Le *poetriae* del medioevo latino
Modelli, fortuna, commenti

a cura di Gian Carlo Alessio e Domenico Losappio

Between Grammar and Rhetoric
Poetria nova and Its Educational Context
in Medieval and Renaissance Italy

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Abstract   This paper examines the context of Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* and of its manuscripts and commentaries in medieval and Renaissance Italy. It is well known that, in Italy, grammar (Latin language and literature) was the concern of elementary and mainly secondary schools, whereas rhetoric was primarily a university subject (although basic introductory rhetoric also figured at the end of the secondary-school curriculum). There is little direct (and scant indirect) indication that *Poetria nova* was taught in Italian universities, but abundant evidence that it was used in schools. Such a school (as opposed to university) context suggests that *Poetria nova* was primarily used in teaching grammar, not rhetoric, in medieval and Renaissance Italy. The most important use of the text was teaching prose composition: how to vary sentences beyond the simplest wording and structure of subject-verb-predicate (*suppositum-appositum*) initially learned by grammar pupils, i.e. moving from *ordo naturalis* to *ordo artificialis.* Marjorie Curry Woods has written, "although there is growing evidence that the *Poetria nova* was used to teach the composition of prose, and especially, letters, throughout Europe, it is almost always copied with verse texts, often classical works, in Italian manuscripts, which suggests that it was also used there to teach the interpretation of literary texts". But there is little sign that Geoffrey of Vinsauf was cited in Italian literary manuscripts during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: in my study of manuscript schoolbooks preserved in Florentine libraries, there are 98 in which authorities are explicitly cited. Vergil tops the list, cited in 35 manuscripts, followed by Cicero (and pseudo Cicero) in 32, Ovid in 29, Seneca (and pseudo Seneca) in 27, Lucan in 16, Valerius Maximus in 15, Aristotle (and ps. Aristotle) in 14, Horace in 13, and so on. In contrast Geoffrey of Vinsauf was cited by name in only one manuscript.

Keywords   Poetria nova. Geoffrey of Vinsauf. Grammar. Rhetoric. Italy.

In the world of medieval and Renaissance Italian education, it would be difficult to overlook Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*. Columbus' *Classroom Commentaries. Teaching the "Poetria nova" across Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (2010) lists seventy-seven Italian manuscripts of the text and of free-standing commentaries on it, and another four similar

possibly Italian manuscripts (indicated with a question mark).[1] This constitutes a striking group – roughly 40% of the surviving 200 or so manuscripts identified here by Marjorie Curry Woods. A number of these manuscripts were copied or owned by pupils, students and teachers, and many are provided with the type of interlinear and marginal glosses associated with educational use.

With an ostensible purpose of teaching the art of poetry, *Poetria nova* may have been originally intended as a new poetics to replace Horace's *Ars poetica*, a text referred to in the middle ages and Renaissance as his *Poetria*.[2] Verse composition, however, was not *Poetria nova*'s educational context in medieval and Renaissance Italy. In the Italian commentary tradition, the text was associated with the prose writer (*dictator*): "Hic docet auctor quod dictator ad faciendum predicta non debet esse nimium festinus. Unde si quis blanditor det thema et petat rem sine mora, dictator debet petere spatium et consulere mentem suam et dicere illi, 'Tu es nimium preceps'";[3] its "causa materialis est ars dictatoris facultatis";[4] it pertained "ad instructionem dictatorum".[5] Bichilino da Spello, in his *Pomerium rethorice* (a. 1304), declared to his students that *Poetria nova* "pertained to the teaching of *dictamen*", relating the text to Bene da Firenze's famous rhetorical treatise, *Candelabrum* as well as to the practice of letter writing: "non solum *Candelabri* et *Poetrie novelle* doctrina, sed eciam ipsarum epistolarum practicacione continua de hiis, que ad doctrinam dictaminum pertinent".[6] It was compared to prose sermons: "sicut faciunt predicatores sermocinando".[7] Its subject matter was rhetoric, i.e. prose composition, as much as poetry: "tam rethores quam poete in hoc libro instruuntur";[8] according to Giovanni Travesio, a late fourteenth-century commentator,

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1 Woods, M.C. *Classroom Commentaries. Teaching the "Poetria nova" across Medieval and Renaissance Europe*. Columbus (OH), 2010, 289-307.

2 Curtius, E.R. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*. New York, 1953, 153. Transl. by W. Trask. Transl. of *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*. Bern, 1948. Pace da Ferrara, *Declarationes super Poetriam Novam* (London, British Library, Add. 10095) c. 108*v*: "Causa suscepti operis fuit [...] ut artem poeticam posset declarare [Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Col. 5-4-30: 'determinare', cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 12 fn. 56] perfecte quam Oratius nimis confuse et compendiose docuerat".

3 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conventi Soppressi J.VI.17 (a. ca 1330-1340), c. 35*v*.

4 Pistoia, Archivio Capitolare del Duomo, C. 143, c. 1*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 32 fn. 138).

5 Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, 311, c. 5*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 101 fn. 31).

6 Cited in Losappio, D. (a cura di). *Guizzardo da Bologna: Recollecte super Poetria magistri Gualfredi*. Verona, 2013, 54.

7 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob. Lat. 1472, c. 171 (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 80 fn. 157, 82 fn. 166).

8 Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, 311, c. 1*v* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 98 fn. 22, 99 fn. 25).

Poetria nova "non supponitur proprie ipsi phylosophye sed ipse rethorice".[9] Travesio also pointed to the prose discourse of public oratory with reference to *Poetria nova*: "in arenghis", "arengas", "arengare", "arenget".[10] An anonymous glossator, apparently writing in the earlier fifteenth century, highlighted *Poetria nova*'s rhetorical structure: "Opus istud potest dividi [didivi *MS*] secundum partem rethorice et secundum sermonem rethoricum".[11] Geoffrey was compared by Bartolomeo da San Concordio, an early fourteenth-century commentator, to Cicero,[12] associating *Poetria nova* with *epideixis*, the rhetoric of praise and blame.[13] Bartolomeo also declared, "Que quidem sciencia [rethorica] multum sufficienter et plane traditur in libro qui *Poetria nova* dicitur".[14] At about the same time, an Emilian commentator noted that Geoffrey was imitating Cicero, with the implication that, like the latter, he was offering guidance in prose composition:

> Tullius quem autor iste imitatur […] autor exemplificavit secundum ordinem Tullii […] ¶ prima pars dividitur in partes quinque secundum quod significatio ut dicit Tullius potest fieri quinque modis.[15]

According to an anonymous commentary surviving in two fifteenth century Italian manuscripts, "Galfredus de Anglia, qui, licet in ceteris artibus gloriosus fuerit, tamen in arte rethorice [fuit] singularis, quod huius operis profunditas attestatur".[16] Commentators on the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium* often drew examples from *Poetria nova*;[17] for

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9   Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Ca56-2-27, c. 2*v* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 134 fn. 176).

10   Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Ca56-2-27, c. 2*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 136 fn. 184).

11   Brescia, Biblioteca Civica Queriniana, A.IV.10, c. 93*r*, reproduced as plate 1 in a, *Classroom*. Woods dates this copy variously to the fourteenth century (35) or to the "14th-15th cent" (291), but the hand of the copyist, who also wrote this gloss, looks fifteenth-century (heavy, widely spaced gothic book hand, with 2-shaped 'r' frequently the second letter in words).

12   Woods, *Classroom*, 119 fn. 122.

13   Woods, *Classroom*, 202 fn. 145.

14   Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, 311, c. 1*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 98 fn. 24).

15   Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Strozzi 137 (saec. XIV[1]), cc. 23*v*, 26*v*. On this manuscript, see Black, R. *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy. Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century*. Cambridge, 2001, 246, 342.

16   Pistoia, Archivio Capitolare del Duomo, C 143, c. 1*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 253 fn. 1). The other version of this commentary, dated 1440, is Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Regin. Lat. 1982 (see Woods, *Classroom*, 301, 305).

17   Woods, *Classroom*, 137.

Francischello Mancini, an early fifteenth-century commentator, *Poetria nova* was superior as a rhetorical textbook to *Rhetorica ad Herennium*:

> Quia cum vidisset [Galfridus] *Rhetoricam* Tulii prolixam <ali>quantum propter copiam exemplorum confusam, <colligens> compendiose que utiliora sibi ad utilitatem scolarium visa sint, hoc opusculum sub brevitate composuit.[18]

Mancini links *Poetria nova* particularly to letter writing: e.g. "In parte ista componit alium modum ampliandi materiam epistole";[19] he also re-writes Geoffrey's verse story of the Snow Child (vv. 713-17)[20] in prose.[21] In a mid-fourteenth-century Italian manuscript of *Poetria nova*, Geoffrey's theoretical points are exemplified in prose by the copyist, who also wrote the commentary:

> Interpretatio fit cum dico: scientia hominem nobilitat et decorat, quoniam idem dico, sed muto verba. Et idem: hoc nos magnificat et exaltat. Ista verba portant idem sed mutata sunt per hunc colorem. [...] conduplicatio differt [...] ab interpretatione, quia [...] posita proprietate alicuius rei removetur obiectum eiusdem, ut: ista iuventutis est et non facit senilis. Interpretatio enim per diversa verba eandem sententiam ponit, ut: sapientia nos decorat et honorat. ¶ Parudigma est dictum [h]ortantis vel de[h]ortantis, cum exemplo ait: tam fortiter ruit apud Yponem Scipio quam Atice Cato. ¶ De comparatione [...] dicitur quod fit dupliciter, aperte et occulte. Aperte per tria signa: per magis, minus et eque. Per magis sic: Qui furtum committit vita corporis est privandus; ergo multo magis qui sacrilegium commisit ultimo supplicio est tradendus. Per minus sic: qui sacrilegium committunt veniam promerentur; ergo multo magis qui furtum faciunt debent veniam promereri. Per eque sic: Catellina[m] labefacientem [*ms.*: labefaciantem] rem publicam Cicero interfecit; vos consules Gracium eque subvertentem publicam rem minime occidisti[s].[22]

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18   Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Vind. Lat. 53, c. 1*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 12 fn. 57.

19   Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Vind. Lat. 53, c. 10*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 15).

20   Faral, E. (éd.). *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle. Recherches et documents sur la technique littéraire du Moyen Âge*. Paris, 1924, 219.

21   Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Vind. Lat. 53, c. 13*v* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 157 fn. 290).

22   Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conventi Soppressi J.VI.17, cc. 5*r-v*. On this manuscript, see Black, *Humanism*, 342.

Similarly, Benedetto da Cividale, a commentator writing in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, also illustrated *Poetria nova* with passages in prose.[23]

Occasionally a more literal perspective on *Poetria nova* was taken in Italy. Most prominent here was Pace da Ferrara, who wrote a commentary on *Poetria nova* at some point between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. In his *accessus*, Pace declared that *Poetria nova*'s subject was the *ars poetica*, not rhetoric, and that it was erroneous to say otherwise:

> Materia huius libri in communi est ars poetica […] Er[r]ant ['Errant': Losappio] enim qui dicunt quod materia huius libri est eloquentia sive rethorica […] Hoc enim non est verum: tum quia rethorica et poetica diverse scientie sunt secundum Aristotelem in cuius signum diversos libros de his composuit. Et liber iste communiter dicitur *Poetria* quia determinat de poetica, quod nomen non daretur ei si enim ['enim' omitted: Losappio] determinaret de rethorica vel eius partibus ut de principali materia.[24]

Pace goes on to clarify what he means by the *ars poetica*:

> Utilitas vero potest assignari tripliciter: prima est plena cognitio artis poetice in communi; secunda, artificiosa eloquentia; tertia et ultima, delectatio que habetur tam ex verborum ornatura et simphoniis quam ex sententiarum pulcritudine.[25]

There is no reference here to writing verse: the usefulness of *Poetria nova* is, first, general knowledge of the art of poetry; second, acquisition of an elaborate writing style; third, delight gained from ornate and euphonious compositions and from the beauty of uplifting maxims. Pupils and students of *Poetria nova* would not take pleasure from their own crude literary efforts nor would they delight in their own laboured presentation of *sententiae*. What Pace means here is the reading of the great ancient poets whose elegant style and beautiful sentiments could begin to be appreciated through the guidance of *Poetria nova*. Geoffrey of Vinsauf was, so Pace suggests, providing a gateway to great literature, an introduction to

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23 Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 29-30.

24 Cited from Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 44 (slightly different readings given here on the basis of London, British Library, Add. 10095, c. 108*v*). Woods, *Classroom*, 117 fn. 109, provides a different reading, based on Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Col. 5-4-30, including "cum quia rethorica", which is correctly read as "tum quia rethorica" by Losappio on the basis of the London manuscript.

25 London, British Library, Add. 10095, c. 108*v*, here providing better readings than the manuscripts cited in Woods, *Classroom*, 16 fn. 78.

literary criticism, a first step on the path to appreciating and understanding the poetic masterpieces of antiquity.

It is telling that Pace identifies himself not as a rhetorician but as a grammarian. A note of possession on Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 126 inf. reads "Magister Pax doctor gramatice et logyce qui fuit de Ferraria et nunc moratur Padue"[26] while in the *accessus* to his *Declarationes super Poetriam novam*[27] he declares that grammar was his mother discipline: "matrem grammaticam".[28] The subject of grammar in fourteenth-century Italy embraced not only correct latinity but also reading authors, culminating in the great classical poets. Spigliato di Cenne da Firenze, who taught grammar in Prato from 1359 to 1365 and from 1382 to 1384 as well as in his native city up to 1382 and then again from 1388 to 1389, used Horace's *Ars poetica* and *Epistulae* in his grammar school; Domenico di Bandino d'Arezzo, who worked as a grammarian in Florence from 1381 to 1399 and who taught grammar in his native city at the end of the 1390s if not earlier, frequently cited classical Latin poets in his teaching of grammar, as embodied in his textbook, the *Rosarium*. In the earlier Trecento, Goro d'Arezzo, documented as teaching grammar in his native city during the 1340s, used Lucan in the classroom. Antonio di ser Salvi Vannini da S. Gimignano, who is known to have used Seneca's *Tragedies* in his grammar schoolroom, taught grammar in Prato during the later 1380s. At Colle Valdelsa not only did Nofri di Giovanni da Poggitazzi teach Vergil and Lucan during his decade's tenure there as public grammar master from 1381 to 1391, but Nofri di Angelo Coppi, who served as communal grammarian there from 1393 to 1395, read Persius' and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in his classroom. Benaccio di Francesco da Poppi, documented as teaching Persius in Volterra, taught grammar at S. Miniato in 1398-1399. Nofri Coppi also served in his native city of S. Gimignano from 1395 to 1396, as did Antonio di ser Salvi Vannini, who is documented as teaching Seneca's *Tragedies* in 1385 there, working from 1377 to 1386, 1392 to 1395 and 1398 to 1400; Nofri da Poggitazzi, a grammarian teaching Vergil and Lucan at Colle Valdelsa, as well as Statius's *Achilleis* later at Siena, also taught grammar in S. Gimignano from 1388 to 1390. In Poppi, the communal grammar master Santi di Biagio da Valiana taught Statius's *Achilleis*, Vergil's *Georgics* and Terence during the

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26   Stadter, P.A. "Planudes, Plutarch, and Pace of Ferrara". *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, 16, 1973, 137-62 (141).

27   This is the title of his commentary according to London, British Library, Add. 10095, c. 108*r*: "Suscipe igitur declarationes nostras super poetriam novellam". It is also identified variously as *Commentum magistri Pacis super Poetria novella magistri Gualfredi*, *Comentum magistri Pacis Paduani supra Poetriam novellam*, *Expositio Poetrie novelle magistri Pacis* and *Rationes super poetria*: see Stadter, *Planudes*, 149 fn. 4, 150 nnf. 1-3.

28   Stadter, *Planudes*, 146, citing Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica, Γ.IV.10, c. 1*r*; Woods, *Classroom*, 108 fn. 64, citing Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Col. 5-4-30, c. 2*r*.

last quarter of the fourteenth century. At Castelfiorentino, the grammarian Niccolò di ser Duccio d'Arezzo taught Lucan in 1395. At Volterra, Antonio Vannini, who has been seen to have used Seneca's *Tragedies* in his grammar classroom, taught from 1395 to 1398.[29] At Chioggia in the last decades of the fourteenth century the grammarian was appointed to teach "volentibus audire tragedias Senecae, Virgilium, Lucan, Terentium et similes poetas et auctores".[30] The most famous appointment of this kind occurred at Bologna in 1321, when Bertolino Benincasa da Canolo was appointed to teach rhetoric, whereas the grammarian Giovanni del Virgilio's remit was to teach "versificaturam et poesim et magnos auctores, videlicet Virgilium, Statium, Luchanum et Ovidium maiorem".[31] Pace da Ferrara's approach to Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*, combining *ars poetica* and the classical authors, thus parallels his contemporary Giovanni del Virgilio's teaching at Bologna, encompassing as it did "versificaturam et poesim et magnos auctores".

Another telling resemblance to Pace da Ferrara comes from Guizzardo da Bologna, who described himself as a "minimus donatistarum minister".[32] Domenico Losappio's emendation here from the manuscript readings of 'dictatorum' or 'donatorum' is a convincing case of *lectio difficilior*, and his interpretation of the expression as an instance of *topos humilis* is equally persuasive.[33] The exact sense of 'donatistarum' is suggested by a document from Pescia dating from 1408, where a pupil learning to read Donatus was called a *donatista*: "salario floreni unius pro quolibet latinante et lib. tres pro quolibet donatista et sol. XL pro quolibet qui legisset alphabetum et seu salterium".[34] This terminology was repeated there in 1477: "a quolibet donatista et donatum adiscente solidos quatuor pro quolibet mense: S. 4".[35]

The sense of Guizzardo's self-description is that he is the humblest of grammarians, teaching boys to read 'donatum', i.e. the 'donatellum', the most elementary grammatical text now known as *Ianua*.[36] Guizzardo's expression is hyperbolic self-deprecation, but what is clear is that he is describing himself, like Pace da Ferrara, as a grammarian.

29 See Black, R. *Education and Society in Florentine Tuscany. Teachers, Pupils and Schools, c. 1250-1500*. Leiden, 2007, 165-6.

30 Bellemo, V. "L'insegnamento e la cultura in Chioggia fino al secolo XV". *Archivio Veneto*, 18, t. 35, 1888, 277-301, e 18, t. 36, 1888, 37-56 (49).

31 Rossi, V. *Dal Rinascimento al Risorgimento*. Firenze, 1930, 16-17. For more references of this type, see Black, *Humanism*, 200-4.

32 Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 95.

33 Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 215-16.

34 Black, *Education*, 105-6.

35 Black, *Education*, 106.

36 See Black, *Humanism*, 44-63.

Pace of Ferrara's focus on *Poetria nova* as a grammatical rather than as a rhetorical treatise raises the question of the educational ambience in which Geoffrey of Vinsauf's work was read in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy. A leitmotif of Marjorie Curry Woods's *Classroom Commentaries* is the contrasting textual context of *Poetria nova* in Italy on the one hand, and in transalpine Europe on the other.

> Although there is growing evidence that the *Poetria nova* was used to teach the composition of prose, and especially letters, throughout Europe, it is almost always copied with verse texts, often classical works, in Italian manuscripts, which suggests that it was also used there to teach the interpretation of literary texts. This situation is in distinct contrast with the central European tradition [...] where the *Poetria nova* is found almost exclusively with dictaminal texts (treatises on the art of letter-writing model letter collections, etc.) and quadrivial works.[37]
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> In [...] central European manuscripts the *Poetria nova* is often copied with dictaminal works and/or with grammatical and quadrivial texts taught at the lower levels in the universities (almost never found in Italian manuscripts of the *Poetria nova*).[38]
>
> In central Europe the *Poetria nova* was often copied or bound with letter-writing manuals and collections of model letters (dictaminal material) but it is almost never found with such works in Italian manuscripts.[39]

There is no documentary or archival evidence that *Poetria nova* was lectured on or commented upon in any Italian university, whereas "numerosi statuti universitari ne testimoniano la regolare lettura accademica, ancora nel secolo XV, in città poste al di là delle Alpi come Praga, Vienna, Cracovia, Erfurt".[40] It is to be wondered whether the lack of Italian archival documentation, on the one hand, and the grammatical/literary associations of Italian manuscripts of *Poetria nova*, on the other, might suggest that *Poetria nova* was not primarily a university text in medieval and Renaissance Italy, where grammar and the classical authors constituted the core of secondary-level school teaching but remained marginal subjects in the

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37   Woods, *Classroom*, 95.

38   Woods, *Classroom*, 166.

39   Woods, *Classroom*, 169.

40   Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 52-3, referring to Woods, *Classroom*, 163-233. Woods (*Classroom*, 109) points out that "according to Paul Grendler there is no archival evidence that the *Poetria nova* was ever taught at an Italian university", and that there "is no mention of the *Poetria nova* in [P.] Grendler, *Universities of the Italian Renaissance* [Baltimore, 2002]" (Woods, *Classroom*, 109 fn. 68).

Italian universities, which were dominated by the faculties of medicine and law (with a lesser presence of philosophy and theology).[41]

It is, in fact, a struggle even to find positive indirect evidence that *Poetria nova* was taught in Italian universities. Bichilino da Spello, on his own testimony teaching in 1304 at the University of Padua ("Bichilynus Spelensis, vallis Spoletane de partibus, in Paduano Studio moram trahens"), declared to his students that he had been lecturing to them on *Poetria nova*: "non solum *Candelabri* et *Poetrie novelle* doctrina, sed eciam ipsarum epistolarum practicacione continua, de hiis que ad doctrinam dictaminum pertinent, vos diligenter instruxi".[42] In 1387 Giovanni Travesio da Cremona was appointed to the University of Pavia as lecturer "grammatice, rethorice et auctorum", with similar documentation in 1389, 1391, 1393, 1394 and 1395. Examples of his appointment documents from 1391 are

Iohannes de Cremona artium et rethoricae doctor, deputatus ad legendum in scientia gramaticae rethoricae et auctorum, pro eius salario et solutione pensionis domorum habitaculi sui et scolarum, quolibet mense, libr. 34, s. 13 d. 4.

Qui magister Iohannes postea deputatus fuit ad legendum auctores magnos, rethoricam et grammaticam speculativam, dimissa doctrina puerorum et gramaticae positivae, cum eodem salario.[43]

At the beginning of his commentary on *Poetria nova*, Travesio declared that he lectured annually on that text: "hoc opus […] quod in vestrorum filiorum utilitatem facio super *Poetria novella* Gualfredi quam annuatim lego ut fructibus et rethorice metricis imbuantur".[44] Otherwise there is, for Italian universities, only inference and speculation.

The case of Pace da Ferrara is instructive. In Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Z Lat. 544, c. 1*v*, 'Pax de Ferr.' is described as "minister arcium in studio Paduano", where, however, it is not clear that he ever

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41   Typical here are the rolls of the University of Florence published by Gherardi, A. *Statuti della Università e Studio fiorentino dell'anno MCCCLXXXVII seguiti da un'appendice di documenti dal MCCCXX al MCCCCLXXII*. Firenze, 1881; Park, K. "The Readers at the Florentine Studio". *Rinascimento*, s. 2, 21, 1980, 249-310; Abbondanza, R. "Gli atti degli Ufficiali dello Studio fiorentino dal maggio al settembre 1388". *Archivio storico italiano*, 117, 1959, 80-110; Spagnesi, E. *Utiliter edoceri = Atti inediti degli Ufficiali dello Studio fiorentino (1391-96)*. Milano, 1979; Davies, J. *Florence and its University during the Early Renaissance*. Leiden, 1998; and Verde, A.F. *Lo studio fiorentino (1473-1503)*. Vol. 1 di *Ricerche e documenti*. Firenze, 1973.

42   Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 53-4.

43   Rossi, *Dal Rinascimento*, 12-13.

44   Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Ca56-2-27, c. 2*r* (cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 133 fn. 174).

lectured on *Poetria nova*. The crucial text is the dedicatory letter of his *Declarationes super Poetriam novam*:

> Suscipe igitur declarationes nostras super poetriam novellam, quas dudum non ignorans incipiemus, sciens id nos ad earum complementum principaliter induxisse. Quod quia decrevimus matrem [Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica, Γ.iv.10, c. 1*r*; London, British Library, Add. 10095, c. 108*r*: decernimus inautentam (= inattentam)] grammaticam ad medicinam [London, British Library, Add. 10095, c. 108*r*: ad medicinam *omitted*] quasi admodum extraneum transeuntes relinquere, turpe quippe putavimus eas dimittere imperfectas, presertim cum non tam tibi gratas quam ceteris profuturas minime dubitemus. Non ergo mireris si brevius forte quam debuerimus alicubi pertransivimus. Nam hec brevitas satis lucide in singulis quasi mentem declarat autoris. Qua cognita non erit difficile perscrutari verborum seriem exponendo. Quiquid [*ms.:* quequid] vero in his habitum erroris exacciderit apud peritos quidem iudices et sinceros facilem poterit veniam promereri, quia nos primo hoc mare transnatare suasit comunis utilitas. Ideo que sine ullius remigio iam deo ducente diligenti audatia temptavimus.[45]

Pace states that he had once prepared an imperfect commentary on *Poetria nova*; now that he is moving from his original grammatical interests to the new discipline of medicine, he feels he cannot leave his work on *Poetria* in such an imperfect state and so he has prepared a completed version. It is uncertain whether the earlier version of his commentary was connected with his university teaching; the completed version was prepared only on his move from grammar to medicine. It should not be assumed that every commentary on a text was directly connected with teaching. A famous example is Nicholas Trevet's commentary on Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, surviving complete in more than a hundred manuscripts and quoted in numerous further commentaries and glosses on the *Consolation* in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries throughout Europe. Trevet prepared the text while resident at the Dominican convent of S. Maria Novella in Florence at the beginning of the fourteenth century. His work dominated the teaching of the *Consolation* in Italy and beyond for the next two centuries, but there is no evidence or indication that he prepared this work for teaching. It became a standard work of reference for teachers and pupils, and it is arguable that such an exhaustive commentary was beyond the scope of the classroom or lecture theatre.[46] The same could be true of

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45 London, British Library, Add. 10095, c. 108*r*.

46 See Black, R.; Pomaro, G. *La "Consolazione della Filosofia" nel medioevo e nel Rinascimento italiano. Libri di scuola e glosse nei manoscritti fiorentini / Boethius's "Consolation of*

Pace's *Declarationes*, the fullest and most learned of all commentaries on *Poetria nova*: conceivably, like Trevet's *Expositio*, a work of scholarship and learning rather than of pedagogy.

Ambiguous too is the case of Guizzardo da Bologna, whose *Recollecte super Poetria magistri Gualfredi* have been preserved in one Vatican manuscript (Ottob. Lat. 3291), with a fragment of its *accessus* found in Genoa, Biblioteca Durazzo, B II 1.[47] Guizzardo taught in Siena from 1306 to 1311 and from 1314 to 1315.[48] His appointment document makes specific reference to the *studium*:

> in civitate Senarum legere et studium in facultate gramatice retinere, et continue legere, et instruere omnes volentes audire et stare ad didiscendum, satisfaciendo mihi a volentibus mecum studere et meas lecturas audire et doctrinam.[49]

The fact that he received an annual salary of 100 lire, four times the normal salary of 25 lire usually accorded to grammar teachers in Siena[50] appointed through the Studio apparatus, possibly indicates that he was teaching in other disciplines besides grammar, as occurred in Florence in 1320 and 1321, where his appointment documents referred to him as "professori in arte Gramatice et in aliis artibus et scientiis" and as teaching "Graa maticam, Loycham et Philosofiam".[51] But there is no positive indication, unlike Bilichino da Spello or Giovanni Travesio, that he lectured at the university level on *Poetria nova* either in Siena or Florence, much less in Bologna or Padua, where there is no explicit documentation of Guizzardo as a university teacher.

In contrast, evidence abounds of *Poetria nova* as a pre-university school text in Italy. Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 874 has this possession note: "Iste liber est Antonii <Arnaldi> morantis in scholis <Magistri Spiliati>" (c. 37*v*),[52] a teacher in Florence and Prato during the second half of the fourteenth century (see above). The words 'Arnaldi' and 'Spigliati' are writ-

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Philosophy" in Italian Medieval and Renaissance Education. Schoolbooks and their Glosses in Florentine Manuscripts. Firenze, 2000; Brancato, D. "Readers and Interpreters of the *Consolatio* in Italy, 1300-1550". Kaylor, N.H. Jr.; Phillips, P.E. (eds.), *A Companion to Boethius in the Middle Ages*. Leiden, 2012, 357-411.

47   Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 77.

48   Black, *Education*, 592.

49   Cited from Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 34.

50   Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 35.

51   Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 36-7.

52   Black, *Humanism*, 343.

ten over earlier words; what the former, namely 'Arnaldi', covers is illegible, but the latter is superimposed over 'fighinensis', suggesting that a teacher before Spigliato had come from Figline. In Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 682 there is the ownership note "Iste liber est <Alexandri ser Nicholai> populi Sancte Felicitatis ultra Arnum, morantis in scholis magistri <Antonii de Garbo> doctoris gramatice" (c. 50*v*).[53] From 1393 to 1395 and 1402 to 1403, don Nofri di Angelo Coppi da S. Gimignano was public grammar master in Colle, where a schoolbook signed by him in 1394 (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Hamilton 101) contains Persius, Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* and Boethius's *Consolation*.[54] Pace da Ferrara's *Declarationes* in London, British Library, Add. 10095 has an *explicit* of a teacher directing a school at Pordenone in Friuli: "Explicit commentum magistri Pacis super *Poetria novella* magistri Gaulfredi scriptum per me Iacobum in Portun(aonis) scolas regentem 1427, die vero xii° Iulii indictione v hora vesperarum".[55] The library of maestro Paolo del fu maestro Iacopo da Sansepolcro, who had been the publicly salaried grammar teacher in his native town from 1396 to 1400, included a copy of *Poetria nova*, as well as copies of Pace of Ferrara's and Guizzardo da Bologna's commentaries on the text.[56] The glossator of Padua, Biblioteca Universitaria, 505 referred to the schoolboyish glosses that the copyist had inserted in the manuscript: "glosas pueriles quas scriptor apposuit teduit me abradere" (c. II*v*).[57] A notebook (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Acquisti e Doni 343) containing excerpts and incipits of school authors (Henry of Settimello, Cato, *Physiologus*, *Geta*, *Chartula*, *Facetus*, Prosper, *Psychomachia*, *Quinque claves*, Aesop, *Dittochaeon*, Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Boethius's *Consolation*), besides other grammatical notes, *sententiae*, excerpts from Jacopo della Lana's commentary on Dante and from sermons of Remigio de' Girolami delivered in Santa Maria Novella, seems to have had didactic associations with novitiates at the monastery of Ognisanti during the fourteenth century.[58] Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Acquisti e Doni 438 (Italy, saec. XV¹) was copied and annotated by a number of contemporary hands in the usual school manner, including some interlinear vernacular glosses. Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Strozzi 139 (Florence,

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53   Black, *Humanism*, 343.

54   de Angelis, V. "Magna questio preposita coram Dante et Domino Francisco Petrarca et Virgiliano". *Studi petrarcheschi*, n.s., 1, 1984, 103-209 (127-9).

55   Stadter, *Planudes*, 149.

56   Banker, J. *Il giovane Piero della Francesca e la cultura della sua terra*. Firenze, 2015, 88; Black, *Education*, 773-7; Black, R. (a cura di), *La scuola pubblica a Sansepolcro tra Basso Medioevo e Primo Rinascimento (secoli XIV-XV)*. Sansepolcro, 2018, 65.

57   Cited from Woods, *Classroom*, 50 fn. 2.

58   Black, Pomaro, *La "Consolazione"*, 91-2.

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saec. XV¹) is a schoolbook containing *probationes pennae* (cc. 42*v*-43*v*) and Latin verses written by an immature hand. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Panciatichi 69 (Florence, saec. XV^mid) contains copious *probationes pennae* on the two front flyleaves; an immature hand wrote alphabets (cc. 34*v*-35*v*); a Latin-vernacular vocabulary list (c. 36*r*) was written by the only glossator, who provided the usual school-type simple interlinear paraphrases and basic school-type philological marginalia including the vernacular (c. 27*r*: "hoc opus" = 'il bisogno'). Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 874, a signed schoolbook (see above) also contains a puerile drawing of a crenellated tower (c. 37*v*). Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 3600, cc. 49*r*-71*v* (Italy, saec. XV^in) is glossed on the first folio and beginning of the second with normal school-type interlinear and marginal glosses. Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 3605 (Italy, cc. 31*r*-36*v*, fragmentary, saec. XV^mid) contains copious low-level school-type interlinear vernacular glossing and simple school-level marginal philology.**59** The *explicit* of Pace da Ferrara's commentary on *Poetria nova* as it appears in an inventory of a fifteenth-century Friulian notary ("expliciunt *Rationes supra poetria* composite a magistro Pace scolarum dignissimo professore") means that, as far as this writer was concerned, Pace was a secondary school master: in innumerable archival documents dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, 'scole' is the standard term for 'school',**60** and 'professor' was a frequent synonym for 'magister',**61** meaning schoolmaster.

A learned commentator such as Pace da Ferrara might have hoped that his commentary on *Poetria nova* would be used in the schoolroom to elucidate the great works of classical Latin literature, but there is little sign that Geoffrey of Vinsauf was cited in Italian literary manuscripts during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: in my study of manuscript schoolbooks preserved in Florentine libraries, there are 98 in which authorities are explicitly cited. Vergil tops the list, cited in 35 manuscripts, followed by Cicero (and ps. Cicero) in 32, Ovid in 29, Seneca (and ps. Seneca) in 27, Lucan in 16, Valerius Maximus in 15, Aristotle (and ps. Aristotle) in 14, Horace in 13, and so on.**62** In contrast Geoffrey of Vinsauf was cited by name in only one manuscript: Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Strozzi 137.**63**

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59 Black, *Humanism*, 342-4.

60 Woods's rendering of 'scolarum' as 'of the schools' (Woods, *Classroom*, 107) is a mistranslation. Just to cite examples from Pescia, Archivio di Stato, Deliberazioni, 6, c. 105*v* (a. 1373): "magistri scolarum", "magister scolarum"; 10, c. 164*v*-165*r* (1388): "magistro scolarum"; 15, c. 55*r* (1407): "magistro scolarum", etc.

61 E.g. Pescia, Archivio di Stato, Deliberazioni, 17, c. 64*r* (1417): "magistrum et gramatice professorem".

62 Black, *Humanism*, 302.

63 Black, *Humanism*, 431.

Pace of Ferrara, however, represented a minority opinion with his view that *Poetria nova* had poetry and grammar as its subject matter. Most commentators thought that *Poetria nova* was a rhetorical treatise, and it is at the level of introductory rhetoric that Geoffrey of Vinsauf's work occupied a decisive presence in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian secondary pre-university schoolroom.

In Roman antiquity there were two distinct levels of post-elementary education: secondary schools were under the charge of a *grammaticus*,[64] whereas the only institution of higher education known in the ancient Latin world was the rhetorical school, headed by a *rhetor*.[65] Grammar and rhetoric were regarded as two separate subjects. Quintilian saw the particular *métier* of the grammar master as "recte loquendi scientiam" (*Inst.*, I, 4, 2). The key word here was 'recte': the emphasis in grammar was on correct expression. Rhetoric, in contrast, Quintilian defined as the "bene dicendi scientiam" (*Inst.*, II, 15, 34):[66] here the crucial term was 'bene'; the focus in rhetoric was on effective expression. The contrast was between using language, on the one hand, without error and, on the other, for compelling communication. This fundamental distinction between the two subjects persisted into late antiquity. For example, in Martianus Capella's allegorical *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (ca. 410-439), where a separate book was devoted to each, Grammar appears as an old, grey-haired woman, carrying a casket of ebony that contains surgical implements to remove children's grammatical mistakes, whereas Rhetoric strides forth as a splendidly beautiful and tall lady, dressed in a gown decorated with figures of speech.[67] This same type of distinction between the disciplines of rhetoric and grammar persisted into the fifteenth-century, as is clear from a gloss in the school-level grammar course of Filippo Casali, grammar teacher in Tuscany and Bologna in the third quarter of the century.[68]

Even in antiquity, nevertheless, there could already be found some interpenetration and merging of the two disciplines. Quintilian, who himself deplored this amalgamation, observed that in his day *rhetores* tended to disdain prepatory work, whereas *grammatici* wanted to move into higher levels of study; the result was that the first stages of rhetoric were coming to constitute the end of the grammar curriculum (*Inst.* II, 1, 1-3). In later antiquity, it became increasingly common for the *grammaticus* also

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[64]   Marrou, H.I. *Histoire de l'Éducation dans l'Antiquité*. Paris, 1948. Engl. transl. *A History of Education in Antiquity*. Transl. by G. Lamb. New York, 1964, 369-80.

[65]   Marrou, *A History*, 381-90.

[66]   Defined in same terms: II 14, 5; II 15, 38.

[67]   Curtius, *European Literature*, 38-9.

[68]   Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ashburnham 1658, c. 119*r*: "gramaticus loquitur, rhetoricus eloquitur, id est ornate loquitur".

to teach rhetoric;[69] teachers were becoming fewer, and there was a tendency to confuse secondary and higher curricula.[70] For Alcuin, grammar and rhetoric constituted a seamless garment:

> The authors' books ought to be read, and their words well impressed upon our memory. If someone has fashioned his style upon theirs, he cannot but express himself with refinement, however much he might try to the contrary.[71]

Gerbert of Aurillac also saw an indissoluble link between the teaching of grammar and rhetoric.[72] With the growing specialisation of education in the twelfth century, the old boundaries between grammar and rhetoric tended to be resurrected. In Italy, rhetoric was transformed into the *ars dictaminis*, which became, beginning in the thirteenth century, primarily a university-level subject, whereas, with the rise of private and communal schools, grammar normally descended to the pre-university level. Nevertheless, given the assimilation, beginning in antiquity and reinforced in the early middle ages, of the two disciplines, it is not surprising to find that the first stages of rhetoric often found their way into the end of the grammar syllabus in medieval and Renaissance Italy.

An early example of the penetration of rhetoric into the grammar syllabus in Italian schools is provided by Pietro da Isolella's *Summa*, probably datable to the second half of the thirteenth century. This school-level grammar textbook also contains a short chapter on rhetoric, called *De dictamine in soluta oratione*,[73] which, as is evident from its title, offers an introduction to the then fashionable *ars dictaminis*: in addition to furnishing a definition of *dictamen*, this brief section of the text mentions the letter and its constituent parts (*salutatio*, *exordium*, *narratio*, *petitio* and *conclusio*), as well as the different types of phrases, clauses and sentences (*coma*, *colum*, *periodus*, *subdistinctio*, *clausula*), besides touching on punctuation (*punctum*) and

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69 Riché, *Éducation et culture dans l'Occident barbare, 6.-8. siècles*. Paris, 1962. Engl. transl. *Education and Culture in the Barbarian West. Sixth through Eighth Centuries*. Transl. by J.J. Contreni. Columbia SC, 1976, 25).

70 Riché, *Éducation and Culture*, 49.

71 *De rhetorica*, 37. See Riché, *Éducation and Culture*, 254.

72 Riché, *Éducation and Culture*, 358.

73 Fierville, C. (éd.). *Une grammaire latine inédite du XIIIe siècle, extraite des manuscripts no 465 de Laon et no 15462 (fonds latin) de la Bibliothèque Nationale*. Paris, 1886, 116-19, who follows the text in Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale, 465. He also publishes the corresponding chapter in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Lat. 15462, presenting substantial divergences from the Laon manuscript and which is closer to one of Pietro's main sources, the Provençal grammarian Sponcius. See Fierville, *Une grammaire*, 116 n. 1 and 175-177 and 195-197.

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cadential rhythm (*cursus*) – all principal concerns of theorists and teachers of *ars dictaminis*. This material is handled only summarily by Pietro, whose purpose here can hardly have been other than to provide a foretaste of a subject to be encountered later in the educational hierarchy. Such a generic treatment was probably of little immediate practical use to school pupils, but nevertheless in this chapter there was one topic that received a little more detailed attention: style. Here Pietro seems to leave the realm of plati-tudes and enter a more realistic and utilitarian world when discussing sty-listic shortcomings and in particular faults of expression: some of these are simply formulaic repetitions of the well-known passage from *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (IV, 18), echoing pseudo Cicero's warning against consecutive vowels (e.g. "mala aula amat crimen"), overuse of a particular letter (e.g. "soleas in sola non sacras faciebat suas"), repetition of the same word (e.g. "cuius rationis ratio non extat rationi, non est ratio probare fidem rationi"), recurrence of the same ending (e.g. "infantes stantes, lacrimantes, vocife erantes"), dislocation of words ("nulla mulierum est vir"), and overly long periods. Nevertheless, other stylistic faults are not found in pseudo Cicero and perhaps reflect more immediate problems encountered by teachers in the work of their pupils, such as juxtaposition of undifferentiated words (e.g. "celebre studium maxime proficiat"), too many long words (e.g. "ex celebritate studiorum magnam commoditatem sapientes consequantur"), use of metre or rhyme in prose, following a word ending in 'm' by one be-ginning with a vowel (e.g. "animam anxiam amo" or "bonum agnum eum"), or two sibillant sounds at the end and beginning of successive words (e.g. "ex sorte", "ars studiorum" or "rex Xerxes"); in fact, in listing these sup-plementary faults, Pietro refers to the views of "moderni doctores".

The order of chapters in Pietro da Isolella's *Summa* varies considerably among manuscripts, and so there is no indication of the point in the school Latin curriculum at which thirteenth-century pupils were first introduced to rhetoric and *dictamen*. Nevertheless, in one manuscript the above-men-tioned chapter *De dictamine in soluta oratione* occurs at the end of the treatise,[74] and by the fourteenth century it seems that introductory rhetoric had come to represent a normal complement to the secondary grammar syllabus – a pattern that is suggested by a number of manuscripts contain-ing Francesco da Buti's *Regule grammaticales*. In these copies Francesco's secondary grammar is followed by a set of *Regule rethorice*,[75] a work in-tended by Francesco for school use, as is clear from the preface, where he distinguishes between his textbook for children (*rudes*) and complete *dicta-*

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[74]   Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Lat. 15462: see Fierville, *Une grammaire*, XV.

[75]   Alessio, G.C. "Hec Francesco da Buiti". *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, 24, 1981, 64-122 (87 fn. 67), listing eight mss. giving *Regule rethorice* as an appendix to his *Regule grammaticales*.

men treatises by learned authorities.[76] Francesco chose his words carefully here: when speaking in terms of compilation and omission, he was implying that he had taken this text from fuller treatises on rhetoric and *dictamen*, and in fact his *Regule rhetorice* offer almost entirely an abbreviated version of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s fourth book, supplemented by conventional material found in Italian *artes dictaminis*. Thus, Francesco states that his aim is to provide a guide to polished prose composition (*exquisitum dictamen*), which is achieved by three means: elegance, arrangement and appropriate ornament (*elegantia*, *compositio*, *ornatus*).[77] Here he is summarizing the formulation in *Rhet. Her.*, IV, 17. Francesco devotes no more than a few lines to elegance, which he defines as purity of Latin and clarity of explanation, again a repetition of *Rhet. Her.*, IV, 17,[78] and he then quickly moves through his second topic, *compositio*, which consists of a brief discussion of phrases, sentences, clauses and their punctuation as well as cadential rhythm (*cursus*).[79] The treatment here again is summarial, representing a formulaic synopsis of the traditional handling of these themes; similarly cursory and conventional is Francesco's short paragraph on stylistic faults, repeating the classic passage in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (IV, 18) with one addition, which reiterates a fault also highlighted by Pietro da Isolella ('m' at the end of a word followed by a vowel at the beginning of the next).[80] The longest section of Francesco's *Regule rhetorice* is his treatment of rhetorical colours,[81] which, echoing *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, he defines in terms of style.[82] Once again it is no surprise to discover that

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76 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 82*r*: "Quoniam facultas recthorice sine arte potest difficillime edoceri, igitur ad eius doctrinam et artem penitus capescendam quedam introductoria sub breviloquio compilemus, obmissis aliis que ad erudiendum rudes minime necessaria reputamus, cum ea querentibus per documenta doctorum illustrium patefiant".

77 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 82*r*: "Sciendum est quod tria in omni exquisito dictamine requiruntur, scilicet elegantia, compositio et ornatus". This recalls Pietro da Isolella's formulation, ed. Fierville, *Une grammaire*, 116, itself a revision of *Rhet. Her.* IV 17. Francesco later substitutes *dignitas* for *ornatus* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 83*v*: "Unde de tertia parte scilicet de dignitate videndum est"), so following formulation in *Rhet. Her.*, IV, 18.

78 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 82*r*.

79 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, cc. 82*v*-83*r*.

80 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 83*v* and Pietro da Isolella, ed. Fierville, *Une grammaire*, 117.

81 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, cc. 83*v*-88*r*.

82 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 83*v*: "dignitas est enim que orationem exornat et pulcra varietate distinguit. Hec enim in verborum et sententiarum exornationes distinguitur. Verborum exornatio est que in ipsius sermonis insignita verborum continetur perpolicione. Sententiarum exornatio est que non in verbis sed in ipsis rebus quandam habet dignitatem". Cf. *Rhet. Her.*, IV, 18.

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this entire section is taken from *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: for example, the first colour, *repetitio*, is handled accordingly.[83] *Rhetorica ad Herennium* similarly provides the source from which Francesco extracts the rest of his treatment of rhetorical colours,[84] and it is therefore not unexpected to find that the remainder of Francesco da Buti's school-level Latin course consists of material drawn from conventional treatments of the *ars dictaminis*. In several manuscripts, his *Regule rhetorice* are followed by a *Tractatus epistolarum*,[85] a work similarly intended for school pupils, as is clear once more from the preface.[86] This text offers a standard but relatively brief treatment of the parts of the letter according to the medieval doctrine of *dictamen*, concentrating, as was usual, primarily on the first two sections, that is, the salutation and the exordium, and giving only a brief mention to the narration, the petition and the conclusion.[87]

Like Pietro da Isolella's chapter on *dictamen*, Francesco da Buti's treatment of rhetoric and epistolography is thus almost entirely derivative: both texts represent compendia of existing theoretical material, whether from *Rhetorica ad Herennium* or from existing *dictamen* literature. Abbreviation represents the main way in which these works have been adapted to the particular needs of school pupils, and so it is not surprising to find that, in comparison with his widely diffused and influential *Regule grammaticales*, Francesco da Buti's rhetorical and epistolary rules enjoyed a more limited circulation.

In contrast, together with its free-standing lemmatic commentary tradition, Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* achieved a far more extensive diffusion in Italy than Francesco da Buti's secondary-school level rhetoric and epistolography – a *fortuna* due not only to its verse format, typical of other widely disseminated school-level texts such as Alexander of Villedieu's *Doctrinale* and Evrard of Béthune's *Graecismus*, but also to its far more extensive and original treatment of rhetorical stylistics.

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83   Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 83*v*: "Repetitio enim est cum ab eodem verbo continenter in rebus similibus et diversis principia sumuntur hoc modo: vobis istud actribuendum est, vobis gratia est habenda, vobis res ista est honori". Cf. *Rhet. Her.* IV 19.

84   Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, cc. 83*v*-88*r* and *Rhet. Her.* IV 19-68.

85   Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, cc. 88*r*-96*v*.

86   Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Misc. e. 52, c. 88*r*: "Quoniam dictamen tripliciter dividitur, nam aliud prosaicum, aliud rictimimicum et aliud metricum, et prosaicum quatrupliter dividitur, scilicet in istorias, privilegiam, contractus et epistolas, cum hec omnia explanamenta requirent non parvam temporis quantitatem, solum de epistolari dictamine presentis intentionis est utilitati rudium".

87   E.g. Guido Fava's treatment of the *salutatio* is eight times the total length of his discussion of the *exordium*, *narratio* and *petitio*, while the latter two are handled in a single paragraph; he does not even mention the *conclusio*: see Faulhaber, C.B. "The *Summa dictaminis* of Guido Faba". Murphy, J.J. (ed.), *Medieval Eloquence. Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric*. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1978, 85-111 (94-8).

Poetria nova is ostensibly a treatise covering all five traditional parts of rhetoric (invention, disposition, diction, memory and delivery), but its foe cus is evident from the space allotted to the various sections: out of a total length of 2,116 verses, invention is only one among several topics rapidly passed over in the general introduction (vv. 43-86); the two succeeding stylistic themes, on the other hand, occupy the body of the treatise, with vv. 87-736 and 737-1968 dedicated to *dispositio* and *elocutio* respectively; in contrast, the remaining two topics receive less than a hundred lines each, with memory treated in vv. 1969-2030 and delivery in vv. 2031-65. Both Pietro da Isolella's and Francesco da Buti's school-level treatments of dictamen showed some emphasis on style,[88] but *Poetria nova* went much further: Geoffrey of Vinsauf in fact wrote a manual of style rather than a full-blown textbook on rhetoric, as is confirmed by comparison with classical rhetorical treatises, where the emphasis had been on invention: according to *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, invention was the most difficult part of rhetoric (III, 15), while Cicero in *De inventione* called it "princeps... omnium partium" (I, 9). In contrast, *Poetria nova*'s treatment of invention was limited to a few generalities and platitudes: plan thoroughly before writing (vv. 43-60); choose the appropriate material for the beginning, middle and end (vv. 61-6); take care lest any single part should blemish the whole (vv. 66-9); start honestly, continue strenuously and solemnly, finish honourably (vv. 71-6). In fact, the stress on style in this text was well appreciated in the later middle ages. The early fourteenth-century copyist of Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Strozzi 137 provided a set of rubrics that highlight the overriding stylistic emphasis of the work.[89] In the Italian medieval and Renaissance classroom, Geoffrey of Vinsauf thus provided a manual on prose style in verse format for easier memorization; in fact, it represented the rhetorical/stylistic complement to Alexander of Villedieu's verse grammar, *Doctrinale*.

Poetria nova's treatment of style begins with the distinction between natural and artificial order (vv. 87-90). Although natural order may have been thought appropriate for purely grammatical study, it is now considered sterile, and the artful approach is regarded as more productive. Abandoning thus the natural accuracy learned at the secondary grammatical level, the pupil now acquires a capacity for artistic expression. Geoffrey then proceeds to illustrate how to amplify or fill out simple sentences, recommending duplication (vv. 220-5), circumlocution (vv. 226-40), comparison (vv. 241-63), exclamation (vv. 264-460), personification (vv. 461-526), digression (vv. 527-53), description (vv. 554-667) and juxtaposition

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88   See above.

89   C. 1*v*: De inventione. 2*r*: De dispositione. 13*v*: De elocutione. 34*r*: De memoria. 35*r*: De pronuntiatione.

(vv. 668-89); for abbreviation, on the other hand, he recommends innuendo (*emphasis*), staccato expression (*articulus*), ablative absolutes, omission of conjunctions (asyndeton) and fusion into a single proposition of several statements (vv. 690-736). Nevertheless, amplification and abbreviation are only the beginnings of ornate style; moving from natural to artificial expression also requires colour (vv. 737-8). This is achieved in the first place (vv. 765-1093) through metaphorical language, such as attributing human qualities to things and vice versa; figurative treatment of verbs, adjectives and nouns; and use of particular tropes (e.g. metaphor, onomatopoeia, antonomasia, allegory, metonymy, hyperbole, synecdoche, catachresis, hyperbaton). Secondly, discourse is given colour through figures of speech (vv. 1094-229) (e.g. rhetorical questions [*interrogatio*] or ending words similarly [*similiter disinens*]) or of thought (vv. 1230-587) (e.g. understatement [*diminutio*] or imagined dialogue [*sermoncinatio*]). Thirdly, sentences are rendered more colourful by employing the doctrine of conversion (vv. 1588-1760), that is, by changing one part of speech or grammatical form into another: verbs into nouns (e.g. "*ex hac re doleo*" = "*ex hoc fonte mihi manat dolor*"), adjectives into nouns (e.g. "*candidus est vultus*" = "*illuminat ora | candor*"), one nominal case into another (e.g. "*ego rem sceleratam | consilio feci*" = "*consilium scelerata manus produxit in actum*"), or indeclinable into declinable parts of speech (e.g. "*huc veniet*" = "*hic locus admittet venientem*"). Fourthly, colour can be achieved by using grammatical relations between words (vv. 1761-841), e.g. between nouns ("*es Cato mente, | Tullius ore, Paris facie, Pirrusque vigore*") or between adjectives and oblique cases ("*avarus | plenus opum, vacuus virtutum, avidissima rerum, | prodigus alterius parcus rerumque suarum*"). Finally, Geoffrey completes his discussion of style (vv. 1842-968) by urging care in the choice of words, by warning against various stylistic faults (such as juxtaposition of vowels among two or more words; repetition of the same letters, words or final syllables; sentences of excessive length; or forced metaphors)[90] and by recommending good judgement, a sensitive ear and attention to usage.

It has been pointed out that commentaries do not support the view that "Geoffrey's discussion of natural and artificial order […] refers to word order"; in contrast, it is suggested that Geoffrey here is referring to altering the "narrative order", for example by "the simple rearranging of the natural order by putting events that happen later earlier".[91] The relevant passage is *Poetria nova*, vv. 87-100:

Ordo bifurcat iter: tum limite nititur artis,
Tum sequitur stratam naturae. Linea stratae

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90   Sometimes repeating points made in *Rhet. Her.*, IV, 18.

91   Woods, *Classroom*, 102 and fn. 38.

Est ibi dux, ubi res et verba sequuntur eumdem
Cursum nec sermo declinat ab ordine rerum
Limite currit opus, si praelocet aptior ordo
Posteriora prius, vel detrahat ipsa priora
Posterius; sed in hoc, nec posteriora priori,
Ordine transposito, nec posteriore priora
Dedecus incurrunt, immo sine lite licenter
Alterans sedes capiunt et more faceto
Sponte sibi cedunt: ars callida res ita vertit,
Ut non pervertat; transponit ut hoc tamen ipso
Rem melius ponat. Civilior ordine recto
Et longe prior est, quamvis praeposterus ordo.[92]

At the time Geoffrey wrote these lines, however, it is arguable that he was referring to words (*locutionibus*), not narrative structures, as is suggested by the famous thirteenth-century gloss on *Doctrinale* known as *Admirantes*:

> quantum ad figurativas locutiones est ut sapientibus et provectis sapientes et provecti, figurativis locutionibus mediantibus, suos exprimant affectus et intellectus per plenarias sententias et profundas. Nam peritus gramaticus sibi duplex preparat instrumentum, unum, quo utitur ad plures, ut est sermo simpliciter congruus, et aliud, quo utitur ad sapientes, ut est sermo figurativus.[93]

Order of words, not of narration, is indicated when the terms *ordo naturalis* and *ordo artificialis* appear in a thirteenth-century text:

> Scias itaque quod duplex est ordo, scilicet naturalis et artificialis. Naturalis ordo est, quando nominativus cum determinatione sua precedit et verbum sequitur cum sua, ut *ego amo te*. Artificialis ordo vel dispositio est, quando partes proprie transponuntur et pulcrius ordinantur, ut *Petrum sincera dilectione prosequor et amplector*.[94]

A fourteenth-century passage contrasts simple grammatical exposition with rhetorical composition ('dictationem'), again in terms of the word order, not narrative sequence:

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[92]   Faral, *Les arts*, 200.

[93]   Thurot, C. *Notices et extraits de divers manuscrits latins pour servir à l'histoire des doctrines grammaticale au moyen âge*. Paris, 1868, 459.

[94]   Thurot, *Notices*, 343.

In constructione duplex est ordo, naturalis videlicet et artificialis. Naturalis est ille qui pertinet ad expositionem, quando nominativus cum determinatione sua precedit et verbum sequitur cum sua, ut *ego amo te*. Artificialis ordo vel compositio est illa que pertinet ad dictationem, quando partes pulcrius disponuntur; que sic a Tullio definitur: Compositio artificialis est constructio equaliter polita.[95]

It is correct that Italian commentators glossed the above-cited passage in *Poetria nova* (vv. 87-100) in terms of narrative, not word order. For example, Franceschello Mancini enjoins,

Nota secundum Oratium in sua *Poetria* quod duplex est ordo, scilicet naturalis et artificialis. Naturalis est quando preponenda preponuntur et postponenda postponuntur. Artificialis est quand preponenda postponuntur et e converso, et hunc ordine tenet Virgilius *Eneydorum*, ut ibi 'Vix e conspectu' etc.[96]

The passage from the *Aeneid* referred to here (I, vv. 34ff) is an example of narrative reordering: the Trojans sailing to Italy are then observed by Juno, who gives vent to her previous anger. Similar are the comments by Guizzardo da Bologna, who gives the stories of Abraham and Minos to exemplify narrative reordering.[97]

When it comes to concrete application rather than literal textual exe position and exemplification of a generic passage, however, much of the advice given by Geoffrey's Italian commentators involves reordering and rewriting simple phrases and sentences in terms of a more ornate style. In practice, the Italian commentary tradition focused as much on words as on narrative techniques. For example, in the table of contents for Bartolomeo da San Concordio's commentary (Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, 311, cc. 69*v*-70*v*), the following headings refer explicitly to words:

Docet in generali colorare in sentientia et verbis […] De addend[is] transumptis adiectiva […] De contrarietate vocis et concordia in sentientia […] Quando eadem dictio ponitur proprie et improprie […] De transumptione verbi […] De transumptione adiectivi […] De transumptione substantivi […] De transumptione plurium dictionum […] De coloribus verborum et levioribus […] Exemplum de commutione et variatione verbi […] De commutatione adiectivi […] De mutatione substantivi per suos casus […] De permutatione indeclinabilius […] De Addendo dictionibus.

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95   Thurot, *Notices*, 344.

96   Cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 155 fn. 282.

97   Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 108-15.

Et primo de addendo substantivo […] De addendo adiectivis […] De addendo verbis.**⁹⁸**

According to Guizzardo da Bologna, the procedural method involved in *Poetria nova* inevitably leads to rewriting in terms of ever smaller units:

Forma tractatus est distinctio libri per partes principales et partium principalium in partes minutas, quosusque deveniatur ad minimas sententiam continentes. Forma tractandi idem est quod modus agendi, qui est divisivus, continuativus et exemplorum positurus.**⁹⁹**

A writing technique

to which the commentators pay a lot of attention […] is determination, in which the effect of a word is modified and often made figurative by joining it to or juxtaposing it with an additional word or words […] a focus on very small units of composition, here single words and short phrases.**¹⁰⁰**

One Italian commentator distinguishes between simple and elaborate wording: "duplex est enim vox complexa et incomplexa: vox incomplexa est sola dictio, vox vero complexa est duo coniuncta per factum sensum g<e>enerancia".**¹⁰¹** Gasparino Barzizza, not a commentator on but an admirer of Geoffrey of Vinsauf ("Galfredus, natione anglicus, vir eruditissimus"),**¹⁰²** adopted an "imitation exercise based on 'changing singular to plural' or 'adding or removing' words" arguably

based on Geoffrey's long discussions of the theories of conversion, which is finding the best way to express an idea by trying it out in different inflected forms of a word, and determination, in which a word is made more powerful or figurative by juxtaposing it with another word.**¹⁰³**

This technique of determination, leading to more artificial verbal expression, had, according to one Italian commentator, to be learned from *Poetria nova*: "Sic artificium inveniendi laudabiles determinationes hic volumus

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98   Cited from Woods, *Classroom*, 269-72.

99   Guizzardo da Bologna, *Recollecte*, 97-8.

100   Woods, *Classroom*, 85.

101   Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob. Lat. 1472, c. 23*v*, cited by Woods, *Classroom*, 92 fn. 200.

102   Cited in Woods, *Classroom*, 136 fn. 182.

103   Woods, *Classroom*, 137.

recipere ab eodem [Galfrido] quia nec Tullius nec Quintillianus aliquid de hiis dixit".[104] A final example illustrating how an Italian commentator, arguably writing in the fourth decade of the fourteenth century, shows how techniques adopted from *Poetria nova* enabled a writer to move from simple grammatical wording to more ornate diction, i.e. from *ordo naturalis* to *ordo artificialis*:

> Nunc determinat de sermone ampliandi materiam, que est circuitio sive circumlocutio. Que a Donato dicitur peryfrasis, a peri, quod est circum, et frasis, ferre, id est, circulatio vel circumlocutio. Que fit aut ordinande rei causa que pulcrior est, aut colende rei causa que turpis est. Et dividitur hec pars in duas. In prima tradit doctrinam de circuitione; in secunda docet circuitionem fieri tripliciter, ibi *cum triplici claustro*. Fit autem primo circumlocutio cum loco nominis ponitur descriptio eius, ut prudentia Scipionis loco eius quod Scipio; secundo, loco verbi cum ponitur obiectum [*MS* obiectio], ut bellando superavit pro eo quod est vicit; tertio de utroque quod per predicitam partem ponit, scilicet, quando variatur nomen et verbum similiter. Prudentia Scipionis (primus modus) bellando superavit (secundus modus). Dicere poteram, Scipio superavit, sed unicuique additur per circumlocutionem: prudentia Scipionis bellando superavit (tertius modus).[105]

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104   Pistoia, Archivio Capitolare del Duomo, C. 143, c. 30*v*, cited by Woods, *Classroom,* 255 fn. 4.

105   Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conventi Soppressi J.VI.17, c. 5*v*.