

Pico's Latin Manuscripts  
Palaeographical and Codicological Observations

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Riassunto

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), figura quasi mitica di studioso tra filosofia e teologia del Quattrocento europeo, costituì un'insigne biblioteca di lavoro di codici e stampati in latino, greco, ebraico, arabo, aramaico ecc. Solo raramente di fattura esteticamente ambiziosa (ad es. il Plinio ora a Venezia, BNM), i suoi codici, in parte acquistati, in parte confezionati *ex novo*, permettono di seguire lo sviluppo dei suoi interessi intellettuali, i suoi lavori e gli ambienti che frequentava a diversi punti nel tempo e nei luoghi. Questo articolo descrive lo sviluppo e le caratteristiche della biblioteca e esamina in particolare il codice Firenze, BNCF, C. S. E. I. 2562, databile al 1484, testimone materiale delle modalità di costituzione della raccolta libraria picchiana e dei rapporti di Pico con Marsilio Ficino in pieno lavoro di traduzione delle *Enneadi* di Plotino.

Biography<sup>1</sup>

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-94) was the youngest child of Gianfrancesco I (d. 1467), Count of La Mirandola and Concordia, and Giulia Boiardo (d. 1478). He received an excellent humanistic education from early on. Appointed apostolic protonotary in 1473, he studied law at the University of Bologna in 1477-78, at the wish of his mother, only to take up letters and philosophy at the university of Ferrara in 1479-80. In Ferrara he met important humanists, such as the educator and translator Battista Guarini (c. 1434-1503), the medical doctor and translator Niccolò Leonicensi and the poet Tito Vespasiano Strozzi (c. 1423-1505), and last but not least, Aldo Manuzio (1449/52-1515), the future typographer.<sup>2</sup> His first contacts with Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98) may also date from this period.

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<sup>1</sup> The research for this article was financed by the Lamemoli project (Academy of Finland and University of Jyväskylä, no. 307635, 2017-2022). I have the pleasure of thanking in particular project member Giovanna Murano for information and insights. – For Pico's biography, see in particular Franco Bacchelli, 'Pico, Giovanni, conte della Mirandola e Concordia', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, ed. by Alberto M. Ghisalberti *et al.*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pico-giovanni-conte-della-mirandola-e-concordia\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pico-giovanni-conte-della-mirandola-e-concordia_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 31 December 2022, Maria-Christine Leitgeb, 'Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni', in: *Der Neue Pauly: Supplemente II Online*, ed. by Manfred Landfester, *Der Neue Pauly: Supplemente*, 2, 9 (Stuttgart: Metzler and Poeschel, 2014), [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-3418\\_dnp09\\_p9011900](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-3418_dnp09_p9011900), 1 January 2023, as well as Brian B. Copenhaver, 'Giovanni Pico della Mirandola', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2016 Edition)*, ed. by Edward Nouri Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/pico-della-mirandola/>, 31 December 2022.

<sup>2</sup> For the three, see Gino Pistilli, 'Guarini, Battista', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/battista-guarini\\_res-5b631af7-87ee-11dc-8e9d-0016357eee51\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/battista-guarini_res-5b631af7-87ee-11dc-8e9d-0016357eee51_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 31 December 2022; Paolo Pellegrini,

In 1479 he first stayed in Florence, getting acquainted with Lorenzo de' Medici, Marsilio Ficino, Girolamo Benivieni and Politian, who were to become life-long friends.<sup>3</sup> In 1480-82 Pico concentrated on studying philosophy, in particular Averroism, at the university of Padua, where he certainly got acquainted with Savonarola. It was also in Padua that he met Elijah del Medigo (c. 1455-82/3), a Hebrew scholar of Cretan origin, who subsequently translated for Pico a series of Averroistic commentaries on Aristotle into Latin,<sup>4</sup> in the context of Pico's undertaking an in-depth study of the Aristotelian tradition. Pico also continued his Greek studies with another scholar of Cretan origin, Emanuel Adramittenus (d. 1485), who also knew Politian and Aldo and was a professional scribe.<sup>5</sup> From Padua Pico returned to Mirandola in 1482, then to the university of Pavia in 1483 and to Paris in 1484. Of considerable importance was Pico's next stay in Florence in 1484-86, which made it possible for him to deepen his knowledge of Platonism and Neo-Platonism. Again, Elijah del Medigo translated for him Averroes' paraphrasis of Plato's Republic. Pico also undertook studies of Hebrew, Arabic and maybe also the Cabbalah, with the converted Jewish scholar Juda Samuel ben Nissim Abul Farag de Girgenti, aka Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada aka Flavius Mithridates, among others, son of a wealthy Sicilian Jew.<sup>6</sup> In 1485, Pico had a controversy with his friend, the Venetian humanist and translator Ermolao Barbaro about the value of scholastic studies.<sup>7</sup> In 1486 Pico

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'Niccolò da Lonigo', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/niccolo-da-lonigo\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/niccolo-da-lonigo_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 31 December 2022; Claudia Corfiati, 'Strozzi, Tito Vespasiano', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ricerca/Strozzi,-Tito-Vespasiano/Dizionario\\_Biografico/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ricerca/Strozzi,-Tito-Vespasiano/Dizionario_Biografico/), 31 December 2022.

<sup>3</sup> For Pico's exchanges with Ficino, Politian and Aldo in this period, see Monika Frazer-Imregh, 'Chapter 10: What Is the Purpose of Human Life? Immediate Experience of God in Pico's Works', in *The Immediacy of Mystical Experience in the European Tradition*, ed. by Miklós Vassányi and others, Sophia Studies in Cross-cultural Philosophy of Traditions and Cultures, 18 (Cham: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, 2017), pp. 123-41 (pp. 124-24).

<sup>4</sup> On Elia in general, see Giovanni Licata, 'Delmedigo, Elijah', *Encyclopedia of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. by Marco Sgarbi, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02848-4\\_40-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02848-4_40-2), 31 December 2022, and Michael Engel, 'Elijah Delmedigo', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2019 Edition)*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/delmedigo/>, 31 December 2022; on his relationship with Pico, see Giovanna Murano, 'Opere di Elia del Medigo nella biblioteca di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola', *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Vaticanae*, 25 (2019), pp. 333-70, Giovanna Murano, 'Un "codice d'autore" di Elia del Medigo appartenuto a Pico della Mirandola: osservazioni sul ms. Paris, BnF, lat. 6508', in *La lama del sapiente: saggi sulla filosofia di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, ed. by Giovanni Licata and Pasquale Terracciano, Clavis, 13 (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2022), pp. 141-77, and Barry Cyril Novak, 'Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Jochanan Alemanno', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 45 (1982), pp. 125-47 (p. 128).

<sup>5</sup> Domenico Musti, 'Adramitteno, Manuel', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/manuel-adramitteno\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/manuel-adramitteno_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 31 December 2022.

<sup>6</sup> On Pico's Hebrew studies, see Novak, pp. 128-9. On Flavius Mithridates, Novak, p. 129.

<sup>7</sup> For Barbaro, see Emilio Bigi, 'Barbaro, Ermolao (Almorò)', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ermolao-barbaro\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ermolao-barbaro_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 1 January 2023. For Pico's reply, commonly entitled *De genere dicendi*

spent some time in Perugia and Fratta, in the company of Elijah, to study Averroes, and continued learning Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic with Flavius Mithridates.<sup>8</sup> The latter also translated Medieval Hebrew commentaries and Cabbalah texts for him.<sup>9</sup>

Pico was now ready to propose for public debate a synthesis demonstrating the convergence in Christianity of all philosophical and religious doctrines of both the West and the East. He published his *Conclusiones nongentae publice disputandae* on 7 December 1486.<sup>10</sup> Pope Innocent VIII cancelled the public discussion foreseen for January 1487, and established a commission to examine the orthodoxy of Pico's work. When the commission concluded that thirteen conclusions were heretical, Pico published an *Apologia*,<sup>11</sup> which was interpreted as a provocation by the Pope. An inquisitorial process ensued, and all of the work was condemned as heretical. In fear for his life, Pico fled to France in 1488, was arrested but could return to Florence thanks to the intervention of King Charles VIII and Lorenzo de' Medici. He spent the years 1488-93 in Florence until the new Pope, Alexander VI Borgia, issued a bull of absolution. Pico continued to deepen his knowledge of Hebrew and the Bible with the Jewish humanist and Cabbalist philosopher Yochanan Alemanno (c. 1435-1503).<sup>12</sup> In 1489 he translated the Book of Job into Latin and published *Heptaplus*, a commentary on Genesis.<sup>13</sup>

Savonarola was permitted to return to Florence in 1490. His relationship to Pico grew closer, and the pressure on the latter to join the Dominican Order increased. Another close friend, Politian, is the dedicatee of the treatise *De ente et uno*, finished in 1490 (see below p. #00). It

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*philosophorum* (On the Languages of Philosophers), to Barbaro, who had criticised scholastic philosophers as being rude and dull, and the controversy, see e.g. Leitgeb, and Quirinus Breen, 'Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola on the Conflict of Philosophy and Rhetoric', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 13, 3 (1952), pp. 384-412.

<sup>8</sup> For Pico's studies at Perugia and La Fratta, see Novak, p. 129.

<sup>9</sup> For Mithridates' translations, see Giovanna Murano, 'La collezione arabo-ebraica di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola', *Materia iudaica*, 25 (2020), pp. 291-301 (p. 291 note 2).

<sup>10</sup> Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones* [...] (Romae: Silber, 7 December 1486), ISTC ip00639200 and GW M33295; see e.g. Vatican City, BAV, Barb. BBB. III. 11, <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/Stamp.Barb.BBB.III.11>, 2 January 2023. The introductory *Oratio* is commonly known as *De dignitate hominis*, see e.g. Bacchelli and Copenhaver.

<sup>11</sup> Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia* [...] ([Neapoli: Francesco del Tупpo], after 31 May 1487), ISTC ip00635000 and M33291; included in a re-issue of the *Conclusiones*, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones* ([Ingolstadii: Printer of Lescherius, *Rhetorica*], 1487?); ISTC ip00639300 and GW M33292; e.g. Munich, BSB, Ink P-474, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00040091-2.

<sup>12</sup> On Yochanan and in particular his connections to the Florentine Platonic Academy, see Klaus Herrmann, 'Jochanan Alemanno', *Metzler Lexikon jüdischer Philosophen*, ed. by Otfried Fraisse and Andreas B. Kilcher, <https://www.spektrum.de/lexikon/juedische-philosophen/jochanan-alemanno/103>, 3 January 2023 as well as Novak.

<sup>13</sup> Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Heptaplus* [...], ed. by Roberto Salviati (Florentiae: Bartolommeo di Libri, not after 24 Nov. 1489)], ISTC ip00641000 and GW M33319; for the contents, see Leitgeb and Novak, pp. 133-40. Pico, who lived at the Badia Fiesolana in 1490-91, had already spent some time there and enjoyed the well-endowed library of the monastery as well as the mentorship of Roberto Salviati, see Angela Dressen, 'Peripatetici pariter et Platonici: Poliziano and Pico della Mirandola and the Library of the Badia Fiesolana', in *The Artist as Reader: On Education and Non-Education of Early Modern Artists*, ed. by Heiko Damm and others, *Intersections*, 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 367-85 (pp. 376-77).

is Politian and Pico that Lorenzo de' Medici sent out to Bologna, Ferrara, Padua and Venice to acquire books and head-hunt teachers for the Florentine *Studium* in 1491.<sup>14</sup> Pico finally joined the Dominican Order in the turbulent autumn of 1494, which also saw the French invasion of the Italian peninsula and the expulsion of the Medici on 9 November.<sup>15</sup> Pico died on 19 November 1494, probably poisoned by his secretary Cristoforo da Casalmaggiore).<sup>16</sup>

### The library

Pico is known to have started acquiring books in his adolescence.<sup>17</sup> At his death, his library, which he never catalogued, contained 1132 titles, both manuscripts and prints. In his testament of 1493,<sup>18</sup> he bequeathed to his brother, Count Antonio Maria, his books that were to be sold within two years to regular clerics at a price of, or more than, 500 ducats.<sup>19</sup> After Pico's death the books were taken in chests to the Dominican convent of S. Marco of Florence. At that point, an inventory (or rather a shortlist) was drafted. The original has so far not been found. There is an early sixteenth-century copy conserved on fols 263<sup>r</sup>-84<sup>r</sup> of a manuscript that belonged to the Roman humanist, Greek scholar and member of the Roman Academy, Angelo

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<sup>14</sup> For Politian's famous account of this intensive trip, see Alessandro Daneloni, *Per l'edizione critica delle note di viaggio del Poliziano*, Progetto Poliziano: L'Opera, 3 (Messina: CISU, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> For the context and consequences of the events of 9 November 1494, see *Le collezioni mediche nel 1495: deliberazioni degli ufficiali dei ribelli*, ed. by Outi Merisalo (Firenze: Associazione 'Amici del Bargello', 1999).

<sup>16</sup> A recent chemical analysis has revealed arsenic in Pico's bones, see Gianni Gallelo, Elisabetta Cilli, Fulvio Bartoli, Massimo Andretta, Lucio Calcagnile, Agustin Pastori, Miguel de la Guardia, Patrizia Serventi, Alberto Marino, Stefano Benazzi and Giorgio Gruppioni, 'Poisoning Histories in the Italian Renaissance: the Case of Pico Della Mirandola and Angelo Poliziano', *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine*, 56 (2018), pp. 83-89. For Girolamo Benivieni, who was buried in the same tomb in 1542, see Giacomo Mariani, 'Benivieni, Girolamo', in *Encyclopedia of Renaissance Philosophy*, doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02848-4\_713-1, 31 December 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Pico's nephew, The library in the castle of Mirandola was decorated by the Ferrarese painter Cosimo Tura in 1466-67, see Kristen Lippincott, 'Tura, Cosimo', *Grove Art Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T086559>, 5 January 2023. On Pico's exchanges about books in particular with Ficino and Politian, see Frazer-Imregh, p. 124, with extensive quotations from his correspondence. Pico's nephew, Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1470-1533), considered Pico's library to have been essential for his uncle's research, see 'Vita Ioannis Pici', in *Opera* [...], ed. by Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (Venetiis: Bernardinus Venetus, de Vitalibus, 1498), ISTC ip00634000, GW M33286, fol. <Avi<sup>v</sup>>.

<sup>18</sup> Carlo Milanese, 'Testamento olografo e codicillo di Giovanni Pico dei conti della Mirandola', *Giornale storico degli archivi toscani*, 2 (1857), pp. 85-100 (pp. 88-93); the codicil, dated 16 November 1494, edited in Milanese, pp. 93-94.

<sup>19</sup> Milanese, p. 88.

Colocci (1467-1549), Bishop of Nocera,<sup>20</sup> now Vatican City, BAV, Vat. Lat. 3436.<sup>21</sup> There is another sixteenth-century copy of the Vatican inventory in Milan, VBA, J 110 inf. The volumes are registered in no recognizable order, with shelfmarks consisting of *C(apsa)* (chest) and a number.<sup>22</sup>

Count Antonio Maria did not find a buyer, let alone a community of regular clerics wishing to acquire his brother's books, in two years. It was only in 1498 that the Venetian Cardinal Domenico Grimani (1461-1523), celebrated scholar and art and book collector, who had personally known Pico, decided to incorporate the library into his own considerable collection.<sup>23</sup> For the purpose of that transaction, a new inventory was completed in S. Marco

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<sup>20</sup> For Colocci, see the anonymous contribution 'Colocci, Angelo', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/angelo-colocci\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/angelo-colocci_(Dizionario-Biografico)), 2 January 2023 and

<sup>21</sup> The Vatican inventory was published by Pearl Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1936) and resumed in *RICABIM: repertorio di inventari e cataloghi di biblioteche medievali dal secolo VI al 1520*, ed. by Donatella Frioli and others, *Biblioteche e archivi*, 19- (Impruneta and Firenze: SISMEL 2009-), 1: *Italia: Toscana*, no. 397, pp. 66-69 (pp. 67-68). The composite manuscript was partly (fols 243<sup>r</sup>-52<sup>v</sup>) written by the well-known humanist scribe, Dr. Jakob Aurelius Questenberg (c. 1460-c. 1527; for his dates, see Johannes Helmrath, 'Die Aura der Kaisermünze: Bild-Text-Studien zur Historiographie der Renaissance und zur Entstehung der Numismatik als Wissenschaft', in *Medien und Sprachen humanistischer Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. by Johannes Helmrath and others, *Transformationen der Antike*, 11 (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2009), pp. 99-138 (pp. 114-15). For the Greek scholar and scribe Questenberg, of Germanic origin, *abbreviator* in 1494 and protonotary in 1505 and a disciple of Pomponio Leto's, see Ulrich Pfisterer, *Lysippus und seine Freunde, Liebesgaben und Gedächtnis im Rom der Renaissance oder: Das erste Jahrhundert der Medaille* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2008), p. 138 note 335; Franz Joseph Worstbrock, 'Hartmann Schedels 'Liber Antiquitatum cum epitaphiis et epigrammatibus'. Zur Begründung und Erschliessung des historischen Gedächtnisses im deutschen Humanismus', in *Erkennen und Erinnern in Kunst und Literatur: Kolloquium Reissburg, 4.-7. Januar 1996*, ed. by Wolfgang Frühwald and others (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1998), pp. 215-44. The hand that wrote fols 263<sup>r</sup>-284<sup>r</sup> and the following inventory of the library of the Barbaros on fols 284<sup>v</sup>-296<sup>r</sup> resembles Questenberg's; fols 292<sup>r</sup>-96<sup>r</sup> were certainly written by him. I have the pleasure of thanking Anders Kirk Borggaard (University of Aarhus), Erasmus+ stagiaire of the Lamemoli project in Rome in 2018, for a new transcription and collation of the BAV and Milan, VBA copies.

<sup>22</sup> See the reproduction at 'Manoscritto - Vat.lat.3436', in *Digital Vatican Library*, [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.lat.3436](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3436), 2 January 2023. For the inventory, see Walter Hermann, 'Per la biblioteca di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: l'inventario anonimo nel cod. vat. lat. 3436, foll. 263r-296v', *Studi umanistici Piceni*, 24 (2004), pp. 119-28, and Giovanna Murano, 'Inspecting Inventories: Miscellanies and Composite Volumes in Pico's Library', in *Collecting, Organizing and Transmitting Knowledge: Miscellanies in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. by Sabrina Corbellini, Giovanna Murano and Giacomo Signore, *Bibliologia*, 49 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), pp. 163-76 (p. 165-66).

<sup>23</sup> For Grimani, see Gino Benzoni and Luca Bortolotti, 'Grimani, Domenico', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/domenico-grimani\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/domenico-grimani_(Dizionario-Biografico)), 2 January 2023. For Grimani's Hebrew-language volumes, see G. Tamani, 'I libri ebraici del cardinal Domenico Grimani', *Annali di Ca' Foscari*, 34, 3 (1995), pp. 5-52 and his Greek manuscripts, Henri D. Saffrey and Leendert G. Westerink, *Bibliotheca graeca*

on 13 February 1498 by Grimani's friend and assistant, the learned Venetian protonotary, Thomist scholar and later Bishop of Feltre, Antonio Pizzamano (1461/2-1512),<sup>24</sup> now Modena, ASM, Archivio Materie letterati, b. 55 (formerly Cassaforte 5, Autografi, b.1, fasc. 47).<sup>25</sup> While there are some losses compared to the 1494 inventory, about 60 volumes have been added (see literature in note #22).<sup>26</sup> The books were taken from Florence to Rome, where they remained until the beginning of the 1520s, when they were transferred to Venice with the rest of Grimani's library. According to Grimani's testament of 1523, manuscripts on parchment and Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, Aramaic, Arabic manuscripts were bequeathed on the Venetian monastery of S. Antonio di Castello, whereas the paper volumes were to go to his nephew, the learned scholar and collector Marino Grimani, Patriarch of Aquileia (c. 1488-1546), future Cardinal (1528) and Patriarch of Constantinople (1545).<sup>27</sup> Domenico Grimani had special rooms built for the library, and forbid in his testament any dispersion of his collection.<sup>28</sup> Very little is so far known of the fate of the incunables.<sup>29</sup>

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*manuscripta cardinalis Dominici Grimani (1461-1523)*, Bibliotheca Nazionale Marciana: Collana di Studi, 1 (Mariano del Friuli: Edizioni della Laguna, 2003) as well as Pade, 'Pico's Multilingual Pentateuch' in this volume, pp.# 00-00 (pp. 00-00#).

<sup>24</sup> See Ugo Pistoia, 'Pizzamano, Antonio', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-pizzamano\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-pizzamano_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), 2 January 2023.

<sup>25</sup> The Modena inventory was published by Ferdinando Calori Cesis, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola detto la Fenice degli Ingegneri: cenni biografici con documentazione ed appendice*, Memorie storiche della città e dell'antico ducato della Mirandola pubblicate per della Commissione municipale di storia patria e di arti belle della Mirandola, 11 (Mirandola: Cagarelli, 1897), and resumed in *RICABIM*, 1, no. 397, pp. 67-69 (pp. 68-69). New editions by the Lamemoli project of both are forthcoming. I have the pleasure of thanking Lucrezia Chieffallo (University of Bologna), Erasmus+ stagiaire of the project in Jyväskylä 2018, for a new transcription, and Dr. Timo Korkiakangas (University of Helsinki/University of Jyväskylä/Academy of Finland), member of the Lamemoli project in 2022, for the collation of the Modena inventory. I am also very grateful to Dr. Alberto Palladini, archivist, for excellent working conditions at the ASM on 20-21 March 2019. – For the inventories, cf. Giovanna Murano, 'Inspecting Inventories: Miscellanies and Composite Volumes in Pico's Library', in *Collecting, Organizing and Transmitting Knowledge: Miscellanies in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. by Sabrina Corbellini, Giovanna Murano and Giacomo Signore, *Bibliologia*, 49 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), pp. 163-76 (p. 165-66).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *RICABIM*, 1, no. 397, p. 68 and bibliography in note #22.

<sup>27</sup> For Grimani's 1523 testament, see Giovanni Mercati, *Codici latini Pico Grimani Pio e di altra biblioteca ignota del secolo 16 esistenti nell'Ottoboniana e i codici greci Pio di Modena: con una digressione per la storia dei codici di S. Pietro in Vaticano*, Studi e testi, 75 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1938), 27 note 1; for Marino Grimani, see Giampiero Brunelli, 'Grimani, Marino', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/marino-grimani\\_res-540ebc10-87ee-11dc-8e9d-0016357eee51\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/marino-grimani_res-540ebc10-87ee-11dc-8e9d-0016357eee51_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 2 January 2023.

<sup>28</sup> See Murano, 'Inspecting Inventories', p. 170.

<sup>29</sup> See Giovanna Murano, 'Per la biblioteca di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: ricerche sugli incunaboli', *La Bibliofilia*, 121, 1 (2019), pp. 5-46. For a recently discovered incunable now at New York, PML, ChL650 (Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, Romae: Apud Sanctum Marcum, 5 September 1475, ISTC ig00428000, GW 11432) probably having belonged to

Despite Domenico Grimani's strict testamentary dispositions, the monks of S. Antonio started very soon selling off manuscripts. In the 1560s, the French ambassador Jean Hurault de Boistaillé (m. 1572) purchased twenty Greek manuscripts.<sup>30</sup> By 1570 twenty Oriental manuscripts had ended up in the library of the Augsburg bibliophile, Johann Joachim Fugger (1516-75), who in 1581 sold his collection to the Duke of Bavaria.<sup>31</sup> Despite these illegal alienations, Giacomo Filippo Tomasini's (1596-1655) mid-seventeenth-century catalogue of the library of S. Antonio still lists 911 parchment manuscripts.<sup>32</sup> In 1687, the catastrophe struck, when during the Morean War the Venetian magistrate decided to place the gunpowder deposit next to S. Antonio di Castello, with the predictable consequence of an explosion and subsequent fire. The inaccurate information of the total destruction of the library already circulates at the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>33</sup> It was only the research of Giovanni Mercati

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Pico and luxuriously decorated by the Pico Master (see below p. #00), see John T. McQuillen, 'The Master of the Pico Pliny: In Memory of Lilian Armstrong', in *The Morgan Library and Museum*, <https://www.themorgan.org/blog/master-pico-pliny-memory-lilian-armstrong>, 4 January 2023, and see Lilian Armstrong, 'Illuminated Copies of Plutarchus, *Vitae illustrium virorum*, Venice: Nicolaus Jenson, 1478: New Attributions, New Patrons', *Et Amicorum: Essays on Renaissance Humanism and Philosophy in Honour of Jill Krayer*, ed. by Anthony Ossa-Richardson and Margaret Meserve, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 273 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018), 69-117 (pp. 74-81).

<sup>30</sup> For Jean Hurault de Boistaillé (d. 1572), French ambassador to Venice in 1561-64 as well as his younger brother, André Hurault de Maisse (1539-1607), see Isabelle de Conihaut, 'Jean et André Hurault: deux frères ambassadeurs à Venise et acquéreurs de livres du cardinal Grimani', *Italique: poésie italienne de la Renaissance*, 10 (2007), pp. 105-148, <https://journals.openedition.org/italique/80>, 2 January 2023.

<sup>31</sup> See Murano, 'Inspecting Inventories', p. 70; on J. J. Fugger's library, see Hermann Kellenbenz, 'Hans Jakob Fugger', *Lebensbilder aus dem Bayerischen Schwaben*, ed. by Götz Freiherr von Pölnitz, Veröffentlichungen der Schwäbischen Forschungsgemeinschaft bei der Kommission für Bayerische Landesgeschichte. 3- (München and elsewhere: Hueber and others, 1952-), 12 (1980), pp. 48-104 (p. 89); on the Fugger family libraries, see Paul Lehmann, *Eine Geschichte der alten Fuggerbibliotheken*, 2 vols, Veröffentlichungen der Schwäbischen Forschungsgemeinschaft: Reihe 4, 3 and 5, and Studien zur Fuggergeschichte, 12 and 15 (Tübingen: Mohr and Siebeck, 1956-60).

<sup>32</sup> Giacomo Filippo Tomasini, *Bibliothecae Venetae manuscriptae publicae (et) privatae* [...], Utini: Schirattus, 1650), pp. 1-19 and Murano, 'Inspecting Inventories', p. 170. On Tomasini, who had been consecrated Bishop of Cittanova in Istria (now Novigrad, Croatia) in 1642, see Giuseppe Trebbi, 'Tomasini, Giacomo Filippo', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giacomo-filippo-tomasini\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giacomo-filippo-tomasini_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 2 January 2023. Tomasini p. 1 quotes the inscription above the door of the library: *Dominicus cardinalis Grimani Antonii principis filius bibliothecam hanc publicae posuit commoditati* (Domenico Cardinal Grimani, son of Prince Antonio, established this library for public commodity).

<sup>33</sup> Jean Mabillon, 'Praefatio II.', in Jean Mabillon and Michel Germain, *Museum Italicum seu Collectio veterum scriptorum ex bibliothecis italicis* [...], 2 vols (Lutetiae Parisiorum: Montalant, 1687), 1, fol. cj, maintains that not a leaf of the library would have survived. Another important conveyor of the myth was Emanuele Antonio Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane* 6 vols (Venezia: Orlandelli, 1824-53), 1 (1824), pp. 188-89 and 365. Thanks to Lamemoli project member Giovanna Murano for pointing out these passages for me.

that started to change the picture,<sup>34</sup> though the myth has been circulating quite recently. Indeed, up to the present day, #100 extant manuscripts having certainly or very probably belonged to Pico's library have been identified.<sup>35</sup> They are scattered in a series of in particular European libraries, such as Vatican City, BAV, Rome, BA, Venice, BNM, Paris, BNF, Munich, BSB, Oxford, Bodl., Udine, BArc etc.

Recognising Pico's volumes is normally not easy. While his ex-libris, such as that in Oxford, Bodl., Laud Gr. 18, fol. 288<sup>v</sup> (see Fig. #1)<sup>v36</sup> and shelf-mark, consisting of the word *C(apsa)* and a number, are very rare,<sup>37</sup> Grimani's (e.g. *Liber D(ominici) Grimani Car(dina)lis S(ancti) Marci*)<sup>38</sup> is quite frequent and offers a starting point though does of course not guarantee that a volume would have originally belonged to Pico. As Pico indeed seems to have read books (whether his or others) with a pen in his hand, his annotations and paratextual signs indicate his presence, though do not guarantee his actual ownership.<sup>39</sup> In case the contents and the material of a volume correspond to an entry in either or both of the inventories, bears either Pico's or Grimani's shelf-mark or both and presents Pico's characteristic hand and paratextual signs, the manuscript is a good candidate for identification. Thanks to the research in particular of Mercati and, more recently, Lamemoli project member Murano, over one hundred volumes having belonged to Pico have so far been identified.<sup>40</sup>

#### The Latin manuscripts in Pico's library

The Latin volumes, on both parchment and paper, constitute the absolute majority of Pico's manuscripts.<sup>41</sup> There are very few luxury exemplars among the surviving ones. One of them is a sumptuous manuscript of Pliny, Venice, BNM, lat. VI 245 (= 2976), which has Pico's arms on fol. 3, and decoration attributed to the Pico Master.<sup>42</sup> The colophon on fol. 458<sup>v</sup> (Fig. #2) states

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<sup>34</sup> Mercati (see note #26).

<sup>35</sup> Thanks to Giovanna Murano for discussing the estimate.

<sup>36</sup> For more information, cf. Pade, 'Pico's Multilingual Pentateuch', p. #00 in this volume.

<sup>37</sup> E.g. Berlin, SBB-PK, Ham. 438: *De ente et uno* with other texts, presents the shelf-mark *C. 14*, with the note *d(omi)no Ludouico Pictorio*, i.e. Ludovico Pittorio or Luigi Bigi, religious poet, 1454-1520?, for whom see Giancarlo Andenna, 'Pittorio, Ludovico', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ludovico-pittorio\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ludovico-pittorio_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 3 January 2023.

<sup>38</sup> E. g. Venice, BNM, lat. X 108 (= 2555).

<sup>39</sup> Pico copiously annotated e.g. the volume Bologna, BAg, A 943 (see fols 119<sup>v</sup>-20<sup>v</sup>, among others), which belonged to the Dominican convent of Bologna; for a material description and contents of this volume, see *Bibliotheca Manuscripta Henrici de Gandavo* [...], ed. by Raymond Macken, 2 vols, *Opera omnia Henrici de Gandavo*, 1-2: Ancient and medieval philosophy, 2 (Leuven: Universitaire Pers and Leiden: Brill, 1979-), 1 (1979), cat. 19, pp. 69-73.

<sup>40</sup> Thanks to Giovanna Murano for this comprehensive estimate.

<sup>41</sup> The two inventories present altogether c. 900 Latin-language volumes.

<sup>42</sup> I have the pleasure of thanking Dr. Elisabetta Lugato for letting me consult the original in March 2018. For a concise description of the manuscript, 'Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, lat. 245 (2976)', in *Nuova biblioteca manoscritta*, <https://www.nuovabibliotecamanoscritta.it/Generale/ricerca/AnteprimaManoscritto.html?codiceMan=65396&tipoRicerca=S&urlSearch=area1%3D245+%282976%29&codice=&codiceD>



Hoc opus scripsit Nicolaus de Mascharinis de Ferraria ad instantiam  
M(agnifi)ci Comitio Ioannis de la Mirandola. Anno incarnationis domini n(ost)ri  
Iesu (Christ)i. M.º CCCC.ºLXXXI.º die. xvii. Augusti (This work was written by Niccolò  
Mascarini of Ferrara on the order of the magnificent Count Giovanni della Mirandola in  
the year of incarnation of our Lord 1481 on the seventeenth day of August).

Niccolò Mascarini, or Mascarini, of Ferrara (*fl.* 1460-81) writes an accomplished vertical antiqua typical of the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>43</sup> Though the volume figures in neither of the inventories, it did reach S. Antonio, as Tomasini describes it in his 1650

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[igital](#), 4 January 2023, with bibliography; on the miniatures, see Inge Jackson Reist, 'Divine Love and Veronese's Frescoes at the Villa Barbaro', *The Art Bulletin*, 67, 4 (1985), pp. 614-35, Lilian Armstrong, 'Il Maestro di Pico: un miniatore veneziano del tardo Quattrocento', *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte*, 17 (1990), pp. 7-39 and 215-53 (no. 65, p. 35) and Sarah Blake McHam, 'Chapter 4, Erudition on Display: The "Scientific" Illustrations in Pico della Mirandola's Manuscript of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*', *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History, 1200–1550*, ed. by Jean A. Givens and others, AVISTA Studies in the History of Medieval Technology, Science and Art, 5 (Ashgate: London, 2006 and Routledge: London and New York, 2016), pp. 83-114. On the work of the Pico Master (*fl.* 1469-1505), who illuminated both manuscripts and incunables, see e.g. Lilian Armstrong, *Studies of Renaissance Miniaturists in Venice* (London: Pindar Press, 2003), pp. 233-338, Beatrice Bentivoglio-Ravasio, 'Il Maestro del Plinio di Pico: un artista tra codici e incunaboli', *Alumina: Pagine miniate*, 4, 12 (2006), pp. 24-31, Višnja Bralić, 'The Cult of Saint Euphemia, the Patron Saint of Rovinj, and the Venetian Politics of Co-creating Local Identities in Istrian Communities in the 15th Century', *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti*, 43 (2019), pp. 9-22, <https://doi.org/10.31664/ripu.2019.43.01>, 5 January 2023, Nataša Golob, 'Brevir škofa Žige pl. Lamberga in Bartolomeo del Tintore, alias Picov mojster' [=Personal Breviary of Sigismund of Lamberg and Bartolomeo del Tintore alias The Pico Master], *Zbornik za umetnostno zgodovino*, 51 (2015), pp. 21-53, Nataša Golob, 'Bishop Sigismund of Lamberg and His Books', p. #4 note #18 in this volume as well as Lilian Armstrong, 'Illuminated Copies of Plutarchus', pp. 74-81. On stylistic grounds, some scholars have proposed to identify the Pico Master with the Bolognese illuminator Bartolomeo del Tintore (*fl.* 1451-95, see Vincenza Scassellati Sforzolini Riccardi, 'Bartolomeo di Giovanni, detto Bartolomeo del Tintore', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bartolomeo-di-giovanni-detto-bartolomeo-del-tintore\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bartolomeo-di-giovanni-detto-bartolomeo-del-tintore_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/), 5 January 2023). I thank Nataša Golob for discussing this attribution with me. – In the Modena inventory, p. 10<sup>rb</sup>, there is a *lib(er) pul[cherri]m[us][?]*. It is, however, hardly plausible that Pizzamano and his assistants would not have recognised Pliny.

<sup>43</sup> On the vertical antiqua and specific cursives developed in northern Italy from the middle of the Quattrocento onwards, see Teresa De Robertis, 'Chapter 32, Humanistic Script: Italy', in *The Oxford Handbook of Palaeography*, ed. by Frank T. Coulson and Robert G. Babcock, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 522-52 (pp 538ff.). On Mascarini's ruling pattern, see Albert Derolez, *Archaeology of the Manuscript Book of the Italian Renaissance*, Conferenze, 32 (Roma: Unione internazionale degli istituti di archeologia storia e storia dell'arte in Roma, 2018), p. 154.

inventory.<sup>44</sup> Its whereabouts at the moment of the fire are unknown. By 1750 the volume had been acquired by the Venetian scholar, author of operatic libretti, journalist, book-seller and Imperial poet Apostolo Zeno (1668-1750),<sup>45</sup> who bequeathed his extensive library to the Collegio di SS. Rosario of the Observant Dominicans at Le Zattere, Venice. Most of the volumes of this the Collegio were incorporated into the BNM in 1823-27.<sup>46</sup> Before that, the French had taken the volume to Paris in 1797, as shown by the red stamp of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* at the beginning of Book 1; it was brought back to Venice in 1816.<sup>47</sup>

#### Palaeography and codicology

Pico's characteristic humanistic cursive may be found in all variants from calligraphical to extremely cursive in the Latin-language manuscripts. Pico's ex-libris in Oxford, Bodl., Laud Gr. 18 (fol. 288<sup>v</sup>) presents a very calligraphical, upright, in some words even slightly left-inclined variant (see Fig. #1), with the characteristic broad two-stroke *r*, a cursive long *s* descending below the line, a Greek-type *M* and one uncial *E* at the beginning of the word. A good case with less formal variants is Venice, BNM, lat. V 60 (= 2387), fol. 240<sup>v</sup> (see Fig. #3), with the list of contents. While the beginning of the list presents several lines of an easily legible right-inclined cursive, with the broad two-stroke *r* (also present in the ex-libris, Fig. #1), cursive long *s* in all positions, sometimes alternating at the end of the word with a rounded *s* and an occasional majuscule *C* in the middle of the word, as well as loops in *g*, *J* and, occasionally, in *d*, the lower section of the list is increasingly cursive.

Another interesting case is Florence, BNCF, C. S. E. I. 2562, containing Marsilio Ficino's Latin translations of Plotinus (204/5-70), *Enneads*<sup>48</sup> and Porphyry's Life of Plotinus, to be

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<sup>44</sup> Tomasini, p. 15: *Pluteus XIV. Plinij Historia Naturalis, elegantissimè scripta cum miniaturis. bonæ notæ liber f.m.* (Book case XIV. Pliny's Natural History, most elegantly written with miniatures. A book of high quality. In-folio, parchment).

<sup>45</sup> The BNM ticket on the front pastedown states the provenance. Also see Paul Oskar Kristeller, 'Platonism', in Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters*, 4 vols, Studi di storia e letteratura, 54, 166, 178 and 193 (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1956-96), 3 (1993), p. 297. On Zeno, see Marco Bizzarini, 'Zeno, Apostolo', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/apostolo-zeno\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/apostolo-zeno_(Dizionario-Biografico)), 4 January 2023.

<sup>46</sup> For the fate of Zeno's library, see Bizzarini, Elisabetta Sciarra, 'Possessore: Apostolo Zeno', and Orsola Braides, 'Possessore: Collegio del Santissimo Rosario <Venezia>', in *Archivio dei possessori*, <https://archiviopossessori.it/archivio/66-collegio-del-santissimo-rosario>, 4 January 2023.

<sup>47</sup> See Giuseppe Valentini, *Bibliotheca manuscripta ad S. Marcum Venetiarum [...]*, 6 vols (Venetiis: Typographia commercii, 1868-1873), 5 (1872), p. 58.

<sup>48</sup> For this manuscript, see Sebastiano Gentile, '44. La traduzione ficiniana di Plotino con note di Giovanni Pico', in *Pico, Poliziano e l'Umanesimo di fine Quattrocento: Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana 4 novembre - 31 dicembre 1994*, ed. by Paolo Viti, Studi picchiani, 2 (Firenze: Olschki, 1994), pp. 131-33. The dedication copy, also containing Ficino's preface to Lorenzo and his commentary on the *Enneads*, is the sumptuous Florence, BML, Plut. 82. 10, datable to 1490, see Stefano Pagliaroli, '2.11 Plotino, "Enneadi": Traduzione latina e commento di Marsilio Ficino nel manoscritto di dedica per Lorenzo de' Medici' in *Sandro Botticelli, pittore della "Divina Commedia" (Roma, Scuderie Papali al Quirinale, 20 settembre-3 dicembre 2000)*, ed. by Sebastiano Gentile (Milano: Skira and Scuderie Papali al Quirinale, 2000), p. 81. For Plotinus and the *Enneads*, see Lloyd Gerson, 'Plotinus', in *The*

dedicated to Lorenzo il Magnifico.<sup>49</sup> Ficino himself was to date the completed translation to 16 January 1486.<sup>50</sup> According to Ficino, making a translation and a commentary of the *Enneads* would already have been an idea of Cosimo the Elder's, and Pico would have strongly encouraged Ficino to finish the project.<sup>51</sup> The manuscript is indeed the only witness of an early version of Ficino's translation, lacking the preface addressed to Lorenzo and, above all, the commentary. Pico's hand is almost constantly present in the margins and in some titles (see Fig. #4). Consequently, the volume sheds light on the very core of his Florentine environment in the middle of the 1480s.

Description of Florence, BNCF, C. S. E. I. 2562

Paper. Meas. 329 x 223 (206 x 111) mm, 32 lines, interlinear space 6 mm, ruling in ink, above top line, double lateral margins. I (paper)+ I (parchment)+ 540 (foliation in modern pencil) + I' (paper). Quires I-V<sup>10</sup> VI<sup>8</sup> VII-XXXVIII<sup>10</sup> XXXIX<sup>8</sup>. The watermark, a cardinal's hat, resembles most Briquet 3387 (Venice 1464). Hands: h1, textual and rubricating hand (Luca Fabiani); h2, marginal hand, completing some titles (Pico); h3, early sixteenth-century, fols II, 1<sup>v</sup> and 537<sup>r</sup>: *Hic Liber est monasterij Abbatiae Florentine. S(ignatus)*. (This book is of the Badia Fiorentina, with shelf-mark); in addition, on fol. II the shelf-mark is given in a paler ink as 101; h4, eighteenth century, fol. 1<sup>v</sup>: *Plotini Opera, et Vita. // Inter codices designatur num(ero) 33* (Plotinus' works, and Life. Among the manuscripts it has the number 33).<sup>52</sup>

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*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2018 Edition)*, ed. by Edward Nouri Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/plotinus/>, 8 January 2023; for Porphyry, who edited the *Enneads*, see Eyjólfur Emilsson, 'Porphyry', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2022 Edition)*, ed. by Edward Nouri Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2022/entries/porphyry/>, 8 January 2023; for Ficino's translation and his *Life of Porphyry*, see Cesare Vasoli, 'Ficino, Marsilio', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ricerca/Marsilio-Ficino/Dizionario\\_Biografico/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ricerca/Marsilio-Ficino/Dizionario_Biografico/), 8 January 2023.

<sup>49</sup> BNCF, C.S. E. I. 2562, there is a note on the translation of Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* on fol. 1<sup>v</sup> (in Pico's hand): *Plotini vita Scripta a Porphyrio Translata // a Marsilio ficino florentino Platonico [1484 struck]* (Plotinus' *Life* written by Porphyry, translated by Marsilio Ficino the Florentine Platonician). fol. 24<sup>r</sup> (in Pico's hand): *Plotini liber Prim(us) Q(u)id* (rubricating hand: [*animal Quid homo : a*]) (in Pico's hand) *Marsilio // ficino florentino translatus 1484* (Plotinus' *Book One What animal what man* translated by Marsilio Ficino the Florentine in 1484).

<sup>50</sup> Vasoli.

<sup>51</sup> Vasoli, Pagliaroli and Gentile, 'La traduzione ficiniana', p. 132.

<sup>52</sup> In the early sixteenth-century catalogue (now Florence, BML, C. S. 15, fols 2<sup>r</sup>-67<sup>r</sup>) of the manuscripts of the Badia Fiorentina, it is registered as *Plotini opera in papyro in volumine magno [corio] in parte corio rubeo s(ignatus) 101* (Plotinus' works on paper in a large volume (bound) in leather, in part red leather, shelf-mark 101), see Rudolf Blum, *La biblioteca della Badia Fiorentina e i codici di Antonio Corbinelli*, Studi e testi, 151 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1951), p. 137. Montfaucon made a summary catalogue of the manuscripts in 1700, see Bernard de Montfaucon, *Diarium italicum [...]* (Parisii: Anisson, 1702), pp. 362-75, reprinted in his *Bibliotheca bibliothecarum manuscriptorum nova*, 2 vols (Parisii: Briasson, 1739). Montfaucon's catalogue was the basis for the eighteenth-century catalogue transmitted by *Index Manuscriptorum tum Graecorum tum Latinorum qui habentur in bibliotheca Abbatiae Florentinae*, BML, C. S. 15, fols 68<sup>r</sup>-84<sup>r</sup>.

Modern binding, half-leather on wooden plates. Contents: fols 1<sup>v</sup>-18<sup>v</sup>, Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, tr. by Marsilio Ficino; fols 24<sup>r</sup>-537<sup>r</sup>, Plotinus, *Enneads*, tr. by Ficino.T

The volume has large margins with ample room for annotations. There is very little decoration: rubrics are not always present, reserved initials have not been executed, and there are occasionally some paragraph signs in red. The text and the regular rubrics were written by Luca Fabiani, a Florentine notary regularly working for Ficino in the 1480s and 1490s. Fabiani writes a very accomplished cursive preserved in c. twenty manuscripts and documents.<sup>53</sup> Pico is present in all of the volume with his cursive of different levels of execution: he adds the titles on e.g. fols 1<sup>v</sup> and f. 24<sup>v</sup> (see Fig. #4), numerous annotations and paratextual marks signalling his interest, in particular on fols 156<sup>r</sup>-164<sup>v</sup>, which contains the *Liber Quintus de Amore enneade tertie* (fifth Book of the third *Ennead* on love).<sup>54</sup> On fols 1<sup>v</sup> and 24<sup>v</sup> the Greek-type tall *T* as well as the Greek-type *M* (see p. #00) should also be noted.

The manuscript does not figure in either of Pico's inventories. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, it belonged to the library of the Badia Fiorentina (see p.#11 and note 52). The volume entered the Bibliotheca Magliabechiana on the occasion of the Napoleonic suppression of monasteries from 1808 onwards.<sup>55</sup>

## Conclusions

Pico's library, which he never catalogued himself, illustrate the opportunities of an exceptional intellectual with means to acquire all the works that he needed for his ambitious projects. His books were lucky enough to end up in the competent hands of Cardinal Domenico Grimani, who incorporated them into his own extensive library and bequeathed them, with strict conditions aiming at preventing dispersion, to the monastery of S. Antonio di Castello in Venice and placed them in special rooms built for the library, to be consulted by scholars. It was no doubt the financial importance of the Grimani collection that made the monks of S. Antonio to start selling volumes within a few decades of Grimani's death in 1523, an infraction that proved beneficial, when a fire caused by the explosion of the Venetian gunpowder deposit wrought havoc in the buildings of the monastery in 1687. The myth of the complete destruction of the library persisted until the late twentieth century despite information to the contrary slowly emerging from the first half of the 1900s. The surviving manuscripts, mainly scattered all over Europe, bear witness to Pico's extensive interests and his relentless acquisition of new volumes, whether bought or copied at his orders, and always copiously annotated by him. The well tried-out book historical method, taking into consideration not only the texts transmitted but also all of the material aspects and the historical context of the

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<sup>53</sup> See Albinia C. de la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', in *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento 1440-1525: un primo censimento*, 2 vols, Inventari e cataloghi toscani, 18-19 (Giunta regionale Toscana and La Nuova Italia, 1985), pp. 393-600 (pp. 465 and no. 42, 511-12).

<sup>54</sup> For Pico's probable use of this section, see Gentile, 'La traduzione ficiniana', p. 132-33.

<sup>55</sup> See 'Conventi soppressi', *Biblioteca nazionale centrale di Firenze*, <https://www.bncf.firenze.sbn.it/risorse/conventi-soppressi/>, 8 January 2023, and 'Le Soppressioni conventuali', *Biblioteca nazionale centrale di Firenze*, <https://www.bncf.firenze.sbn.it/biblioteca/origine-e-sviluppo-della-biblioteca-magliabechiana/>, 8 January 2023.

manuscript, provides an in-depth insight into the concrete development of the interests and aspirations of this individual, cut off before his prime.