

AESOPICA IN CODEX PAL. LAT. 1378

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Codex Vat. Pal. Lat. 1378, saec. XV, is made up of two parts.¹ The first of these, extending from folio 1^r to folio 40^r, is entitled (folio 1^r): *Ad Excelsum (sic) et Invictissimum Principem D. D. Fridericum Bavariae Ducem ac Palatinum Reni Petri Antonii Finariensis Liber Incipit*. This is a moral treatise on good and bad which takes the form of a dialogue between Henricus and Iodacus. In the course of the work great numbers of classical writers, historical figures of antiquity, mythological figures and gods are mentioned. These include, among others, Plato, Aristotle, Homer, Demosthenes, Vergil, Cicero, Cato, Persius, Juvenal, Alexander, Pompey, Caesar, Brutus, Sertorius, Nero, Socrates, Themistocles, and Pyrrhus. This section of the manuscript is written in a beautiful humanistic hand which is dated (folio 40^r) 1464.

The second part of the codex (folios 41^r–69^v), copied in a cruder humanistic hand of about the middle of the fifteenth century, contains a series of eight letters by a certain Franco de Amelia addressed in most cases to a person designated Frater Artemisius. This is true of Letters 1 (folios 41^r–42^r), 2 (folios 49^r–50^v), 3 (folios 50^v–51^r), 5 (folios 62^r–62^v), 7 (folio 67^r), and 8 (folios 68^v–69^r). Letter 4 (folios 53^r–54^v) has the salutation *Franco de Amelia coniunctissimo fratri Francisco domino Thome de Asculo salutem*; letter 6 (folios 64^v–65^r) has the salutation *Domino Merlino de Scongeminio Franco salutem*. I have been unable to identify either Franco himself or any of the persons to whom letters are directed. Their names are not included in the directory of Italian humanists by Mario Emilio Cosenza.²

The first letter serves as an introduction to an oration by Franco which has the title (folio 48^v) *Oratio Franconis de Amelia Pro Fratre Jacobo de*

¹Information about codex Vat. Pal. Lat. 1378 included in this paper is based on a microfilm copy of the manuscript made available to me by the generosity of The Knights of Columbus Vatican Film Library at Saint Louis University.

²Mario Emilio Cosenza, *Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary of the Italian Humanists and of the World of Classical Scholarship in Italy, 1300—1800*, 5 volumes (Boston 1962).

Montebradone Ordinis Observantiae (folios 42^r–48^v). Letter 8 has some quotations from St. Augustine incorporated into it followed by the statement: *Attende etiam fabellam singularem pro his qui timore compulsi promittunt et obligant* (folio 69^r). This in turn is followed by the text of Fable 31 of Walter of England, *De Cervo et Ove*.³ The intervening six letters contain or have appended to them new fables which, though ascribed to Aesop, have presumably been composed by Franco. Some of these are adaptations of well known Aesopic fables; others are apparently original fables in the style of Aesop. They are used by Franco for the purpose of illustrating and emphasizing the precepts being developed by him. In some cases the fables are incorporated into the letters; in other instances they are appended at the end. Letter 2 is an example of one which includes the fable within its text. Letter 4 is followed by a long essay (folios 54^r–61^v) entitled *De Vana Confidentia Amicorum* in which a great many historical examples of so-called friends are presented. Within this essay is included, for purposes of illustration, the fable of *The Lark and her Young* (folios 58^r–59^r). Letter 5 has two fables appended at the end of its text. The remaining three letters (3, 6, 7) have one fable each attached to them, providing a total of seven fables in addition to the fable by Walter of England found in the last letter. The titles of these fables are: (1) *De Gallo Superbo et Grifone* (folios 49^r–50^v); (2) *De Lupo et Vulpe Victum Quaeritantibus* (folios 51^r–53^r); (3) *De Cassita et Pullis* (folios 58^r–59^r); (4) *De Vulpe et Mulo* (folios 63^r–63^v); (5) *De Vulpe, Mulo, et Lupo* (folios 63^v–64^r); (6) *De Patre Sene et Filio Adolescente* (folios 65^r–66^v); and (7) *De Philomena Ave et Rana et Corvo* (folios 67^r–68^r). Since these fables, though composed at a late date, constitute a worthwhile addition to the *Aesopica* on record, their texts are included in full in the Appendix attached at the end of this paper.

Fable 3 by Franco is a good example of the adaptation of a well known fable—Babrius 88 (Perry 325),⁴ *The Lark and the Farmer*. In adapting his version of Babrius 88 Franco follows closely an adaptation of the same fable by Ennius cited in Aulus Gellius, *NA* 2.29. Franco may also have been influenced by Avianus 21 which is a brief version of the same story. In the version by Franco, who uses the story as an illustration of the unreliability of “friends,” a lark who has her nest in some bushes in a wheat field realizes, as harvest time approaches, that she may soon be compelled to transfer her household to other surroundings. Therefore, as she goes out in search of food for her young, she instructs them to listen carefully for any utterances from the farmer which will indicate his intentions for harvesting his wheat.

³Leopold Hervieux, *Les Fabulistes Latins*, Tome II (Paris 1894) 331.

⁴Ben Edwin Perry, *Aesopica*, Vol. 1 (Urbana 1952) 450–51.

One afternoon, when the mother bird returned from her quest, the young excitedly urged her to start making preparations for moving since they had heard the farmer telling his sons to call in all their friends the next day to help with the harvesting. The mother lark, however, reassured her children that they need not be excited since it would still be some time before their home would be disturbed by these friends of the farmer. A few days later the lark's children again met their mother as she returned from her search for food with another account of how the farmer was planning to harvest his wheat field. This time they had heard him tell his sons to call in all the relatives of the family to help with the harvest. But again the lark urged her children to be calm, pointing out that there was no threat to their safety. A few days later on returning from her daily quest for food the lark was told by her children that during her absence they had heard the farmer tell his sons that they would themselves harvest the grain the following day. At this stage the mother lark informed her children with considerable emphasis that it was time to move. Since the farmer was planning on doing his own work instead of relying on friends and relatives, some action could be expected. In this version Franco has added suspense to the version by Babrius through the insertion of additional details. In the Babrius account the small birds report to their father that the farmer is planning on calling on friends for help, but the ensuing episode in which the farmer calls on relatives after having been disregarded by friends is absent from the account by Babrius.

In one instance Franco presents as two separate fables incidents which are combined in one fable in the version contained in Perry's *Aesopica* (693). According to this fable, taken from the Munich codex numbered 5337 (saec. XV), a fox approaches a mule grazing in a meadow and inquires, "Who are you?" "I am a beast," replies the mule. "No," says the fox, "that is not what I meant. I want to know who your father was." At this point the mule replied, "My grandfather was a horse." But still the fox was not satisfied. "This," he said, "is not what I asked. Just indicate to me the name by which you are addressed." But the mule explained that he was unaware of his name, because his father had died when he was just a young creature. His father, however, to make certain that knowledge of his name would not pass into oblivion, had had this item inscribed on his rear left hoof. Therefore, if the fox was so anxious to learn his name, he could approach the designated part of the mule's anatomy and read for himself. The fox, suspecting a trick, decided to try to persuade his old enemy, the wolf, to read the inscription on the mule's hoof. On setting out in search of the wolf, the fox soon found him in a half-famished condition, and began impressing upon him the fact that under the circumstances the mule would be his ideal source of food. The wolf was, of course, easily persuaded, and

approached the mule with the intention of reading the name. At this point the mule kicked rather vigorously, causing the eyes and the brains of the wolf to pour out onto the ground. Such is the printed version of the fable.

In the first of the two fables of Franco dealing with the same theme (Fable 4), the fox approaches the mule with the statement that he is unable to decide whether the mule is a horse or a donkey. He would appreciate it very much, therefore, if the mule would indicate who his father was, and he, the fox, would then be most happy to identify his own father. The mule replied that his grandfather, the father of his mother, had been one of the most famous horses in the King's stables. Again and again the fox protested that he had not asked about the mule's grandfather, but wanted to learn the identity of his father. On each occasion, however, the mule, pretending not to hear the fox, went on to extol the actions of his grandfather. The fox, in spite of all his efforts, was able to learn absolutely nothing about the father of the mule. The moral of the story, says Franco, is that men who are in any way involved in any shame will use all devices at their disposal to conceal this and not even the wisdom of scholars is powerful enough to bring out the facts.

The following fable by Franco (Fable 5) represents the fox simply as inquiring of the mule what his name is. The mule replies that he cannot remember his name, but it is inscribed on his right rear hoof. (Whether any significance is to be attached to the fact that reference is made to the right leg of the mule by Franco whereas the other version refers to the left leg, I do not profess to know.) The fox explains that he will bring an interpreter, and soon returns with the wolf exclaiming, "Behold, I have brought a man learned in Greek and Latin letters who will very easily indicate your name." But when the wolf attempted to read the inscription, the results were exactly the same in Franco's version as in the printed version.

It will be noted that the series of incidents lends itself to treatment in two separate fables more readily than to treatment in a single version. The reference to the fact that the mule, on being asked to identify his father, actually identified his grandfather is rather meaningless in the text of the single fable version, but is of the utmost importance in the first fable as told by Franco. It seems quite probable, therefore, that Franco is in this case following an earlier tradition than that presented in the single-fable printed version.

The same is probably true of Franco's Fable 6, which is an alternate version of Poggio's Fable of *The Father, the Son and the Donkey* (Perry 721). According to Poggio (1380-1459), a father and a son start to the market leading a donkey which they are planning to sell. The people who see them leading the donkey begin to reproach them for not riding. Hence the father places his son on the donkey's back. But before long other

travelers begin to scold the son for riding while his aged father is forced to walk. At this juncture the father changes places with the son. But just as many travelers reproach the lazy father for riding while his poor, weak son is forced to walk. In an effort to satisfy this objection both father and son mount the donkey, but this arouses even sharper criticism as bystanders rebuke both for imposing such a heavy burden on one small donkey. In complete despair the two dismount, tie together the legs of the donkey, and, after inserting a pole between the legs of the animal, start down the road carrying the donkey on their shoulders. This strange sight of course arouses uncontrollable laughter among those standing along the road. Finally, in complete disgust, the father and son walk over to the bank of a river and hurl the donkey into the water with legs still bound.

In Franco's version of the story the donkey is replaced by a horse. As in the Poggio account the father and son start down the road leading the animal. When bystanders ridiculed both for allowing the horse to walk without any burden, the father mounted the animal. But when many complained because the father was riding while the son walked, the father dismounted and placed the boy on the horse. (Presumably there is no significance to be attached to the fact that first the father and then the boy rides in the Franco version, whereas first the boy and then the father rides in the Poggio account.) Since the people along the highway become critical of the boy who rides the horse while his father walks, both father and son mount the horse, just as both mounted the donkey in the Poggio story. Again the result is the same. Many accuse the father and son of placing excessive weight on the back of the horse. Obviously the father and son could not tie the legs of the horse and carry it over their shoulders. In Franco's account the father instead of attempting any such dramatic act as this contents himself with giving the assembled public a vigorous tongue lashing for its fickle character.

It is obvious that we have in these two stories two different versions of the same fable. It has been called to my attention by Dr. Melba Buxbaum that the version of the fable in which a horse is substituted for a donkey is to be found in *El Conde Lucanor* by Don Juan Manuel (1282-1347). The question naturally arises: which of the two is the earlier and probably the source of the other? It seems probable that the horse version was the earlier and it can be reasoned that someone, perhaps Poggio, saw how much more amusing the story would be if the father and son, after being scolded for riding the animal together, would reverse the process and carry the animal. This would be impossible as long as the animal was a horse, but would be reasonably convincing if a donkey were substituted for the horse. Hence the change of characters. The version of Poggio is the more interesting of the two by reason of the final episode in which the donkey is carried by the

father and son and thrown into the river. It is hard to believe that anyone would be so prosaic as to start with this interesting narrative and destroy the most important part by inserting into the story a horse which obviously could not be carried to the river and thrown in. One of the anonymous readers of this paper questions this assumption, feeling that Franco may well have sacrificed the ending provided by Poggio to motivate the father's scolding of the fickle crowd contained in his own version. The referee may, of course, be right. The fact that Don Juan Manuel, as indicated above, however, lived almost a century before Poggio, lends additional weight to the argument that the version with the horse was earlier than the one with the donkey.

I have been unable to identify the other three Franco fables with any of the fables included in the Aesopic corpus, but it is possible, though unlikely, that Franco based one or more of them on unpublished Greek fables contained in unused manuscripts of Aesop. It is perhaps more probable that he used Latin fables by earlier Italian Humanists.

APPENDIX

Aesopic Fables of Franco de Amelia, transcribed from Codex Pal. Lat. 1378 (folios 41^r–65^v)

1. De Gallo Superbo et Grifone

Ruri Gallus cum Gallina ac pullorum grege dumosa quadam in parte crebrisque virgultis densissimis cubiculum dies et noctes arcemque in suo robore quo a raptu rapacium volucrum tutior esset sibi delegit. Sed non omnem penitus pestem devitavit. Quin plerumque vulpes in parvulos pullos ferales morsus intenderent. Ad hanc itaque propulsandam natorum perniciem in necem vulpium disposuit omne consilium ut quas non poterat superare viribus superaret ingenio. Gallus igitur anxius pro sua ac gregis suae salute arte magna structum occultumque laqueum in delendas protinus vulpes effecit. In quem paulo post cum illae gallo pararent insidias praeter unam vulpeculam quae tanti casus fuit avibus nuntia corruerunt. Qui adeo duriore vinculo tenebantur ut omni salute prorsus desperarent ac solum ultimum dei (folio 49^v) supplicium extimescerent. Hac enim audita prope strage vulpium novitate ocus aquila cum rapacibus avibus consilium iniit ubi sine ulla segnitie cuncta sunt in salutem vulpium summa ope decreta decrevitque avium regina oratores ad gallum mittere vulpes statim e vinculo solveret sicque accessit corvus primus in ordine rogicans volpes a deformi carcere liberaret. Gallus existimans se dumis virgultisque munitum nec avium offendicula eum et suum gregem posse laedere corvi dicta contempsit. Plures deinde aves missae sine effectu imperatae

voluntatis aquilae redierunt. Venit aquila et primo blande tum et aspere locuta sine cunctatione gallus arrogans totiens imperata conficeret. At ille eadem pertinacia oris et gestus aquilae verba fecit inania. Sic illa furore discedens mortem gallo minabatur iurans per summum Iovem molem tantae iniuriae et spreti imperii ad posteros non relinquere. Unde effectum est illico grifo caelo terraque potens cum illuc novissimus adventaret orator mite in principio suae orationis exorsus gallum pro amicitia commonens et obtestans si suam incolumitatem et suorum haberet in pretio ne aquilae iussa ita superbe ita dementer despiceret. Vellet potius propriae saluti consulere quam propriae indulgere voluntati. Nam cum minor (50^r) maiori non obtemperat tendit in exitium una cum suis et pares, inferiores, et proximi ipsius casum derident et vitam et culpam erroris admissi vehementissime criminantur. Ita enim esse multorum exempla significant. Inter has autem grifonis et galli lites testudo periculorum omnium curiosa intervenit inquires gallo iussionibus aquilae et grifonis obediat tum grifonis potissimae monita ne contempnat. Nam avis aerea est robusta et animal terrestre validissimum. Eadem quae responsa dedit superioribus avibus dedit et grifoni dicens postremo grifo et ceterae aves sua facta curent; non ita se inermem esse (ut) aut acerbum bellum aut quenquam viventium reformidet. In tuto iam loco suas esse fortunas docet. De hostibus quidem vulpibus nequid sibi timoris resideat brevi momento debitum supplicium se sumpturum. Sic quoque grifo spretus et contemptus a gallo exarsit in iras. Vallum omne virgultorum congeriemque spinarum quibus gallus superbus imprudens misere confidebat magna vi passim abiecit et convellit undique. Ad gallum in brevissimo angulo latitantem pervenit illumque ungulis lacerat. Quem ut parvuli pulli viderunt clamitabant interitum galli iuste suam ob superbiam et temeritatem evenisse. Vulpes vero eadem hora qua omnia (50^v) quae diximus gesta sunt elapsae horrendis suppliciis vicinae mortis liberae cum gaudio ad propria latibula sunt reversae gratias dignas agentes grifoni. Hac profecto Esopi fabella argumentum habeamus in nobis qui superbe sine viribus de se praesummunt singulos et potentiores quosque fatue despicientes vana spe innixi magno cum dedecore ac ludibrio ad excidium sui atque suorum finiunt dies suos.

2. De Lupo et Vulpe Victum Quaeritantibus

Lupus diutina vexatus aegritudine in tantam corporis tabem inbecillitatemque devenerat ut vix paulatim incedere(t) nedum veloci cursu unde se aleret ad repiendam praedam suppeditaret. Tanta macies ac exilitas erat in illo membrorum ut cadaver potius quam vivum animal videretur. Sic itaque cogitabundus agnoscens se viribus destitutum

propediem mortem expectabat miser. Tum illi acerbior erat dolor se inedia mori quae malorum omnium gravior est. Ante tamen quam ignominiose ita moriretur decrevit experiri si quid pabuli fortuna sibi afferret. Magno cum labore e strato surgens debili quodam incessu gradiebatur. Forte advenit ad ferratum [h]ostium per quod tenuis fluvijs exibat cui fons in <h>orto muris circumdato oriebatur ar(51^v)bustis variis multaque amoenitate referto ubi gallinae cum parvulis pullis, anseres in omni genere et numerosa copia erant simulque et lepores et multa minuta animalia acta venationibus. Ad quae videnda et aliquando capienda prout optabat animus <h>orti dominus cum canibus aliisque venabilis ire consueverat. Igitur lupus [h]ostium ferratum introire statuit si in loco illo clauso sicut solet saepe accidere eidem aliquid alimenti praestaretur cum iam suprema fame et vita laboraret. Enim fuit lupo facilis aditus per [h]ostium per quod minutissimis animalibus reconditis exeundi facultas nulla dabatur adeo ut stupenda et res mira cunctis gentibus illius celeberrimae regionis penitus visa sit. Lupus enim gaudens gratias referebat Jovi qui in tanta necessitate eidem tulisset opem. Famelicus ille rapit et minuta illa animalia vorat sine labore multo. Solae insidiae illi erant subsidio. Paucis deinde diebus in pristino robore corporisque nitore versus passim rapiebat et potens (52^r) et agilis cuncta faciebat quae antea in bona valitudine fecerat unquam. Interea dum ille in tanta sua fertilitate et genere pascionis laetaretur dominus ad <h>ortum venatum cum canibus venit. Lupus timens inter arbusta condensa latuit. Multis deinde vicibus inter laeta lupus existens et tristia pericula mortis evasit. Quam horis singulis pertimescens ac videns se in loco illo diutius evadere non posse omnino inde abscedere firmavit animo. Salutem aliam non prospexit nisi per ferratum [h]ostium fugam quaerere. Ad [h]ostium ivit; priorem fere capitis partem inmittere non potuit. Tristis inde discessit et pavor et tremor inerat misero quam primum dominus proficisceretur in <h>ortum a canibus lacerari. Venit dominus. Fugit lupus. Interdum se abdidit inter vepres, interdum inter concavas arborum radices, interdum inter materias quae ad soliditatem murorum ibi relictae remanserant. Quid sibi quaerat auxilii non reperit nisi multo ieiunio corpus tenue reddere et sic posse vitae (52^v) tantum consulere. Melius esse iudicans debilem extra <h>ortum in libertate mori quam pinguem et nitidum canum morsibus laniari ieiunavit. Herbas quae viscera et superfluos purgant humores sumpsit. Hac quidem disciplina vivendi brevi spatio consecutus est securitatis votum. Accessit ille ad [h]ostium et exiit. Sicut lupus in ingressu ita et in egressu fuit et eadem macies et vigor idem. Vulpes longo morbo confecta in ipso prope exitu obviam lupo fecit inquiring, “Me miseram, quanta me tenuit aegritudo. Nam tanta fuit ut paene me cruribus ipsa feram. Incessu autem ita ine[h]rs sum ne possim mihi parare vitae subsidia.” Lupus amorem in vulpem simulans illi sub

amicitiae umbra consuluit <h>ortum unde ipse egressus fuerat introiret ubi omnia quae sibi usui forent facile adessent veluti eidem contigerat. Vulpes tum consilio facilis <h>ortum sicut lupo suasit introiit. Quae lupo fecit fecit et vulpes. Quae pericula tulit ille tollit et illa. Denique consilium quod egrediendi cepit lupo et vulpes misera decepta cepit. Hac (53^r) enim facetissima fabella monemur omnes ne faciles credendo simus atque dum pauperes et indocti nobis consulunt nos sequi quae illi faciunt avertamus ne ipsi pariter in eandem imperitiam concidamus et calamitatem. Alterum quidem est qui dominorum secuntur aulam simus memores eodem quo ipsi introeunt habitu et copia eodem exitu oportet egredi.

3. <De Cassita et Pullis>

Avis parvula constat cui cassita nomen est. Nidificat in segetibus eo ferme tempore cum messis legitur. Avis illa propterea anxiosa erat quod praeter spem in segetibus in tempestivis nidum fecerat. Proinde dum ea filiis victum quaereret docet illos (58^v) ut siquid novi sentirent considerarent idque totum in suo reditu eidem referrent. Patronus interea agri ubi sua erat seges filio adolescentulo inquit, “Videsne agrum nostrum manus appetere ad metendum? Quare cras quamprimum aurora surget fac nostros amicos convenias et oves venire velint mutuasque operas nobis afferant. His dictis homo ille inde abscessit. Et cum mater redisset illi quod audierant sibi denarrant eamque obsecrant trepidantes statim festinet in tutiorem alium locum eos deferre. Mater ait illos minime debere timere. Si dominus messis spem in amicis habet ut mutuum auxilium praestent die crastino non fiet quod postulat nec expedit hodie vos hinc dimoveam. Altero die mater cibum pullis quaesitum tendit et expectati amici non veniunt. Tum pater in agro dixit filio, “Rogemus consanguineos et affines ut nobis cras auxilientur metere.” Illudmet pulli timidi aviculae dicunt. Tum mater <h>ortatur sine timore et sollicitudine curae vivant. Nulli consanguinei et affines fere sunt, inquit, ut ad laborem capiendum praesto sint. Nihil tamen extimescant monet et siquid rursus dicatur advertant. Exorto die alio avis mater ut pul(59^r)los pasceret proficiscitur. Consanguinei et affines dare operam neglexerunt. Tum demum pater inquit filio, “Dii perdant propinquos et amicos. Unum postremo restat. Cras, fili, propriis manibus messem nostram metamus oportet.” Haec ubi mater audivit, “Mora non patitur,” ait, “amplius differendi.” Paulo post cassita cum pullis abiit frumentumque a domino metitur.

4. De Vulpe et Mulo

(63^r) Vulpes suo more peragrans cominus in mulum quem nusquam antea noverat oculos iniecit. Cuius aspectus novitate cepit admirari

quidnam animal esset quod sibi incertum sexum indicabat. Ideo propius se illi dedit aitque, “Dic quaeso sodes cum tibi similem nunquam viderim nec utrum equ(u)s sis an asinus possim decernere neu dubia meus animus opinione versetur quis tuus genitor extitit. Istud quidem nosse mihi erit in pretio. Si tu autem meum patrem optas scire tibi dicere non cunctabor, equum enim esse arbitror. Si amicitiam mutuo inire volumus, inter nos aperiamus vera omnia; alia quidem via ac ratione amici esse non possumus.” Mulus vero quaesitus ab illa respondit avum suum quem patrem equae matris suae dicebat equ(u)m esse optimum et inter equos curiae Regis Francorum cuius miles illum habebat. Fore virtute primum quo tam glorioso avo atque nobili se inter cuncta animalia deputari non degenerem aiebat predicabatque simul sui clari generis varia iactabunda. Rursus et rursus vulpes poposcit de patre non de avo se certam (63^v) faceret. At mulus fingens se non audire continuo de avo equo mentionem reddebat nec de patre verbum ullum enuntiabat neque tantum dicendo potuit vulpes eniti ut responsum daret genitoris. Quid igitur quimus ex his doctrinae exemplariis excipere nisi homines quamquam turpi et sordida vita convinciantur si in illa interrogantur silent tegunt simulant operiunt et si quid sentiunt quovis tegumine quavis fallacia aliunde sibi praesidium petere student in hoc instant et perseverant et obdurescunt nec inquirendi atque dicendi adversus valet peritia sapientum?

5. De Vulpe, Mulo, et Lupo

Vulpes inedia de suo pulsata cubili eminus aspexit animal quod paratum ad praedam sibi sperabat. Illa igitur volucris pede mox illuc attigit atque spe sua decepta est. Nam et animal quod credidit pusillum comperit esse mulum in quo animali parumper oblectate vulpes novum invenit (64^r) deludendi genus et inquit illi quonam ipse nomine appellaretur et tamen interrogans iam bene noverat illum. Nam id maxime pro emergente occasione opus erat sciri profitebatur. Mulus ait se obliviosum esse parumque memoriae ac litteris studium attulisse sed hoc unico recordari testabatur quod subtus pedem dextrum posteriorem nomen suum litterarum sculptura erat expressum. Vulpes inquit illi, “Expecta parumper, obsecro, quo ipsa reperiam qui has litteras possit legere ut ex illis tuum nomen intelligam postquam me tanta eum noscendi ingens op(p)ortunitas urget.” Ad lupum se illa contulit et inquisitionis ordinem denaravit. Lupus continuo blandis excitatus sermonibus quo mulus paulo ante fuerat cum vulpe contendit. Cui mulo illa dixit, “Ecce duxi hominem in litteris Grecis et Latinis edoctum qui nomen tuum facillime indicabit.” His dictis lupus se attentum praebuit per litteras ut videret illius nomen in pede descriptum. Mulus ut vidit tantae rei paratissimum tempus

horrendum calcem in lupi fronte defixit. (64^v) Ex his itaque colligere possumus homines qui litterati perhibentur aliquando ducuntur fraudibus illitteratorum qui multo tamen usu et exercitatione humanarum rerum periti noscuntur.

6. De Patre Sene et Filio Adolescente

Ex oppido Asinelonge partium Etruriae tenus Paludes quas Chianas vulgus appellat, senex⁵ cum filio adolescentulo ad beatam Virginem de Loreto duo milia a Racenato provinciae Marchiae distantem et cum quodam suo equo pingue et nitido porrexit secumque per iter sodalitium continuum hominum eiusdem oppidi extitit illi ut tali in tempore catervatim solet contingere. Multi pari voto ac voluntate illuc eundo mirabili quadam devotione consentiant. Evenit (65^v) itaque ipsi seni molestia non vulgaris dum ille primo pater⁶ et natus cum sodalitio pergerent. Sine onere ducebant equ(u)m cum sodalitium detrahare et murmurare cepit. "Vide quid agit delirus senex. Hem secum duxit equum incassum validum robore. Cur voluit? Ad quid eum reservat postquam nec ipse nec gnatus equitant?" His auditis senex equ(u)m ascendit cuius vestigia sequebatur natus. Post paulo sodalitium deridere cepit inquiring, "Quam insanus hic est. Ipse durus senex et asper quiescit in equo; filius tener et languidus itineris patitur labores et aestus nec pater filii discrimen excogitat." Desiliit genitor ut verba intellexit murmurantis turbae et filium vicarium sibi fecit. Parum deinde confectum fuit itineris. Eadem turba insanire cepit et dicit, "Nonne sanctius esset quod pater decrepitis insideret equo et filius ambularet qui iam adultus et patiens laboris est? Quae est nam haec dementia, quae stultia patris tam indigna a filio perpeti?" Haec ipsa animo (66^r) recensebat senex ac secum acerbè cuncta examinabat cum quid de se ageret ignorabat, qualiter illis occasionem murmuris auferret. Statuit tandem ipse cum nato pariter equ(u)m ascenderent, cogitans fortasse his moribus murmurantium linguas demulcere. Ista solum cogitavit esse remedio. Deceptus quippe remansit cogitatu suo. Mox cum imperita turba vidit ambos in equo dedentes non clam ut antea fecerat sed palam alta voce clamitavit, "Homo omnium imprudens senex equ(u)m habet ita pulcrum et venalem quovis pretio et ille cum nato simul in ipso sedent et quiescunt quo illum interimant. Quae hominis stultitia est! Quae deliratio tam turpiter equ(u)m tam formosum amittere!" Tum senex ira et indignatione plenus ait ad illos: "Quid dictis malignissimi detractores omnem meam

⁵*Senes* of the manuscript has been corrected to *Senex* here and in the remaining instances in which the word appears.

⁶The manuscript has *pedes*. I have written *pater*.

vitam criminati estis, si sine ullo nostrum equ(u)m ducebam, si ego insidebam solus, si natus solus, si ambo (66^v) a vestris conviciis non abfuimus? Dii vos maledicos perdant qui (non) nisi maledicendo delectamini. Omnis vestra intentio in damnatione detractationis conteritur. Quid itaque redeundo ad mores insanos hominum ex his dictis colligendum est nisique multi avida et effrenata cupiditate calumpniandi ac aliis detrahendi misere traducuntur ut non attendant neque considerent quid loquantur etiam si falsa, etiam si inter se contraria, et dissona reperiantur? Esto; intueantur contra deum ius iurandum decorem suum contra ius omne et veritatem loqui. Tanta est mentium obscuritas et obdurata pervicacia qua omnia divina et humana prosternunt,⁷ dummodo stimulantis invidiae suae undecumque possint vires et virus consumere.”

7. De Philomena Ave et Rana et Corvo

Avis quam Latini philomenam vocant veris in tempore in virente stirpe supra limosam paludem sonoros cantus enuntiabat. Nec dies nec noctes cantandi sinebat officium. Rana quae per radices stirpis struxerat sibi commorandi sedem superbiens et vires et guttura (67^v) versavit in iram inquiens philomenae quo pacto tam audax et inconculta fuisset supra suum dominatum presumere sibi locum et ubi rana cantabat illa auderet expromere voces quae sibi maximo impedimento essent. Cum rana non per varia modulamina vocum sed per unicam tantum (h)armoniam nullo adeptam artificio sed natura duce et magistra virtutum indefesso studio ostentabat dicebatque avis ipsa artificiosis amoenisque cantibus ad se amantium corda trahere non virtutis beneficio sed arte fallendi non ope naturae quae nullo indiget adiumento et quae sola pro se sine praesidio regit humanum genus cuius cuncta quae ex illa veniunt bona et recta sunt. Cetera quaesita industria simultata probantur. Si igitur rana unico pollebat cantu aiebat se philomena praestantioris digniorisque cum eadem diuturna et sedula voce sine ulla varietate cantaret atque si non flectebat homines remorabanturque oblectamine audiendi tamen id in se erat dignum laude neminem decipere eandem esse omnibus sine fraude. Philomena autem procacitatem garulae intuens placida et lenis dicebat. Secum certare erubescibat at valde se cupere si quispiam litem (68^r) hanc solveret. Dum haec ipsa agitantur de repente illuc corvus advenit in aestus fervore ut in palude ablueret alas sitimque leniret quem mox rana vocavit in arbitrum et iudicem tantae litis. Corvus ex insperato ait se praesto facturum ut talium discordia tolleretur. Et inquit illico ranam suo cantu pollere naturali absque ullo medicamine et dolo simulandi aut artis

⁷The manuscript has *postergunt*. I have written *prosternunt*.

musicae comparato studio philomenam vero multos composita arte canendi illicitis voluptatibus saepe vertisse. Sicque inde pellendam nec cum rana habere commercium ne verum cantum ab insidioso tolleretur. Actum postea ita comperimus ut avis philomena hac indignata sententia aufugerit sedulo aquarum sordes et parvulos stirpes amaritque deinceps amoena viridaria et ingentia arbusta lucorum. Haec enim fabella cunctos admonet quisquis reprobis et indoctis quantumcunque rudissimum se cognoscat peritiam omnem damnat et usum et ut ipse est sibi pares illibrato iudicio laudat et extollit et ut audacius procaciusque detrahat doctissimis naturale commodum solum in (68^v) homine praefendum decernit. Hoc enim et grave et celebre dictum esse singulis sibi putat et tunc nec natura in ipso prospicitur neque doctrina vel usus sed tamen insulsa miseraque loquacitas.⁸

⁸The author wishes to express his gratitude to the anonymous referees for suggesting several corrections and other changes which have been incorporated into the paper.