



# **THE BOOK OF THE CIVILISED MAN**

**AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE  
*URBANUS MAGNUS* OF DANIEL OF BECCLES**

Fiona Whelan, Olivia Spenser and  
Francesca Petrizzo



# The Book of the Civilised Man

A translation of *The Book of the Civilised Man* by Daniel of Beccles brings to light the social and cultural life of medieval people in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries through a previously little-known text.

Known in Latin as *Urbanus magnus*, it is a complex and illuminating text which covers an array of topics related to social mores in the Middle Ages, including: how to be a good and moral citizen, how to dine courteously, how to maintain standards of hygiene, how to regulate your diet, and how to run your household.

Often described as one of the earliest ‘courtesy texts’, this translation will reveal a text which cannot be easily categorised in any genre but is relevant widely for anyone with an interest in medieval life. An expansive text of enormous breadth, this translation will provide scholars new insight in areas such as social hierarchy, citizenship, morality, friendship, family ties, household administration, food consumption, standards of etiquette, and much more.

**Fiona Whelan** completed her DPhil in Medieval History at the University of Oxford in 2015, and has previously studied at Trinity College Dublin and University College London. She has published widely on medieval codes of behaviour, in particular on *Urbanus magnus* by Daniel of Beccles. Her research interests include the cultivation of norms of behaviour, food and diet in the medieval period, household administration, and the manuscript culture of early courtesy literature.

**Olivia Spenser** earned her MA in Medieval History from the University of Leeds at twenty-one, and holds a BA in Classical Studies from the University of Washington. Since falling in love with Latin in high school, she has pursued that linguistic passion into the study of Medieval as well as Classical Latin texts, and also into Classical Greek poetry. She lives in Seattle and spends time each week speaking Latin with her husband, and to her cat.

**Francesca Petrizzo** completed her PhD in Medieval Studies at the Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds in 2018. She has previously studied at UCL and the University of Oxford. Her primary interests are kin and military

history, with a focus on the Normans in the Mediterranean and the Crusades. Her interest in primary sources in their original language has brought her to this project, and she has been publishing on both family history and the use of literary sources in historical enquiry.

# The Book of the Civilised Man

An English Translation of the  
*Urbanus magnus* of Daniel of Beccles

**Fiona Whelan, Olivia Spenser  
and Francesca Petrizzo**

First published 2019  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge  
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group,  
an informa business*

© 2019 Fiona Whelan, Olivia Spenser and Francesca Petrizzo

The right of Fiona Whelan, Olivia Spenser and Francesca Petrizzo to be identified as authors of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

*Trademark notice:* Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

*British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data*

Names: Whelan, Fiona E. (Fiona Elizabeth), 1986- author. | Spenser, Olivia, author. | Petrizzo, Francesca, 1990- author.

Title: The Book of the Civilised Man : An English Translation of the Urbanus Magnus of Daniel of Beccles / Fion Whelan, Olivia Spenser, Francesca Petrizzo.

Description: First edition. | London ; New York, NY : Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2019. | "A commentary accompanies the text, to support the reader in understanding its intricacies and challenges" - Introduction. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018043349 | ISBN 9781138601260 (hardback) | ISBN 9780429470226 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: England—Social life and customs—1066-1485. | England—Moral conditions. | Interpersonal relations—England—History—To 1500. | Urbanus magnus. | Daniel, of Beccles. | Latin literature, Medieval and modern—England—History and criticism. | Manners and customs in literature.

Classification: LCC DA185 .W43 2019 | DDC

390.0942/09021—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018043349>

ISBN: 978-1-138-60126-0 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-429-47022-6 (ebk)

Typeset in ITC Galliard Std  
by Cenveo® Publisher Services

# Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	viii
<i>Manuscript sigla</i>	ix
<b>1 Introduction to <i>Urbanus magnus</i></b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 <i>Text and narrative</i>	2
1.2 <i>Thematic analysis</i>	10
1.3 <i>Authorship and composition</i>	13
1.4 <i>Use, influence and scholarship</i>	16
1.5 <i>Translator's notes</i>	19
<b>2 Translation of <i>Urbanus magnus</i>: The Book of the Civilised Man</b>	<b>25</b>
2.1 <i>Section I</i>	25
2.2 <i>Section II</i>	61
2.3 <i>Section III</i>	81
2.4 <i>Section IV</i>	129
<i>Appendix A: The manuscripts of <i>Urbanus magnus</i></i>	157
<i>Appendix B: <i>Urbanus magnus</i> in MS O<sub>1</sub></i>	179
<i>Bibliography</i>	183
<i>Index</i>	186

# Acknowledgements

A translation of *Urbanus magnus*, attributed to Daniel of Beccles, has been a long time coming. The authors would like to collectively thank those scholars who have worked to shine a light on this text, create a foundation for us to build on, and without whom this translation would not have been possible: J.G. Smyly, Anne Frith, Susan Treggiari, A.G. Rigg, Frédérique Lachaud, Robert Bartlett, David Crouch and many others who have helped to introduce this text to readers. We would also like to express our gratitude to our editors at Routledge who published the first monograph on *Urbanus magnus* and agreed to support us with the follow-up English translation. On an individual level, the authors have a number of people they would like to thank.

My first introduction to *Urbanus magnus* was at University College London, under the tutelage of Hannah Williams. From that point, and with the support of David d'Avray at UCL and Roger Stalley at Trinity College Dublin, I undertook a DPhil on *Urbanus magnus* at the University of Oxford under the supervision of the wonderful Lesley Smith. I am immensely grateful to all these inspirational and supportive scholars, without whom this translation would not be possible. I am grateful to the Oxford Medieval Diet Group, and especially Christopher Woolgar, for providing additional insight into the text and providing diverse opportunities to showcase this fascinating text. I have to thank my collaborators in this project—Olivia and Francesca. Thank you so much for joining me on this translation and giving up your time to untangle what Daniel of Beccles was trying to say. On a personal level, I must thank Dr Jed Foland, who has lived with *Urbanus magnus* almost as long as I have. Finally, I want to thank my family who have always supported me in my academic endeavours and never doubted me—Brendan, Marie, David, Lorraine, Wen, Alex and Mira.

*Fiona Whelan*

First and foremost, I'd like to thank Fiona for introducing me to *Urbanus magnus*. This project would never have been possible without her leadership, and I owe her a great debt for the enjoyment its translation has given me. Likewise to Francesca, who contributed so much of her time and hard work to its completion. I'd also like to thank my husband Jonah for his loving good humour—no matter what Daniel of Beccles thought about redheads—and my parents and friends for their support. Lastly, I'm profoundly grateful to all of my Latin professors and teachers, from Dr William Flynn back to Jennifer Judge a decade before. Their combined wisdom and passion are a source of inspiration to me in all that I do.

*Olivia Spenser*

I would like to thank Fiona for her trust in taking me onto this project when I was still in the first year of my PhD, and Olivia for a stimulating and rewarding translating partnership. Dr William Flynn, Dr Iona McCleery and Dr Alan Murray of the Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds, generously made available their precious feedback and help in beating out a couple of knotty points requiring specific knowledge. Likewise, my colleagues Sunny Harrison and Charles Roe kindly provided their expertise and a second opinion in more obscure areas of the text. While he has long since gone to the great library in the sky, Charles du Fresne, sieur du Cange, was often in my grateful thoughts for his peerless, and frequently still unbeaten, work in the *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis* (Paris, 1678), and so are those who digitised it for public consumption. Finally, I would like to dedicate my work in this text to the memory of Professor Anna Battifoglia, who first taught me Latin.

*Francesca Petrizzo*

# List of abbreviations

<b>CBMLC</b>	Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues
<b>DMLBS</b>	<i>Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i>
<b>EETS</b>	Early English Text Society
<b>RSS</b>	<i>Regimen sanitatis Salernitatem</i>
<b>SPAM</b>	<i>Stans puer ad mensam</i>
<b>UM</b>	<i>Urbanus magnus</i>

# Manuscript sigla

*[Manuscripts containing full copies of Urbanus magnus]:*

- C<sub>1</sub> Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 61/155
- D Dublin, Trinity College, MS 97
- W Worcester Cathedral Library, MS F.147

*[Manuscripts containing partial copies of Urbanus magnus]:*

- C<sub>2</sub> Cambridge, St John's College, MS 79
- L<sub>1</sub> London, British Library, MS Arundel 52
- L<sub>2</sub> London, British Library, MS Cotton Titus A. XX
- L<sub>3</sub> London, British Library, MS Royal 10 A. X
- O<sub>1</sub> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 310
- O<sub>2</sub> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C.552
- O<sub>3</sub> Oxford, Trinity College, MS 18
- P<sub>1</sub> Paris, BnF, MS latin 3718
- P<sub>2</sub> Paris, BnF, MS latin 15170

The 1939 published edition of the text used the following sigla: C for Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 61/155; D for Dublin, Trinity College, MS 97; W for Worcester Cathedral, MS F.147; and T for London, British Library, MS Cotton Titus A. XX. As eight additional manuscripts have now been identified, the sigla has been amended to reflect this.



# Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

# 1 Introduction to *Urbanus magnus*

*Fiona Whelan*

The stereotypical image of medieval people as rustic, uncouth and uncivilised has long been propagated in the modern era through the media, especially in television and film depictions of the medieval period. The term ‘medieval’ is frequently employed as a synonym for what we might consider ‘backwards’ or ‘barbarous’; whereas the march of ‘progress’ allows us to look into the past from a position of superiority, judging those from the past as not only different to us but also inferior to us. *Urbanus magnus*, or *The Book of the Civilised Man*, challenges this notion. It is a text which sets out the codes of behaviour in the late-twelfth century. There are moments of delightful symmetry with today, reminding us that we are not quite as far removed from each other as we might first think. Consider that even in the twelfth century people were instructed not to put their elbows on the table.<sup>1</sup> Of course, at times the precepts contained within this text can seem rather remote to the standards of our own time, particularly in relation to the body and standards of hygiene which modern readers may raise an eyebrow at. Nevertheless, the text and this translation demonstrates that the medieval period *did* have standards of behaviour and manners, albeit standards which were often different from our own. Importantly, the unifying element is that the desire to create and codify acceptable behaviour in society is universal throughout the ages.

This volume represents the first full English translation of the text known most commonly as *Urbanus magnus* and attributed to Daniel of Beccles. It is a wide-ranging and unusual text dating from the twelfth or early thirteenth-century England, and its subject matter ranges from morality to manners and contains much more in between. Often described as a courtesy text, this text should appeal to a wide range of scholars as it covers a breadth of material relating to moral and social life in medieval England. This translation is the first stage in restoring this text to a place of prominence and to render the text more accessible to contemporary scholarship. When it comes to the name of the text, we have followed Robert Bartlett’s title translation of *Urbanus magnus* or *Liber urbani* as ‘The Book of the Civilised Man’. This was a deliberate choice as it reflects the theme which is at the core of the text—the cultivation of appropriate courtesy and civil behaviour in the elite echelons of society.

A modern translation of the text is well overdue. It first appeared as a Latin edition in 1939, but it has not been until the latter part of the twentieth century

## 2 Introduction to *Urbanus magnus*

that scholarly attention was paid to it.<sup>2</sup> In part, this was due to misrepresentations of the text through short extracts which have appeared in recent scholarship, which utilised parts of the texts relating to specific themes such as hospitality or nobility, for example.<sup>3</sup> The publication of a full translation allows the text to be appreciated as the sum of its parts. At the outset, it should be noted that the choice to publish an English-only translation, as opposed to a Latin-English one was deliberate. We have translated this text as historians, focused on the subject matter and what it can reveal about medieval social mores of the late twelfth century rather than focusing on the literary or stylistic elements of the Latin original. A commentary accompanies the text, to support the reader in understanding its intricacies and challenges.

While the aim of this study is to allow the text to speak for itself, it must be acknowledged that the text has complicated issues of use, audience, composition and authorship, and this requires some context before the reader delves into its 2,840 lines. Therefore, what follows is an attempt to aid the reader in understanding the narrative by providing a summary of the subject matter. It is our intention that this introduction and translation will provide the springboard for further scholarship, and facilitate future research into the aims and ambitions of *Urbanus magnus*. As this represents the first full-length translation of the text, we hope that it will provide impetus for more reflection on the text and, ultimately, to provide a better understanding of what Daniel of Beccles was attempting to achieve when the text was first formulated.

### 1.1 Text and narrative

As the text unfolds, it will become evident to the reader that it encompasses a wide range of subject matter, often jumping from topic to topic with little sense of order. [Table 1.1](#) illustrates the breadth of topics covered throughout the text.

As the table demonstrates, the subject matter covered is varied but broadly encompasses morals and manners, beginning with a focus on the ideal Christian moral man before expanding to discuss more practical matters such as domestic administration, table manners, marriage and family, and diet and health. However, to view the text as a smooth shift from morals to manners ignores much of the complexity of the poem and the problems associated with it. For example, themes are repeated, the intended audience shifts, and subject matter can jump from one topic to another with no apparent logical link. In order to help the reader navigate the text, this section provides a brief and broad-brush narrative of the text. Where possible, within the main body of the translation itself, subheadings are provided for sections of the text to aid the reader. Nevertheless, any reader of *Urbanus magnus* ought to expect to be surprised and sometimes confused by the shifting and often incohesive content, coupled with the frequent repetition of themes. It is important to note at the outset that the text itself has no discernible structure in terms of headings or sections within the text itself. The extant manuscripts have provided some assistance in this endeavour to structure the text. In particular, one manuscript included an

Table 1.1 Table of subject matter<sup>4</sup>

<i>UM</i>	<i>Contents</i>
1–19	Opening prologue
20–131	Moral advice; the teachings of God; the ideal and perverse man; vice in speech
132–205	Religious advice; behaviour in church; singing the Psalms
206–224	Avarice and greed
225–363	Heaven and hell
364–381	God as the ultimate authority
382–874	<i>Social advice</i>
382–421	Avoidance of gossip and envy; advice to be charitable and respectful to parents
422–520	Maintaining peace and social order
521–578	Miscellaneous: respecting parents; sexual conduct; physicians
579–625	Friends and advisors
626–874	Speech; friendships; not to repeat mistakes
875–896	Speech in the context of hospitality
897–911	Gift-giving
912–918	Greetings
919–1082	Table manners
1083–1103	Bodily emissions
1104–1163	On servants; on clerics and stewards
1164–1220	Appearance; grooming; attire, bodily gestures
1221–1265	Bad masters
1266–1325	On servants
1326–1339	On messengers
1340–1353	Greetings and farewells
1354–1365	Behaviour in the street
1366–1483	Behaviour as a guest
1484–1859	Advice to different persons: judges; bailiffs; knights; students; teachers; citizens; merchants; fowlers; sailors; musicians; thieves; physicians; religious men
1860–1885	Defensive provisions for the town
1886–2143	Marriage and the behaviour of women; sexual conduct
2144–2523	Management and care of the estate, household, and finances; hospitality; children in the household
2524–2815	Food consumption; diet
2816–2840	Epilogue

extensive gloss which attempted to interpret different sections of the poem.<sup>5</sup> We have included these glosses in the commentary and, where applicable, have used those same glosses as headings for sections of the text.

The text opens with the lines that set out its intention and audience:

If you, dear reader, want to be polished with morals and manners, if you want the esteem of worthy men, or want to lead a civilised life among noble lords, to be a shrewd overseer of your property, keep these everlasting verses in mind which I have decided to write in unadorned plain speech for untrained boy-clerks.<sup>6</sup>

#### 4 *Introduction to Urbanus magnus*

This establishes two things at the outset: first, that the intended readership is ‘untrained boy-clerks’; and second, that the context is that of a noble household. The text goes on to often speak to that noble householder, at times making it unclear who the text is actually speaking to: the noble householder or the boy-clerk. As seems to always be the way with this text, the answer is not straightforward. Following this narrative description of the text, we will return to these thorny questions of use and audience.

From those opening lines, the text continues to form the prologue which further exhorts the reader to heed the advice of the author. This is followed by a series of passages relating to moral character and being a good Christian [ll.20–73]: ‘Understand God’s Ten Commandments that the laws teach’.<sup>7</sup> The reader is exhorted to follow the commandments, to avoid vices and strive towards virtuosity. This is followed by further advice regarding education, heeding the words of others, appropriate speech and honouring your status [ll.74–131]. Speech is an important theme in *Urbanus magnus*, and the overarching emphasis is on self-preservation through self-control in public. In essence, the text repeatedly warns that individuals should not speak too much, boast, or speak ill of others. At the root of this is the belief that one’s actions should match one’s standing, that actions should not discredit or disgrace one’s noble family, and that refined speech can mask an immodest mind:

When speaking, do not go on long tangents. If your mind proves contrary, learn to speak more elegantly and your words will hide your mind’s impudence.<sup>8</sup>

The next section is linked to being a virtuous and moral Christian and concerns attendance and behaviour in church [ll.132–183]. This includes what to wear, how to sit, how to sing the Psalms, and generally how to behave respectfully towards others in church: ‘Seek out God’s churches every morning. Adore Christ devotedly on bended knee and keep a Psalm on your tongue’.<sup>9</sup> This practical advice then develops in more abstract precepts, focusing on virtues and vices [ll.184–381]. It advises one to live a life as free from vice as possible in order to live up to the honour of one’s parents but also to secure a favourable afterlife. Furthermore, it advises that material wealth carries no weight in the afterlife, so avarice should be eschewed and moderation in life should be the goal.

The theme of virtues and vices continues into a section [ll.382–419] which advocates the avoidance of hubris and boasting, along with restraint from gossiping about others. Repeatedly *Urbanus magnus* warns about dangers of rumours and gossip and the effect which this can have on one’s reputation in the eyes of others. It is unsurprising that eschewing rumours and gossip has prominence in this text, knowing that the underlying principle of the text is the cultivation of a reputable image to be projected to those more prominent in society.

Another key theme is the maintenance of order, both within the household and external to it [ll.420–520]. Internally, order is needed within the family unit and that begins with respect for one's parents: 'Cherish beloved family members in peaceful and in turbulent times, and cherish dear companions equally'.<sup>10</sup> Beyond the family unit, order is needed among neighbours, which is achieved through compassion, restraint, gift-giving, and the avoidance of violence: 'Be a compassionate person, forbearing and good to your neighbours, not a spark fostering anger, lit with fury'.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, at the level of citizen one had duties of peace and order to uphold. However, the text acknowledges that peace was not always achievable and enemies will exist. As a result, one should be prepared to defend oneself if absolutely necessary. The ideal scenario is to have a powerful guardian or protector who can shield you since 'you cannot argue alone, you cannot fight by yourself'.<sup>12</sup>

As is the nature of this text, there is little order to the sequence of subject matter. The following short section is a miscellany of advice on respecting one's parents, not abusing those weaker or inferior to you, and the avoidance of sexual indiscretions [ll.521–578]. Some precepts may be surprising, and modern-day readers may query the need for the written codification of precepts on sexual conduct such as the following: 'Refuse to violate your godmothers or your goddaughters. Do not touch your daughters and your mothers'.<sup>13</sup> The text jumps again to a commentary on misfortune, and how to handle setbacks and losses in fortune, before shifting once more to a discussion of illness, enduring pain, and the role of physicians: 'If you are laid low by a weight of illness, consult trustworthy physicians. When you have consulted them, follow their medical advice'.<sup>14</sup>

The next substantial section of the text covers the more consistent theme of friendship and speech [ll.579–874]. Friendship in *Urbanus magnus* is often about having the *right* friends, those who might be useful or advantageous in terms of protection, status, and upward mobility. In addition, friends can be perceived as a mirror: if surrounded by powerful, trustworthy, and good friends, then you yourself would absorb those qualities by association. If surrounded by crooked, deceitful, and duplicitous friends, then the same is true of you. Part of friendship in *Urbanus magnus* is the avoidance of rumours and gossip coupled with the complementary virtue of keeping secrets: 'If a lord or a faithful confidant should entrust a secret to you, keep that secret in your silent heart'.<sup>15</sup> Linked to this is a key theme of the text: restraint and moderation in speech. Words are dangerous in *Urbanus magnus*. Being too loquacious could render you a fool. Being a gossip could damage valuable societal bonds. Being too quick to speak without thinking could lead to quarrels and fights. As a result, it is stated repeatedly that it is best to remain silent and speak when spoken to: 'if you have any friend in particular who exasperates you and fills you with anger, keep quiet'.<sup>16</sup> The overriding message of *Urbanus magnus* is that restraint, both in speech, emotions, and gestures, is a self-preservation tool used to mitigate against making enemies, transgressing social taboos, and avoiding social embarrassments.

## 6 *Introduction to Urbanus magnus*

The next substantial section is rather more cohesive in content and focuses broadly on issues related to hospitality [ll.875–1353]. It begins by reiterating the importance of appropriate and restrained speech for social advancement: ‘If the royal court nurtures you under its wings, make yourself known for your honeyed words’.<sup>17</sup> However, while much of the previous text was theoretical or abstract, the following 500 lines represent more concrete and tangible advice for correct and urbane behaviour. This includes practical advice on gift-giving and greetings. For example:

If you give someone a box, there should be something fun inside it, a golden ring or buckles, either merely lovely ones or heirlooms that generation after generation will inherit.<sup>18</sup>

Much of this section is about behaviour which is designed to curry favour with superior and more powerful individuals. Correct etiquette allowed one to fit into an elite and noble environment, while also avoiding embarrassing mistakes or committing taboos. One key element to social inclusion is dining and, as such, *Urbanus magnus* dedicates much advice to table manners [ll.919–1082]. This includes modesty in speech at the table, restraint in over-eating and over-drinking, and also restraint in bodily gestures and emissions. Over-indulgence in alcohol is to be eschewed as this can lead to shameful behaviour such as lasciviousness, foolish speech, and aggression [ll.943–987]. There is also practical advice about eating and table manners, including details of utensils such as spoons:

Do not burden [spoons] with oversized mouthfuls, or you risk a morsel falling off. When you pick up food with a spoon, do not shovel it on board with your thumb. Two guests should not share one spoon. Do not take the spoon you were provided with at dinner home with you.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to useful descriptions of table manners, which shed light on twelfth-century norms of etiquette, there is also reference to bodily emissions at the table within the text: ‘If you empty your nose into your hand. Do not look at the filth on your palm. There should not be any spitting across the table’.<sup>20</sup> There is consideration of defecation and urination which is similarly framed around discretion, restraint and preservation of reputation [ll.1083–1103].

The narrative then shifts to a discussion on individuals who have cause to be in the noble household. This includes both those who work in the household and those who have occasion to visit it. The most prevalent are those who service the household, and the text dedicates a substantial section to those servants, including their duties and their appearance [ll.1104–1325]. Those listed who service the household are the steward, servants at the table, personal attendant and clerics.<sup>21</sup> For visible servants, those who serve the householder and his guests, their behaviour was envisioned as a mirror of

the master. Therefore, neat appearance and refined gestures reflected positively on the master. In addition to the servants associated with hospitality are the more personal servants who accompany the master in travel and in more intimate moments, such as the toilet, fulfilling a similar role to the later Groom of the Stool:

When the lord goes into his private chambers take a quick look to ensure that his privy is clean. When he is sitting on the toilet, you should hold some hay or straw depending on what he prefers. Pick up the large, well compressed mats of straw in your fingers, and offer them to your master, when he has need of them. Stand—do not kneel—as you hand them to him.<sup>22</sup>

One final individual with recourse to visit the household in a service capacity was the messenger who should relay his message to the household with brevity and accuracy, and be treated to appropriate hospitality as recompense. [ll.1326–53] This section on the household, as described above [ll.875–1353], reflects one of the most cohesive parts of *Urbanus magnus*, focusing on the hospitality activities within the household: invitations, greetings, table manners, and service, both at the table and to the lord in private. However, despite the relative cohesion of content, the intended audience is not quite as clear. The reader may at times feel as though the text is aimed at the householder in order to educate him in the correct hospitality expected of his staff.<sup>23</sup> At other times, the text appears to speak to those servants who provide the hospitality. Furthermore, references to a servant can be confusing as it may refer to the servant at the table or a guest of a superior lord to whom one would be subservient. The question of audience will be addressed shortly, but it is important to remember the lack of clarity about the audience and the potential for the audience to shift as the text progresses.

The next section [ll.1354–1482] keeps the theme of social behaviour and includes directives on how to behave in a civil manner in the street and upon entering another person's home. It also includes advice on the acceptance or decline of invitations:

If two companions both summon you to dine with them on the same day, and they are of equal rank, accept the earlier invitation. If an equal or inferior asks you over for dinner, go or stay home—either is acceptable.<sup>24</sup>

As is common in *Urbanus magnus*, the advice provided is tailored to one's social status and the status of those with whom one interacts. The remainder of this section focuses on the behaviour of the guest, and stresses decorum and restraint as a means of maintaining respect and avoiding embarrassment or committing a social faux pas. For example, 'If your dice or chess pieces work against you in a game, your anger should not pin hard grudges to your heart'.<sup>25</sup>

## 8 Introduction to *Urbanus magnus*

Up until this point, *Urbanus magnus* has followed the thematic structure of morals and manners. It commences with the virtues expected of a good Christian, followed by the attributes of a good citizen, and then concludes with the manners expected of a civilised guest. The text then takes a turn into a subgenre of the twelfth-century genre of *contemptus mundi* (contempt for the world) literature known as *satira communis*, which focuses on the vices of various professions in society.<sup>26</sup> The text lists the behaviour expected of a variety of individuals including judges and lawyers (who both receive substantive treatment) [ll.1484–1559], along with bailiffs, officials, soldiers, teachers, students, citizens, merchants, bird-catchers, sailors, singers, thieves, doctors, monks and princes [ll.1642–1859]. For example: ‘If you are a merchant, a man who pockets coins and a buyer of various items, do not sell your goods with tricks or lies’.<sup>27</sup> Another example is:

If you are a physician, practise your medicine carefully so that the patient you are treating does not die. A dull medical practitioner who does not know his work makes himself deceitful and evil by practising everywhere recklessly.<sup>28</sup>

While some *satira communis* share a focus on the same individuals (i.e. doctors, merchants, judges, etc.), the tone between the satirical genre and *Urbanus magnus* is different: *satira communis* focuses on the ills of each profession, bemoaning their corruption or ineffectiveness, for example; *Urbanus magnus* takes a more practical approach by attempting to point out bad behaviour while at the same time attempting to reform the behaviour rather than exposing it. For example, *De contemptu mundi* describes judges and states: ‘the judge] cries out for riches, for these he sells his tongue, he degrades himself and so, finally, the law becomes subject to him, not man to the law’, while *Urbanus magnus* insists that the judge should:

Be a defender of justice, not someone who profanes honesty, obstructs the truth and falsifies virtue. A judge should not be at the beck and call of the wealthy. Nothing is more valuable than reason in seeing justice done.<sup>29</sup>

It is a subtle difference, but traditional *contemptus mundi* literature takes a critical approach, highlighting the ills of society, whereas *Urbanus magnus* seeks to not only identify bad behaviour but also encourage people to follow a nobler path.

Bizarrely, this section concludes with a lengthy passage on the defensive provisions for a town. This transition seems incongruous with the previous descriptions of ranks and professions within society, but it does reveal that *Urbanus magnus* had more than one use as a didactic text. The passage is an enumeration of items which could be available during a siege, which is often repetitive and in

essence is a vocabulary list. Therefore, it could have also fulfilled an educational role in vocabulary building for students learning Latin:

If you are put in charge of towns fortified with towers, there should be hoardings on them to defend the walls, and they should be equipped with shields, ballistae, darts, spears and javelins, slings, collars, cells, and chains, bows, parapets, moats, and swords and arrows, arbalests, heavy and hard pieces of stone, hot wax with saltpetre, smiths, coals, forges, and iron, a swift tortoise manoeuvre, and a buttress and firewood and an axe.<sup>30</sup>

The next section [ll.1886–2143] shifts the focus to women and marriage, another parallel to the *mala femina* trope existing within *contemptus mundi* literature and more broadly misogynistic literature of the twelfth century which included Bernard of Cluny's *De contemptu mundi*. Indeed, R. Pepin has argued that 'misogyny was so common among the *auctores* of satire as to make it an established convention in the twelfth century'.<sup>31</sup> *Urbanus magnus* contains the usual tropes of sexually deviant women who are the temptresses of men, who ensnare men in marriage, and who commit adultery. However, the main message of this substantial section is the preservation and reputation of the man. No matter how troublesome, deviant, or even repulsive a wife is, a marriage should be maintained at all times. It would be worse to have her behaviour known publicly because of the adverse effect on the reputation and status of the husband.

The text then returns to the subject of household and estate administration [ll.2144–2523]. It repeats some of the themes from earlier in the text, including being an effective supervisor of all that happens in the household: 'Your home, wife, and children are your responsibility'.<sup>32</sup> It covers topics including maintaining a tidy home, not exceeding one's means, managing household staff, and it returns to the topic of hospitality and hosting guests.

The final section of the text continues with this theme of hospitality and incorporates dietary concerns [ll.2524–2840]. It details preparations for meals including the setting of the table, the laying of the foods, as well as describing a vast array of food and drink including meat, poultry, fish, cheese, wine and beer. The text describes the practical ways that one should consume food, for example: 'mature cheese should be sliced thinly before serving, and fresh cheese should be served in thick slices'.<sup>33</sup> It also provides details on food and appropriate accompaniments, such as serving game meat with pepper sauce or goose with garlic, salt and mustard. There are even some rudimentary recipes for leek sauce and pepper sauce.<sup>34</sup> Much of this section will be of interest to food and medical historians as not only do we have details of the food pairings, but also the dietary effects of consuming them:

Wheat strengthens the body and curbs, satisfies, and cools the stomach, and barley gives vigour. Wheat harvested late-in-the-season irritates the body and causes gout.<sup>35</sup>