POGGIO'S *HISTORIAE FLORENTINI POPULI*:

An Analysis of its Latin Lexicon

By Johann Ramminger

The paper offers a digital linguistic analysis of the Latin lexicon of the Historiae Florentini populi *of Poggio Bracciolini. The* Historiae, *left unfinished at Poggio's death, were revised afterwards by Jacopo di Poggio. The text thus sits in a no-man's-land between an illustrious author and an industrious editor. The* Historiae *have a largely classical repertory of words. Cicero is omnipresent, though Livy under some metrics is even more formative. Also, in the* Historiae *there are longish phrases from a variety of Latin authors, including Poggio himself, suggesting the occasional use of a phrasebook in the elaboration of the* Historiae.

Introduction

Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) has been one of the major research interests of the dedicatee of this volume throughout her life. Contributions have concerned intellectual history, editorial work (a critical edition of the *De varietate fortunae*) and many contributions with a focus on material philology. Amongst these her research on the transmission of the *Historiae Florentini populi* occupies a prominent place, challenging the traditional view of single authorship and suggesting new possibilities of interpreting the work.[1] This contribution builds on Outi's results, combined with my own interest in digital philology; I hope it will be a welcome addition to the understanding of 'her' Poggio.

Poggio, long-time papal secretary and controversialist of note, is today mainly known for his spectacularly successful searches for manuscripts of texts from antiquity that had vanished from the public sphere. In the Quattrocento, he was widely admired for his "eloquence and singular intellectual versatility" (Paolo Cortesi, *De hominibus doctis dialogus*, 1489).[2]

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[1] The title is in the plural (evidence collected by Merisalo 2020 n.11); the variant *Historiae Florentinae* is also attested. Modern research (already Rubinstein 1964) has mostly used the title in the singular, stemming from the edition of 1715.

[2] CORTESI-P *doct* p.22 "facundia et mirifica facilitas ingenii", quoted by Struever 1970, 149. Wherever possible, I will use the sigla of the *Neulateinische Wortliste* (NLW), Ramminger 2003-, for Neo-Latin authors, for classical authors those of the *Thesaurus*

Modern editions of his letters and some of his major works have helped to reestablish access to his œuvre, though many texts (notably the translations) remain in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century editions of questionable reliability or in manuscript.

This paper concerns Poggio's last major work, *Historiae Florentini populi*, which he wrote during his last period in Florence (1455-1459).[3] Poggio had returned to Florence from Rome and became chancellor of the Republic in 1453; his tenure ended with a reorganisation of the chancellery three years later. In a letter from the summer of 1458, Poggio mentions working on a major, still unfinished text; this is very plausibly understood as a reference to the *Historiae*. After his death, the text came into the possession of his son Jacopo di Poggio (1442-1478), who dedicated the work to Federico da Montefeltro, from 1474 Duke of Urbino, in 1472.[4] Based on this text (which remained in manuscript for the time being), Jacopo translated the work into volgare (printed already in 1476[5]). In the preface to the volgare version he explicitly states that the *Historiae* had been unfinished at his father's death. Jacopo describes his own contribution as "with the utmost care bringing together into one unit the whole, arranged in eight books, and making it available to later readers".[6] Jacopo does not state explicitly whether – and if so, how much – he intervened in the text of the *Historiae*. The Latin work, in the version dedicated to Federico da Montefeltro, was printed only in 1715.

In a major breakthrough for our understanding of the work, Merisalo has drawn attention to a manuscript now containing the first half of the *Historiae*, the Palatino Capponiano 64 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence. It is a copy executed after Poggio's death of what apparently is an earlier and

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Linguae Latinae. A modern discussion of Poggio's Latin (in the context of Lorenzo Valla's criticism) is in Rizzo 2004, 78-95. The NLW has many observations relevant for his Latin, e.g., s.v. *aliqualis*, *alterutrim* (but *alterutrimque* already in Bruni), *bambalionitas* (ironically, after Francesco Filelfo had called him a *bambalio*, stutterer), *bizarrus*, *certifico*.

[3] Merisalo 2020. Cf. Bausi 1988, 145-167 (Jacopo's dedication letter). Still valuable for observations concerning the sources is Rubinstein 1964. Merisalo 2023 has put a renewed focus on the whole question.

[4] Bausi 1988, 167. Bianca 2015, 146. Merisalo 2023.

[5] ISTC ip00873000. That Jacopo was engaged in some (unspecified) historiographical work seems to have been widely known; it is mentioned in letters by Marsilio Ficino and Girolamo Squarciafico (for Squarciafico Bausi 1989, 67). The only historiographical work of Jacopo we know of concerns the text and translation of the *Historiae*. Bausi 1988, 187 suspects a separate historiographical project of Jacopo (as did already Wilcox 1969, 9) which may have never come to fruition. Ficino's letter (and the banquet referred to in it) is either from 1473 or 1475; see Bausi 1988, 190 (dating discussed by Bausi 1988, 90). Obviously, if the letter is from 1475, it cannot refer to the Latin text of the *Historiae* finished a year earlier.

[6] "omnia in octo digesta libros summa cum diligentia in unum corpus redigere ac legenda posteris tradere", quoted from Merisalo 2013 n. 22. The preface to the volgare version has a similar statement (ibid. n. 23).

much less polished version of the *Historiae*. If, as plausibly argued by Merisalo, this is indeed the text left at Poggio's death, Jacopo's revision was thorough, changing nearly every sentence of the work into the polished classicising form of the 1715 edition.[7] Merisalo has a series of convincing examples of comparisons between the two versions, which show changes from medieval toponyms to classicising ones, restructuring of sentences, removal of personal contents, etc. Especially changes which excise personal information about Poggio are, as Merisalo argues, more likely due to an editor who felt that such odd titbits were unsuitable for a historical work in the classical style, i.e. to Jacopo di Poggio, than to Poggio himself.

The following is an attempt to use Merisalo's observations and build an (at least partial) digital picture of the textual data of the *Historiae* via a series of comparisons with classical Latin and Poggio's as well as Jacopo di Poggio's works.

Statistical analysis is confronted with several obstacles. We have a huge amount of analogue textual data on Poggio's Latin that can be rendered machine-readable without too much difficulty; his works span the gamut of genres of Humanist writing. However, his only historiographic work – if we may call it that – that has been printed is the translation of the first five books of Diodorus Siculus, the style of which was clearly influenced by the fact that the contents had to reflect the Greek original to some degree. Jacopo di Poggio, on the other hand, has only left a small corpus of texts. There are a couple of letters (mainly letters of dedication), but the only Latin works of some length are the *Contra detractores*, an essay from 1466 of a little less than three thousand words, and the *Sophronia*, a Latin translation from Boccaccio's *Decamerone*.

The Lexicon of the *Historiae* and the Latin of Antiquity

We will begin by analysing the Latin of the *Historiae* against the backdrop of the Latin of Antiquity in general, comparing the lemmata of the *Historiae* with those of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* and of Forcellini's *Totius Latinitatis Lexicon* (see fig. 1).[8]

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[7] See Merisalo 2007 and 2013.

[8] For this analysis I have used a list of lemmata derived from a lemmatized text of the *Historiae*, machine-read, manually corrected and tagged for the archive of the *Neulateinische Wortliste*, Ramminger 2003-. The lemmatization was done with an optimized version of *Collatinus* and subsequently completed and corrected manually.
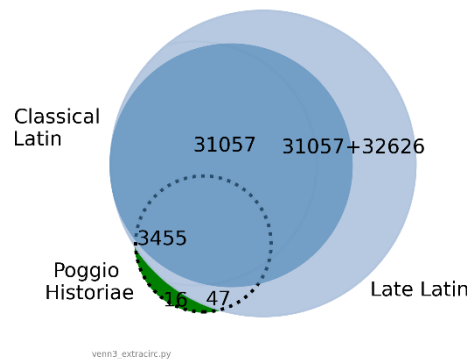
Fig.1. The lexicon of Poggio's/Jacopo di Poggio's *Historiae* compared to Classical Latin (lemmata of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*) and Late Latin (Forcellini). The dotted circle indicates the lemmata of the *Historiae*, dark and light blue represent Classical Latin (31057 OLD-lemmata) and Late Latin (Forcellini has, besides 31057 lemmata identical with OLD, 32626 Late Latin lemmata)

As shown in the diagram above, there are a modest sixteen words in the *Historiae* that are not attested in Antiquity. Amongst them are collocations that have grown together, such as *praeseferre*, *anteaquam*, and *proculdubio* which arguably need not be considered as innovations. Others are words that had long become accepted in contemporary Latin discourse, such as *florenus* (the Florentine currency), *bombarda* (famously discussed by Biondo), and *importatio* ('import', a mercantile term often used by, amongst others, humanists such as Bruni, Loschi, and Guarino), *remiulcus* ('rope', cp. ital. 'rimorchio', Du Cange ad l.), *capitaneus*, *vexillifer* (both as nouns referring to political institutions).[9] In addition there is the otherwise unknown *camuleius*, which seems to be a kind of transportation vehicle. Overall, the text is classicizing: aside from the 16 lemmata discussed, only 49 lemmata are not attested in Classical Latin, but rather from late antiquity onwards. Aside from the vagaries of lemmatization (such as *idest*, *huiuscemodi*, *castrametor*), these are mainly words concerned with the Church (*apostolus*, *abbas*, *archiepiscopus*, *monasterium*, etc.). Others, such as *pervalidus*, *ingratitudo*, were current in Italian humanist Latin.[10] Words like *coronatio* and *palatium*, even though in use in late antiquity, have by Poggio's time acquired quite a different, specific meaning (what has been called by

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[9] Obviously quite different from the adjectives attested in Late Latin.

[10] Poggio might even have considered *ingratitudo* as classical, since it is attested in what are now considered later additions to the text of Seneca's popular *De remediis fortuitorum*, cf. Newman 1988. In any case, the word enjoyed a wide circulation in medieval and humanist texts (frequent in Bruni and Biondo).

Helander 'neologism of sense'), and thus might have been difficult to avoid.[11] Overall, the text displays a remarkable sensitivity for the lexicon of classical antiquity, with scarcely any later vocabulary.

Author 1: Poggio, Contra hypocritas and Facetiae

Whatever the revisions, there are still similarities between the *Historiae* and Poggio's earlier writings. This can be confirmed by a look at two other works of Poggio, the late *Contra hypocritas* (1447/49), and the *Facetiae* (1438-1452). I have chosen them because they – albeit loosely – correspond to the two major works of Jacopo I will discuss below:[12]
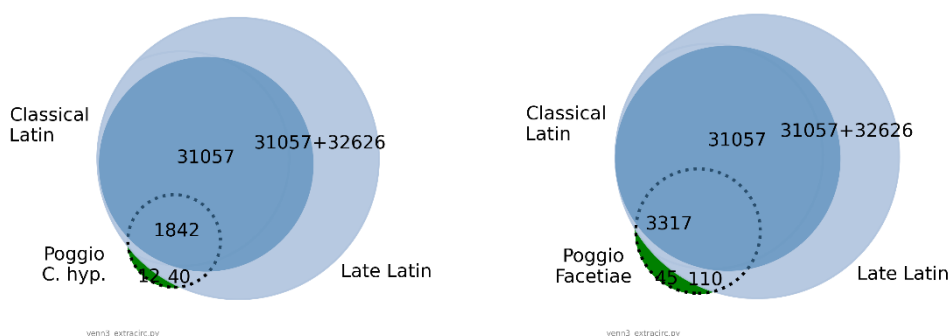

Fig. 2a & b. The lexicon of Poggio's *Contra hypocritas* (2a, left) and *Facetiae* (2b, right) compared to Classical Latin (lemmata of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, dark blue) and Late Latin (Forcellini, light blue). The dotted circles indicate the lemmata of Poggio's *Contra hypocritas* and *Facetiae*, respectively.

In both texts there is about the same percentage of words from Late antiquity, in large part due to the Latin of the Church and its teachings (as with the *Historiae* above).[13] Where they differ is in the medieval/humanist

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[11] Helander 2014.

[12] I have used *Contra hypocritas* rather than Poggio's *Contra delatores* – on which Jacopo di Poggio's modelled his *Contra detractores* – because it more closely reflects the Latin style of the old Poggio and thus is more relevant for the *Historiae* than the *Contra delatores* written thirty years previously.

[13] *Contra hypocritas*: Vocabulary of the Church: *abbas*, *apostolicus*, *apostolus*, *capitium*, *coenobium*, *crucifixus*, *diabolus*, *eleemosyna*, *episcopus*, *eremita*, *euangelicus*, *euangelium*, *eucharistia*, *excommunicatio*, *hypocrisis*, *ieiuno*, *martyr*, *monachus*, *monasterium*, *palatium*, *peccator*, *reuelatio*, *sacerdotalis*, *saluator*, *spiritualis*, *tentatio*. Other late antiquity: *contraeo*, *deceptio*, *derisio*, *inculcatio*, *multoties*, *nocumentum* (overlooked in Forcellini), *nuditas*, *pusillanimitas*, *relucto*, *saccharum*, *sustentaculum*, *uenereus*. *uendico* and *diffinitio* are problems of orthography as much as lemmatization. Medieval/humanist: *contribulus*, *dietim*, *fimbria*, *macilentia*, *occupatiuncula*, *ostentatiuncula*, *percallidus*, *peroptimus*, *praesefero* (see above), *resignatio*, *subfascinatus*, *subocculus*. — *Facetiae*: Late antiquity: e. g. *con-*

vocabulary. Here the *Contra hypocritas* has a markedly more classical style than the *Facetiae*; even the words that are new, mostly conform to classical patterns (intensive forms with *per-*, diminutives with *-uncul-*). This difference is due to a difference in genre; the *Contra hypocritas* is a philosophical essay, while the *Facetiae* are funny stories about everyday life with a less *recherché* vocabulary closer to the vernacular and to spoken language.

Author 2: Jacopo di Poggio, *C. detractores* & *Sophronia*

Jacopo di Poggio's style, in contrast, is much more stringent in its classicism, if his two longest works, in two entirely different genres and loosely parallel to Poggio's works discussed above, are any indicator:[14]
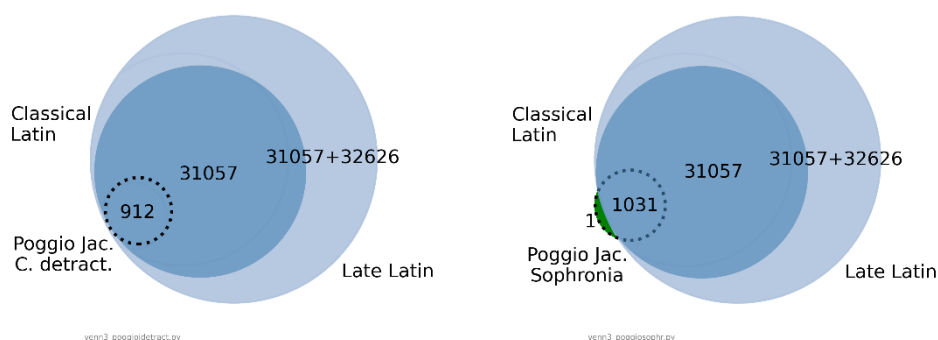

Fig. 3a & 3b. The lexicon of Jacopo di Poggio's *Contra detractores* (3a, left) and *Sophronia* (3b, right) compared to Classical Latin (lemmata of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, dark blue) and Late Latin (Forcellini, light blue). The dotted circles indicate the lemmata of Jacopo di Poggio's *Contra detractores* and *Sophronia*.

In the *Contra detractores* there are simply no words that are not attested in Classical Latin, in the translation of the *Sophronia*-story there is one, *minabundus*. It is a medieval coinage, in common use in Italian humanist Latin (a. o. used by Bruni, Biondo, and Valla).[15] Clearly, Jacopo had just as

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fricatio, *subagito*, *priapus*, medieval/humanist Latin: e. g. *copista*, *cancellaria*, *secretarius*; *carnispriuium*, *parochianus*, *archipresbyteratus*, *monialis*; *florenus*, *bursa*, *tasca*, *biretum*.

[14] For the dating of the *Contra detractores* to 1466 and further dicussion see Fubini 1982, 91-92. The *Contra detractores* is modelled after Poggio's *Contra delatores* (1426, Fubini 1982, 91). Bausi 1988, 107-114. A modern edition is in Bianca 2015. For the *Sophronia*, a translation of Boccaccio, *Decamerone* 10,8, see Bausi 1988, 136-145. As far as I know it has never been printed. For both texts I use my own transciptions (see Appendix 1).

[15] See NLW s.v., and Tunberg 1988, 37 n.28 (Valla). Medieval attestations in *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* s.v.; it is contained in Hugutio's *Derivationes* which were widely used in the early Renaissance. Generally, adjectives in *-bundus* are discussed by GELL. 11.15.8 (who seems to consider them as part of the paradigm of the verb) and by VALLA-L *eleg* 1,11. A fine-grained discussion of the semantics of *-bundus* is a bit later in Angelo Decembrio's *Politia literaria* (c. 1462; 3,27,41).

sophisticated a command of Classical Latin as his father, but he used it rather differently. For him avoidance of unclassical lexical features was a priority, much more so than for his father.

	total no. of lemmata	Classical Latin	Late Latin	medieval & hum.	% Late Latin	% medieval and hum.
Facetiae	3472	3317	110	45	3.1%	1.3%
Contra hypocritas	1894	1842	40	12	2.1%	0.6%
Historiae Florentinae	3518	3455	47	16	1.3%	0.4%
J.Poggio Contra detractores	912	912	-	-	-	-
J.Poggio Sophronia	1032	1031	-	1	-	-

Table 1. The lexicon of Poggio *père* and Jacopo di Poggio compared. Note that the *Historiae* are the most classical work of the three works of Poggio compared here.

As is apparent from Table 1, the *Historiae* are the most classical of the three works of Poggio compared here. Thus, if – as Merisalo has proposed – reduction of the unclassical features in the *Historiae* might be ascribed to the son rather than the father, our comparison of their latinity bears this out.

The *Historiae* and classical Roman historiography

The very first sentence of the *Historiae Florentini Populi* emphatically sets the work into the tradition of classical Roman historiography, combining allusions to both Livy and Sallust into a powerful methodological statement:

> Ea scripturus bella, quae Florentinus populus cum Vicecomitum familia, quaeve cum ceteris . . . gessit, operae pretium putavi initia, variumque urbis nostrae statum usque ad primum cum Archiepiscopo bellum recensere paucis. (p.1)

> Setting out to write about those wars which the Florentine people waged with the Visconti dynasty and with others, I thought it worthwhile briefly to recount the war's beginnings and the changing state of our city in the period up to the first war with the Archbishop.[16]

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[16] The passage is discussed by McLaughlin 1995, 130, to whom I owe both interpretation and translation. The quotations are: "Facturusne operae pretium sim ..." (LIV. 1,1); "Bellum scripturus sum quod populus Romanus cum Iugurtha rege Numidarum gessit" (SALL. Iug.

An intertextual marker (with the future participle, *scribere, bellum gerere,* and *operae pretium*) in such a prominent position was clearly meant to be noticed and interpreted by the reader. Thus, whether this sentence is from Poggio or from Jacopo di Poggio, we can safely assume that imitation of Livy and/or Sallust is an important feature of the style of the *Historiae*. I will try to show the impact of Livy's and Sallust's lexicon on the language of the work under purview, both through a quantitative analysis and through a short discussion of some of the more noticeable building blocks informing Poggio's style. At first, we will compare the lexicon as such, then we will look for reused phrases.

The lexicon of the *Historiae* vs. Cicero, Livy & Sallust

Considering Jacopo di Poggio's preferences as shown above and humanist Latin in general, we will look not only at Livy and Sallust, but also at Cicero as a the overarching textual model.[17]

5,1). It should be noted that the Capponi-ms contains a preface that is completely different; the question of authenticity or authorship will have to be addressed in the future.

[17] Lemmatized data for Sallust, Livy and Cicero come from the LASLA-corpus (see Appendix 1). Sallust was already completely lemmatized; for Livy only the first decade. I have myself lemmatized books 21-45. For Cicero the data include the orations, *Cato*, *De officiis*, *Laelius,* and the letter-corpora. With a complete corpus of Cicero lemmatized presumably the number of words shared between all three authors would increase, and the part Poggio/Livy decrease.
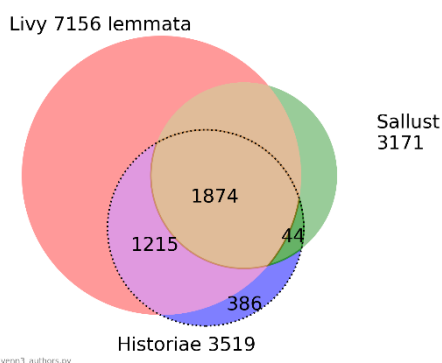
Fig. 4. *Historiae*/Livy/Sallust. The *Historiae* (the dotted circle) share 3089 (1215+1874) lemmata with Livy, of these 1874 are also found in Sallust; 44 lemmata of the *Historiae* are found in Sallust, but not in Livy, and 386 are in other classical and later Latin authors.
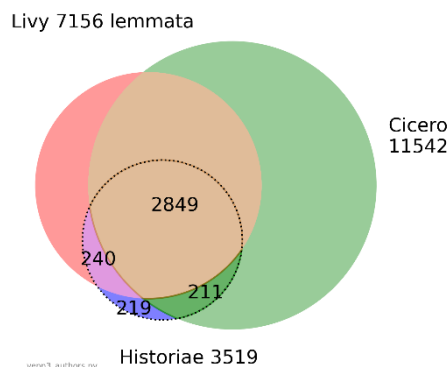
Fig. 5. *Historiae*/Livy/Cicero. The *Historiae* (dotted) share 2849 with both Livy and Cicero; 240 are only shared with Livy, 211 are shared by the *Historiae* and Cicero (to the exclusion of Livy), 219 are not covered by the two authors (65 of these are from Late antiquity or later, see above).

As becomes clear from the two diagrams above, the *Historiae* are written in a thoroughly classicising style. However, as far as Livy and Sallust are concerned, the *Historiae* would not have been written in much different Latin, if Sallust (fig. 4) were inexistent (none of the 44 Sallustian words in the *Historiae* is a hapax).[18] Livy, on the other hand, and Cicero (both much longer texts) are pervasive presences in the text (fig. 5); the former reminds us of Poggio's lifelong preoccupation with the Roman historian.[19] Considering that Livy is much shorter than Cicero, but the exclusively Livian share of the vocabulary is bigger than Cicero's even in absolute numbers (Livy 240, Cicero 211), at this level the *Historiae* are – as fits the genre – more a Livian that a Ciceronian text.

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[18] Discussion of Sallust's presence in *Historiae* in La Penna 1968, 430 "[Poggio] da Sallustio ricava solo qualche frase e qualche pennellata" (referred to in Bausi 1988, 178). Cf. Bausi 1988,178-183 (echoes of Sallust in the *Contra detrectatores*). If we compare Sallust/Cicero/*Historiae* (instead of Sallust/Livy/*Historiae*), the picture remains essentially the same: 57 lemmata shared exclusively between Sallust and *Historiae*, 403 neither in Sallust nor Cicero. I thank the anonymous referee for the suggestion.

[19] Poggio's lifelong preoccupation with Livy is evident for instance in his long pursuit of a more complete copy of the *Ab Urbe Condita*, rumored to be found in the library at the Sorø academy in Denmark, see Bausi 1988, 171.

The phraseology of the *Historiae* and its antecedents

We have two pieces of evidence confirming that the authors we have used so far for a lexical comparison (Cicero, Livy, Sallust) are well suited to the final phase of our analysis, which will be an inquiry into the phraseological framework of the *Historiae*. The first is a short catalogue of authors in a letter written by Poggio around the time of composition of the *Historiae*:

> Te vero nihil delectet nisi eloquens, tersum, elegans, politum, in quo eloquentia sit coniuncta prudentie. Lege inprimis Ciceronem nostrum, Lactantium, Livium, Sallustium, Iustinum, Q. Curtium reliquosque, quos audis vulgo ab omnibus comprobari.

> Nothing should delight you but what is expressed with eloquence, precision, elegance, and polish, where eloquence is combined with prudence. Read above all our Cicero, Lactantius, Livy, Sallust, Iustinus, Q. Curtius, and others if you hear generally that they are approved of by all (POGGIO *ep* 3,5,19 to Alberto Parisi, Florence, February/March 1454)

Secondly, we can whittle down this list by checking which authors on it are quoted or at least mentioned by name in significant numbers in Poggio's œuvre: Cicero leads the field (330 mentions), followed by Livy (90) and Sallust (16). The other names from above are found in Poggio's œuvre in insignificant numbers, some are not named at all (as we will see, they may still be used in some way or other). None of the two tests can be applied to Jacopo di Poggio since he gives no explicit indication of his stylistic preferences in any of his texts. However, based on the evidence presented above, we may assume that he shared (or surpassed) his father's stylistic preferences.[20] Thus, we will base our analysis of phrases reused in the *Historia* on the authors which are considered exemplary and at the same time most frequently named/cited by Poggio.

We can analyse the 'phraseological laboratory', as it were, of the *Historiae* by identifying phrases identical or similar between the *Historiae* and the classical texts. Since the presence of Sallust, as in the tests performed above, is

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[20] We know nothing about the education of Jacopo di Poggio, who in 1454 – when the letter quoted above was written – was twelve years old. Certainly, two years later Poggio writes to Guarino (*ep* 900) about Jacopo: "applicavi… eum nostris studiis humanitatis" (I have introduced him to our literary studies; reference from Vasoli 1971); we may thus assume that he from early on became acquainted with a canon of authors similar to the one promulgated in this quotation. Poliziano, with his visceral dislike of Jacopo, in the *Coniurationis commentarium* recognizes his *dicendi copia* invertedly: "Ipse ex multa historiarum memoria magnaque loquendi copia mirifice superbus esse, eas omnibus circulis coronisque, vel ad societatem audientium, ingerere" (From his vast knowledge of history and his fine command of style came his enormous arrogance; everyone who heard him got tired as he inserted them into all conversations; ed. Perosa p.18).

not strong enough for statistical analysis, we will look at Livy and Cicero.[21] In preliminary tests it became clear that phrases of four words' length (technically called word N-grams, in our case word 4-grams) occupy the sweet point, since shorter N-grams are too frequent to be distinctive and longer ones are too rare to be statistically useful.[22] The aim is to make visible a phraseological 'genealogy' of the *Historiae* which does not stem from the intention of the author/editor to imitate or allude to specific passages of model texts (unlike the opening passage of the *Historiae* discussed above), but from an attempt to evoke a generic closeness to another author in his turn of phrase. As both texts were widely read, many readers who shared this stylistic memory would have recognized a 'color' reminding them of the earlier texts in a general way.

Our analysis of Poggio's and Jacopo di Poggio's lexicon above and Poggio's own acknowledgment of his indebtedness to Cicero is confirmed by the textual reuse data: Cicero is omnipresent in the phraseology of the *Historiae*.[23]

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[21] For this analysis I have used the *Tesserae*-corpus of Cicero (complete; see Appendix). Obviously, a few texts contained there were not yet accessible to Poggio. Furthermore, the Ciceronian letter collections also include texts by other authors. All in all, the Cicero corpus comprises 1115560 words, Livy 505922 (i.e. less than half), Poggio's *Historia* has 58118 words (73122 incl. proper nouns). Proper nouns have been removed for the following analysis.

[22] For the intended comparison between authors to be possible, all have to be regularized orthographically according to the same rules. The classical authors we will be using already have their spelling regularized through centuries of editorial activity. The *Historiae* (and other Neo-Latin texts used here) have been normalized according to the standard of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*; since the spelling conventions of the eighteenth century are not that different from modern ones, this could easily be achieved with software developed for correction and lemmatization tasks carried out for the *Neulateinische Wortliste* (www.neulatein.de) and the *Nordic Neo-Latin Heritage Corpus* (cdnl.dk). This is mostly a low-tech approach that looks for words/syllables that are spelt differently and replaces them with regularized forms (often m/n: *eamdem*/*eandem*, *nunquam*/*numquam*, but also *-comun-*/*-commun-*, *-nunci-*/*-nunti-*, *ditio*/*dicio*, etc.). Some cases were disambiguated manually, e.g. *equus*/*aequus*; this was done together with the lemmatization of the text. Other interventions, such as the disambiguation of *cum* prep. and *cum* conj., and the identification of enclitic *-que* (which were performed during lemmatization) are disregarded in the phraseological analysis. Words not caught by this correction process were mostly identified during lemmatization, though some irregularities doubtlessly escaped our attention.

[23] As late as 1455, Poggio insisted that he had learned everything he knew of Latin from Cicero; clearly his son Jacopo had followed in his footsteps (see Poggio *ep* 7,16, Harth III, 344-345, May 1455). See Witt 2000, ad indicem, esp. 338 on Poggio; Sabbadini 1885, 19.
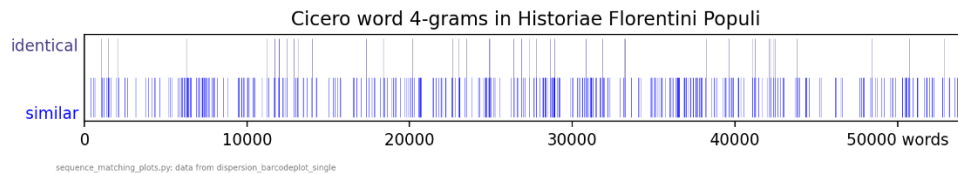
Fig. 6: Distribution of similar or identical word 4-grams from Cicero in the *Historiae*. *4*grams are considered similar if they have a cosine similarity greater than 0.8 (the numbers below the plot refer to the length of Poggio's *Historiae*).[24]

However, even if phrases considered similar to Cicero by the algorithm used are quite frequent and evenly distributed in the *Historiae* (891 instances), there are only 47 identical word 4-grams (mostly occurring only once). We can put this into perspective by performing the same analysis with Livy:
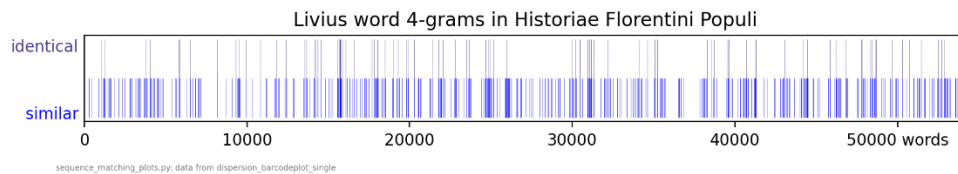

Fig. 7: Distribution of word 4-grams from Livy in the *Historiae* (the numbers below the plot refer to the length of Poggio's *Historiae*).

If we expected Livy to have the same presence in the *Historiae* as Cicero, we would expect about 20 identical word 4-grams from Livy, given that Livy has less than half the length of the Ciceronian corpus. However, Livy is significantly more present in the *Historiae* than Cicero, even in absolute numbers: there are 964 similar word 4-grams, again quite evenly distributed, and 90 identical word 4-grams (more than four times more than expected; most occur only once). Considering that the Ciceronian corpus is more than twice as long as Livy, but Livian phrases are still more numerous even in absolute numbers, the Roman historian's presence is significant.[25] Livy's pre-

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[24] Han & Kamber & Pei 2012, 77-78. There are numerous internet resources explaining cosine similarity. Importantly, the cosine similarity metric can be used to compare data of unequal length. Focusing on similarity, rather than exclusively on identical phrases, is generally more adequate for morphologically rich languages such as Latin, since phrases which a human reader recognizes as identical, may – strictly speaking – only be similar because of small adaptations. Generally, see Leskovec & Rajaraman & Ullman 2014, chapter 3 "Finding Similar Items". Phrases longer than four words are not numerous enough for statistical analysis.

[25] To compare datasets of unequal length, it is customary statistical procedure to 'normalize' the numbers by calculating what they would be if the datasets (i.e. texts) were of equal length. This was not done here, since for the appreciation of the style by a reader the absolute frequency of text blocks from an earlier text is important (few text blocks from a

dominance is even more striking, if we look at the other authors named by Poggio in the letter to Alberto Parisi. Measured in word 4-grams, none of them has a numerically significant presence in the *Historiae* (other results of the analysis will be discussed below). This would suggest that the *Historiae* text, as we have it now, was written or redacted in a firmly Ciceronian idiom at an unmarked 'style-zero' level; the Livian 'color', i.e. the copious re-use of Livian phrases, marks the effort by the author/editor to produce a historiographical work in the style of the 'father of Roman history', Livy.[26] There can be no doubt about the deep acquaintance of both Poggio and Jacopo with Cicero (even if they used him quite differently in their writings), and certainly we can presume a detailed knowledge of Livy (even though in Jacopo's case this can only be inferred from his father's teaching). Thus, both humanists would have been capable of producing a text in this style. Still, the pronounced Ciceronianism of the *Historiae* reminds us more of the monchromatic Latin of Jacopo than of the more personal style of writing of Poggio *père*. There is a further argument that tips the scale.

Exempla elocutionis: Phrases as building blocks

The analysis of word 4-gram similarities also yielded specific similar phrases from a variety of authors. Bausi observed Jacopo's technique of reusing phrases from his father as well as from classical authors in his own texts.[27] Textual reuse of Latin phrases once formed is a common phenomenon in humanists' writing – a reminder that writing elegant Latin was never a trivial undertaking even for humanists whose main written language was Latin. A case in point is Poggio's translation of Diodorus, a lengthy project which Poggio brought to a conclusion in 1449 (the translation comprises books I-V, in Poggio's translation book I is split into two parts).[28] There are 18 word 4-grams which are identical in his Latin Diodorus and in the *Historiae* (some repeatedly, making a total of 23 times). We will discuss one of them widely quoted by later writers on account of the strangeness of the information it offered. In it Diodorus claims that the Chaldeans transmitted philosophy from

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short text are less likely to be noticed by a reader, unless intertextually marked in some way, than frequent reuse from a long text, if both are equally well known).

[26] *Romanae pater historiae* (a variation of *pater historiae*, i.e. Herodotus). Thus Bruni in the prooemium to the *Commentaria primi belli Punici* (1421), BRVNI *opusc* 11 p.123; taken up by POLENTON *script ill* p.17 (1437), PANORMITA *ep Campanae* 37 (1439) and Biondo in the *Italia illustrata* (1453), BIONDO *Italia* 1,5. Pontano later transfers the honorary epithet to Sallust, PONTANO *Actius* p.202 (1499).

[27] Bausi 1988, 110-114.

[28] As has been shown by Bausi 1988, 149 and Bausi 1989, 74 n.18, Jacopo di Poggio was familiar with Diodorus Siculus, presumably in his father's translation. Other transfers by Jacopo di Poggio from Poggio *père* are mentioned *ibid*. p.76 n.22; p.78 n.24; p.79 n.26.

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father to son; young aspiring philosophers learn philosophy "omni aliarum rerum cura posthabita" (to the exclusion of all other interests).[29] The information from Diodorus in Poggio's phrasing is quoted by Annius da Viterbo in his widely read *Antiquitates* (in the so-called 'commentary' to Berosus) and several times later.[30] What is relevant in our case is that the phrase reappears in the *Historiae* in a completely different context: [31]

> Quibus rebus Florentiam renuntiatis, … extemplo *omni aliarum rerum cura posthabita* … foedus cum Francisco … renovant (p.371, my emphasis)

> When these news reached Florence, … immediately, relegating all other interests, … a treaty was renewed with Francesco [Sforza].

Our word-5gram, while as such uniquely shared by the two texts, fits well into Poggio's œuvre. The bare-bones bigram "cura posthabita" (abl. absol.) is already attested in antiquity, and often used in medieval and early modern Latin.[32] Poggio seems to have had a certain fondness for it, various similar phrases can be found repeatedly throughout his writings, beginning with a letter from 1418.[33]

The list of reused phrases, even though it never reaches statistical significance, is long; many are taken from the authors Poggio suggested as exemplary. One such phrase is "unum in ore aliud in pectore habens" (*Historiae* p.271). The *ore/pectore*-opposition is hardly remarkable;[34] our analyses noted, however, a close parallel in Sallust (*Cat.* 10,4): "aliud clausum in pectore aliud in lingua promptum habere". This is a passage which Poggio once had quoted with Sallust's name attached: "qui, ut ait Sallustius, unum in ore, aliud in pectore clausum gerunt" (*c hypocritas* 17 p.11); it is in this form, with the sequence inversed and *lingua* changed to *ore*, that the

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[29] Diodorus 2,29,4 παρὰ μὲν γὰρ τοῖς Χαλδαίοις ἐκ γένους ἡ τούτων φιλοσοφία παραδέδοται, καὶ παῖς παρὰ πατρὸς διαδέχεται, τῶν ἄλλων λειτουργιῶν πασῶν ἀπολελυμένος.

[30] Annivs Viterb *antiq* sig.O2r.

[31] Textual reuse of Poggio's Diodorus in Jacopo's dedication letter to Federico da Montefeltro is shown by Bausi 1988, 149 n.87.

[32] *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* X,2 s.v. *posthabeo* col.222,31-32 (Euler). Petrarca *rem* 1,29,4 (1366) "cura… animi posthabita". *fam* 19,18,18 "cura conscientie posthabita". Brvni *ep* 4,4 (4,4 M.) (1416, to Poggio) "posthabita visendi cura".

[33] Poggio *ep ed. Davies* p.40 (1418) "posthabita rerum ceterarum cura"; *ep* II 1,2 (1424) "posthabita virtutis cura"; *infel* (*1440*) "posthabita honesti cura"; *var fort praef* (*1448*) "omni bonarum artium cura posthabita"; *Diodorus* sig.f3r "omni posthabita sexus ac pudoris cura" (2,23,3 τῆς ἐκ τῆς πράξεως αἰσχύνης οὐδὲν ὅλως φροντίζων); *laud Venet* 2 (*1459*) "omni rei privatae cura posthabita".

[34] See *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* IX 2 col.1074,51-53 (Tessmer).

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phrase reappears in the *Historiae*.[35] Other reused phrases are "omnia bello necessaria summa industria parat" (p.24, from Iustinus), "obstinatis ad mortem animis" (p.324, from Ammianus), "nimium timidus quam parum prudens uideri" (p.149, from Cicero), and "quibus artibus quibus calliditatibus" (p.93, from Ps.Quintilian).[36] A widely used Ciceronian quotation is "consilium in agendo celeritatem in conficiendo prudentiam in iudicando" (p.374, a popular passage already used by Petrarch, Manetti and Isotta Nogarola).[37] Unlike the beautiful opening phrase of the *Historiae* discussed above, these phrases seem to be arbitrarily inserted; none of them enhances the text by the reference to an earlier subtext.

These disparate phrases suggest the use of a phrasebook of sorts. (Humanist) *florilegia* were an important feature of Guarino Veronese's teaching, as immortalized by his son Battista. Considering that Poggio appreciated Guarino's pedagogical method in general (as witnessed by their contacts concerning Jacopo's education), it may well be that a useful feature such as this found its way into the Poggio household, even more convenient for Jacopo, if he wanted to connect to his illustrious father's writings by quoting from them and generally follow the preferences he had expressed.[38]

Conclusion

Our quantitative analysis of the *Historiae Florentini Populi* commonly ascribed to Poggio Bracciolini has brought to light or confirmed a series of insights. The *Historiae* are written with a vocabulary hardly containing any words not attested in the period up to Apuleius, i.e., before the Church Fathers. The few exceptions are due to the exigencies of describing contem-

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[35] Other Sallustian passages are: "quae altius quam quisquam ratus esset in pectus hominis descenderunt" (*Historiae* p.309), SALL. *Iug.* 11,7 "uerbum in pectus altius quam quisquam ratus erat descendit"; "quibus quocumque modo belli componendi arbitrium permissum erat" (*Historiae* p.238), SALL. *Iug.* 103,3 "quocumque modo belli conponendi licentiam ipsis permittit".

[36] The sources are the following: IVSTIN. 6,3 "cetera… bello necessaria summa industria parabat"; AMM. 17,13,28 "obstinatis ad mortem animis" (the same phrase in SVLP. SEV. *chron.* 2,30,5, hardly known in the Quattrocento); CIC. *Marcell.* 21 "uideri nimis timidus quam parum prudens"; PS.QVINT. *decl.* 14,3 "quibus artibus qua calliditate".

[37] CIC. *Manil.* 29 "industria in agendo celeritas in conficiendo consilium in prouidendo". PETRARCA *sen* 4,1,43 "Neque enim, inquit, ille sunt sole virtutes imperatorie que vulgo extimantur, labor in negotiis, fortitudo in periculis, industria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo". MANETTI *ep ad Calistum III* (1455) "Neque enim ille sunt sole virtutes imperatorie que vulgo existimantur—labor in negociis, fortitudo in periculis, iusticia in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo". NOGAROLA-I *ep* II 82 (1461) "laborem in negotiis, fortitudinem in periculis, industriam in agendo, celeritatem in conficiendo, consilium in providendo".

[38] Cf. the "Quaedam ex Tullio extracta per Poggium", a reservoir of Ciceronian glosses probably written by Poggio early in his career (ed. by Fubini, Poggio 1966 II p.839-845). This list contains individual words, not phrases. See Schweyen 1973, 197 n. 43 (Guarino). Moss 1996, and Moss 2004, 35-63. Hamesse 2020, 885–905.

porary institutions; in one case, we have a word that only later was recognized as not belonging to the classical canon. The style of the work is Livian – as apparent from many instances of textual reuse – although Cicero looms large in the background. Sallust, present in quotations, plays a much less pervasive role, though the text has a liberal sprinkling of phrases lifted from his works.

The quantitative analysis also brought to light a series of nearly unaltered phrases from a variety of classical texts which suggest the use of a phrase book at some point in the development of the *Historiae*.

There are aspects in our statistical analyses that incline us to see Jacopo di Poggio as the writer responsible for many features of the Latin of the *Historiae*: Unlike his father, he is an extreme Ciceronian, and the basic style of the *Historiae* is deeply Ciceronian. Reuse of phrases from his father's works (I have noted the phrases from the Latin Diodorus) is a feature which Jacopo uses elsewhere to propagate his father's fame. Lastly, the apparently arbitrary insertion of phrases lifted nearly verbally from disparate authors may be more likely attributed to an inexperienced writer such as the young Jacopo than to a seasoned humanist such as his father.

While statistical analysis ('distant' reading) cannot replace a philological approach based on 'close' reading, I hope I have shown that it can be one more instrument in an array of philological methods for the analysis of literary texts.

Appendix 1: The Poggio corpus & other texts

Many texts by Poggio are available in modern editions (see the list of sigla of the *Neulateinische Wortliste*); however, apart from the *Facetiae*, none of these is available in machine-readable format with a suitable license. My observations concerning Poggio's language are based on the following machine-readable texts from a variety of sources which are out of copyright.

Poggio 1513, Poggii Florentini Oratoris Clarissimi, Ac Sedis Apo. Secretarii Opera. Thomas D. Aucuparius (ed.), Argentinae: Impensis providi Ioannis Knoblouchi litterario prelo Ioannis Schot pressum, 1513 Kalen. Septembris. URL of digital facsimile: https://mateo.uni-mannheim.de/itali/autoren/poggio_itali.html

Poggio 1481, Diodori Bibliothecae historicae lib. I-VI [i.e.:I-V] sive Historiae priscae latine a Poggio Florentino conversae. [Tacitus] Germania, vel De situ, moribus et populis Germaniae. Ed.: Hieronymus Squarzaficus. Thomas de Blavis, de Alexandria, 25 Nov. 1481. ISTC id00212000. GW 8376 Copy used: Biblioteca Universitaria, Sevilla, Spain. URL of digital print:
http://fondosdigitales.us.es/books/digitalbook_view?oid_page=92477

Poggio 1679, Ad illustrissimum et clarissimum D. D. Antonium Magliabechum serenissimo magno Etruriae duci A studiis proximum, Poggii florentini Dialogus, et Leonardi Arretini oratio Aduersus hypocrisim, ad fidem Mss. ipsius Bibliothecae nunc primum editus, et emendata [sic!] a Hieronymo Sincero Lotharingo, Cabilo-Narbonensi. Lugduni : Ex Typographia Anissoniana, anno MDLXXIX. (sic for 1679)

Poggio 1715: Poggii Historia Florentina nunc primum in lucem edita, Notisque et Auctoris Vita illustrata ab Jo. Baptista Recanato. Venetiis.

Poggio 1723: Poggii Bracciolini Florentini Historiae de varietate fortunae libri quatuor. Ex ms. codice bibliothecae Ottobonianae Nunc primum editi, et Notis illustrati A Dominico Georgio. Accedunt ejusdem Poggii Epistolae LVII. quae nunquam antea prodierunt. Omnia a Joanne Oliva Rhodigino vulgata. Lutetiae Parisiorum.

Poggio 1832-1861: Poggii Epistolae. Editas collegit et emendavit plerasque ex codd. mss. eruit ordine cronologico disposuit notisque illustravit Equ. Thomas de Tonellis JC. Vol. I.-III. Florentiae.

Poggio 1995: Facezie. Stefano Pittaluga (ed.). Milano. Machine-readable text: http://www.bibliotecaitaliana.it/scheda/bibit001358

See also Poggio 1966, infra.

The two texts of Jacopo di Poggio used here I have transcribed myself from digital facsimiles of manuscripts in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Firenze (URL: https://www.bmlonline.it/en/, visited 2.7.2023). Obviously, these are not critical editions.

Contra detractores: Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 46.2 fol. 71r-91r. Machine-read with Rescribe and manually corrected. A modern edition is in Bianca 2015.

Sophronia (Boccaccio, Decamerone 10,8): BML, Plut. 89 inf. 16, fol. 50r-60r. Manually transcribed.

Other texts

Unlemmatized classical texts are taken form the *Tesserae*-corpus (see below). Lemmatized classical texts come from the LASLA-corpus, which is now openly accessible within LILA. The lemmatization has been adapted to the standards of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (an *OLD*-lemmalist has also been incorporated into the LILA-data).

LASLA at LILA: https://lila-erc.eu/data/corpora/Lasla/id/corpus

Appendix 2: Software

Machine-readable texts have been produced with Rescribe v.1.0, and corrected with EML-spellchecker v.2, a script based on the language AutoIt developed for the archive of the *Neulateinische Wortliste*. Lemmatizations of Neo-Latin texts were produced with Collatinus v.11, optimized for Neo-Latin. Lemmatizations exclude proper nouns and derived adjectives, if there is no independent semantic development. Initial similarity tests were made with Tesserae 3 under Strawberry Perl v.5.32.1.1-64bit (these were not used in the results published in this paper). Similarity analyses have been conducted with a combination of scripts under Python v. 3.8.13 (see below). All software-URLs were last visited on 24 June 2023.

AutoIt v3.3.16.1. URL: https://www.autoitscript.com/site/autoit/
Collatinus 11.2 Lemmatiser and morphological analyser for Latin texts. URL: https://outils.biblissima.fr/en/collatinus/
Python:
Chris van den Berg ('Bergvca'), "super fast string-matching". URL: https://bergvca.github.io/2017/10/14/super-fast-string-matching.html
ING Wholesale Banking Advanced Analytics team, "sparse_dot_topn", v0.3.3 Jun 27, 2022. URL: https://github.com/ing-bank/sparse_dot_topn

Erick Wilts ('Lewistrick'), reply to "Python NLTK: Bigrams trigrams fourgrams", Jan 17, 2018. URL: https://stackoverflow.com/questions/24347029/python-nltk-bigrams-trigrams-fourgrams

Rescribe Desktop OCR Tool v1.0.0. URL: https://rescribe.xyz/

Tesserae v. 3. URL: https://tesserae.caset.buffalo.edu/ and https://github.com/tesserae (includes a corpus of texts from antiquity)

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URL: http://infolab.stanford.edu/~ullman/mmds/ch3a.pdf

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