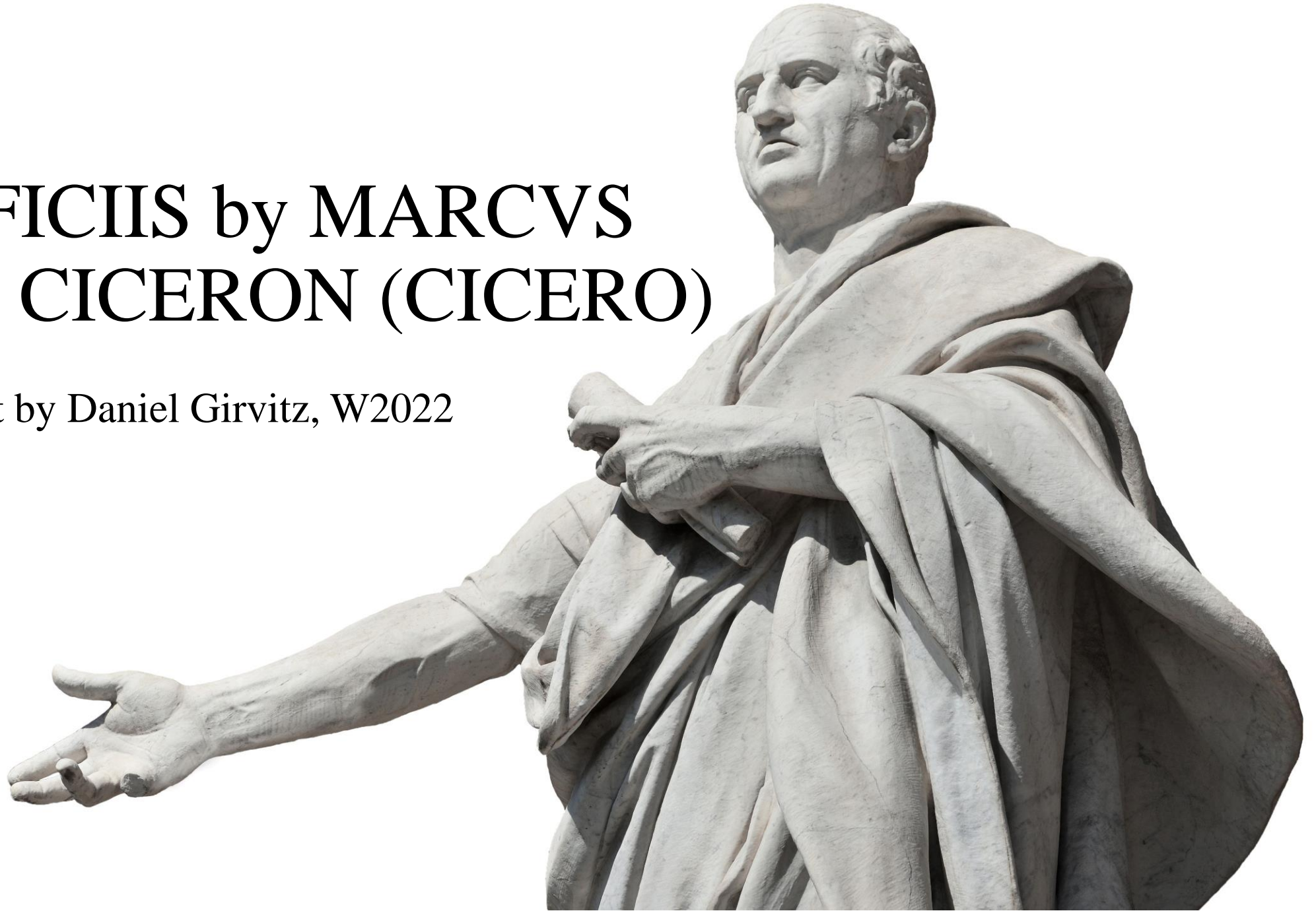


# DE OFFICIIIS by MARCVS TVLLIVS CICERON (CICERO)

Project by Daniel Girvitz, W2022





# Introduction

- University major: Mathematics, formerly electrical engineering
- Why I study Latin? The reason I tell people or the *real* reason?
- My attraction to Cicero: I've always been attracted to the ostensibly *best* things in life. As the "Greatest Roman", this should come as no surprise. My interest in *De Officiis* stems from a desire to appreciate the noble morals of antiquity, and the sort of reasoning a man should employ today.

# Cicero

- Roman lawyer, statesman, philosopher, etc., etc., who eventually became Consul of the Roman Republic in 63 BC
- Acquired notability in the Roman courts
- Involvement in Roman politics oversaw a complete restructuring of Roman society
- After Caesar came to power, Cicero retired from politics
- Introduced Greek philosophy to Ancient Rome and consequently Latin readers

## Philosophy [\[ edit \]](#)

- (89 BC?) *Translation of [Aratus](#)' [Φαινόμενα](#) (Aratea)*
- (46 BC) *[Paradoxa Stoicorum](#) (Stoic Paradoxes)*
- (45 BC) *[Hortensius](#)*
- (45 BC) *[Academica Priora](#)* – (First edition of the *Academica* comprising two books, the *Catullus*, which is lost, and the extant *Lucullus*) - a book about [Academic Skepticism](#), the school of philosophy of which Cicero was an adherent.
- (45 BC) *[Academica Posteriora](#)* or *Academica Liberi* (Second edition of the *Academica* comprising four books, all of which except for part of book 1 has been lost. Also known as the *Varro*)
- (45 BC) *[Consolatio](#) (Consolation)* (see [Consolatio](#))
- (45 BC) *[De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum](#) (About the Ends of Goods and Evils)* – a book on ethics<sup>[8]</sup>
- (45 BC) *[Tusculanae Quaestiones](#) (Questions debated at Tusculum)*
- (45 BC) *Translation of Plato's [Timaeus](#) (sections 27d - 47b)*
- (? BC) *Translation of Plato's [Protagoras](#) - testimonia quoted in Priscian, Jerome, and Donatus*
- (45 BC) *[De Natura Deorum](#) (On the Nature of the Gods)*
- (45 BC) *[De Divinatione](#) (On Divination)*
- (45 BC) *[De Fato](#) (On Fate)*
- (44 BC) *[Cato Maior de Senectute](#) (Cato the Elder on Old Age)*
- (44 BC) *[Laelius de Amicitia](#) (Laelius on Friendship)*
- (44 BC) *[De Officiis](#) (On Duties)*



Henry VIII's childhood copy of *De Officiis*, bearing the inscription "Thys boke is myne" in his hand, from the collection of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

# Philosophy and morals

- The Ancient Greeks concerned themselves with all kinds of philosophy, but more so in the abstract: Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Plato's ...
- Being more practical, the Romans considered ethics to be the only important branch of philosophy (φιλοσοφία, *philosophia*, 'love of wisdom')
- The word “morals” in Latin is “*mos, mores*”
  - Not only translating to morals and principles (in the plural “*mores*”)
  - But also to behaviour, conduct
  - Custom, habit (see *mos maiorum*)

The ***mos maiorum*** (Classical Latin: [ˈmoːs majˈjoːrũ]; "ancestral custom"<sup>[1]</sup> or "way of the ancestors," plural *mores*, cf. English "**mores**"; *maiorum* is the **genitive** plural of "greater" or "elder") is the unwritten code from which the **ancient Romans** derived their **social norms**. It is the core concept of Roman traditionalism,<sup>[2]</sup> distinguished from but in dynamic complement to **written law**. The *mos maiorum* was collectively the time-honoured principles, behavioural models, and social practices that affected private, political, and military life in ancient Rome.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Etymology [\[ edit \]](#)

From [Middle English](#) *moral*, from [Old French](#) *moral*, from [Latin](#) *mōrālis* (“relating to manners or morals”) (first used by Cicero, to translate [Ancient Greek](#) ἠθικός (*ēthikós*, “moral”)), from *mos* (“manner, custom”).

# Now for the contents

- “**De Officiis (On Duties or On Obligations)** is a 44 BC treatise by Marcus Tullius Cicero divided into three books, in which Cicero expounds his conception of the best way to live, behave, and observe moral obligations. The work discusses what is honorable (Book I), what is to one's advantage (Book II), and what to do when the honorable and private gain apparently conflict (Book III). For the first two books Cicero was dependent on the Stoic philosopher Panaetius, but wrote more independently for the third book.” [De Officiis - Wikipedia](#)



# What I think about it?

- Great advice from one of the greatest men to live on this planet...
- I'll tell you more once I finish reading it.

# Paragraph 13 - Search after truth

- The search for truth is particular to man
  - And so when we are free from unavoidable labours ie work
  - We wish to see, hear, learn things which are occult and/or admirable
  - From this, what is true, simple, and sincere, is understood to be the most suitable of the nature of man
    - Ex quo intellegitur, quod verum, simplex, sincerumque sit, id esse naturae hominis aptissimum
      - sit -> 3<sup>rd</sup> person, sing, present subjunctive of sum, esse, fui, futurus
        - Subjunctive is often applied to indicate uncertainty, a sign of refinement
      - id intellegitur esse aptissimum naturae hominis -> accusative-infinitive construction
- futurus – future  
active participle –  
sum, esse has no 4<sup>th</sup>  
principle part**

# Paragraph 13 cont.

- Huic veri videndi cupiditati adiuncta est appetitio quaedam principatus
- So that a mind well-moulded by nature would want to obey nobody
  - ut nemini parere animus bene informatus a natura velit
    - ut velit -> subjunctive
    - parere nemini -> to obey nobody (pareo, parere takes a dative object)
    - bene informatus a natura -> passive with ablative of agent
- Unless he teach good conduct, justice, and law
  - nisi praecipienti aut docenti aut utilitatis causa iuste et legitime imperanti
- From this emerges greatness of the soul and contempt of all human things

# Paragraph 14

- Man is the only animal who has a feeling for reason and order
- Consequently, no other animal has a feeling for beauty, excellence, and harmony
- Similarly, nature and reason transfer from the eyes to the soul beauty, constancy, and order
- So that disgracefulness and effeminacy are to be avoided
- So that in all & thought & deed licentiousness is avoided too



# Paragraph 14 cont

- Quibus ex rebus conflatur et efficitur id,
    - From these things it [moral goodness] is forged (conflo, conflare)
  - quod quaerimus,
    - that **WHICH** we ask
  - ~~honestum~~, quod etiamsi nobilitatum non sit,
    - even if it not be considered noble
  - tamen honestum sit,
    - it is nonetheless good
  - **quodque vere dicimus**,
    - and we truly say
  - etiamsi a nullo laudetur,
    - even if it be praised by nobody
  - **natura esse laudabile**.
    - nature praises it
    - natura -> ablative of agent
- dicimus [id] esse laudabile -> acc-inf
-

# The Latin text

**13** In primisque hominis est propria veri inquisitio atque investigatio. Itaque cum sumus necessariis negotiis curisque vacui, tum avemus aliquid videre, audire, addiscere cognitionemque rerum aut occultarum aut admirabilium ad beate vivendum necessariam ducimus. Ex quo intellegitur, quod verum, simplex sincerumque sit, id esse naturae hominis aptissimum. Huic veri videndi cupiditati adiuncta est appetitio quaedam principatus, ut nemini parere animus bene informatus a natura velit nisi praecipienti aut docenti aut utilitatis causa iuste et legitime imperanti; ex quo magnitudo animi existit humanarumque rerum contemptio.

**14** Nec vero illa parva vis naturae est rationisque, quod unum hoc animal sentit, quid sit ordo, quid sit, quod deceat, in factis dictisque qui modus. Itaque eorum ipsorum, quae aspectu sentiuntur, nullum aliud animal pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam partium sentit; quam similitudinem natura ratioque ab oculis ad animum transferens multo etiam magis pulchritudinem, constantiam, ordinem in consiliis factisque conservandam[15] putat cavetque, ne quid indecore effeminateve faciat, tum in omnibus et opinionibus et factis ne quid libidinose aut faciat aut cogitet.

Quibus ex rebus conflatur et efficitur id, quod quaerimus, honestum, quod etiamsi nobilitatum non sit, tamen honestum sit, quodque vere dicimus, etiamsi a nullo laudetur, natura esse laudabile.

# English translation

**13** Above all, the search after truth and its eager pursuit are peculiar to man. And so, when we have leisure from the demands of business cares, we are eager to see, to hear, to learn something new, and we esteem a desire to know the secrets or wonders of creation as indispensable to a happy life. Thus we come to understand that what is true, simple, and genuine appeals most strongly to a man's nature. To this passion for discovering truth there is added a hungering, as it were, for independence, so that a mind well-moulded by Nature is unwilling to be subject to anybody save one who gives rules of conduct or is a teacher of truth or who, for the general good, rules according to justice and law. From this attitude come greatness of soul and a sense of superiority to worldly conditions.

[The Project Gutenberg eBook of De Officiis, by Cicero](#)

# English translation cont.

**14** And it is no mean manifestation of Nature and Reason that man is the only animal that has a feeling for order, for propriety, for moderation in word and deed. And so no other animal has a sense of beauty, loveliness, harmony in the visible world; and Nature and Reason, extending the analogy of this from the world of sense to the world of spirit, find that beauty, consistency, order are far more to be maintained in thought and deed, and the same Nature and Reason are careful to do nothing in an improper or unmanly fashion, and in every thought and deed to do or think nothing capriciously.

It is from these elements that is forged and fashioned that moral goodness which is the subject of this inquiry—something that, even though it be not generally ennobled, is still worthy of all honour; and by its own nature, we correctly maintain, it merits praise, even though it be praised by none.

[The Project Gutenberg eBook of De Officiis, by Cicero](#)

**Thank you!**



Cicero - De Officiis (13) <sup>In first</sup> In primis~~que~~ hominis est propria veri inquisitio atque investigatio.  
 hominis → genitive sing. of "homo" (masc.)  
 propria → nominative fem sing or neuter pl of "proprius", which means "one's own", "particular to", "exclusive"  
 veri → genitive sing. of "verum" (neuter) — "reality", "fact", "truth"  
 inquisitio → search, investigation (fem)

(13 cont) <sup>therefore</sup> Itaque cum sumus <sup>we are</sup> necessariis negotiis curisque <sup>nom. m. pl.</sup> vacui, tum ~~avemus~~ aliquid videre, audire, addiscere. cognitionemque rerum aut occultarum aut admirabilium ad beate vivendum necessariam ducimus.

cum necessariis negotiis curisque —  
 1. unavoidable 1. business, inevitable employment, 2. indispensable occupation  
 requisite

curisque — dat. pl. or abl. pl. of "cura" (f), which means "care", "concern", "thought" etc.

vacui — nom. m. pl. of vacuus, vacua, vacuum, (1st/2nd dec)  
 gen. m. sing. 1. empty, vacant, unoccupied  
 gen. neu. sing. 2. ~~devoid~~ devoid of, free of, w/out  
 3. (of time) free, unoccupied

tum — (adv) 1. then, thereupon; 2. at the time, at that time  
 avemus — aveo, avere — I desire, wish or long for

aliquid — adverbial accusative of "aliquis" (someone, something)

addiscere — I learn (in addition to)

cognitionem - acc. sing. of cognitio (f) (2)  
↳ examine, inquiry, investigate  
↳ learning, study (acquisition of knowledge)  
↳ knowledge, cognition, cognizance

rerum - gen. pl. of "res" - thing (5th dec.)

aut - (conj) 1. or (exclusive or); "aut... aut... aut" is equivalent to "either... or"

Occultum - gen. fem. pl. of "occultus" - hidden, concealed, <sup>um</sup>

admirabilium - gen. <sup>masc.</sup> fem. <sup>neu.</sup> pl. of "admirabilis" - admirable, wonderful, worthy of admiration

Beate - (adv) happily (from "beatus")

ad vivendum necessarium -  
(gerundive of vivo)

(13 cont) <sup>out of from (abl)</sup> Et quod intellegitur, quod verum, simplex  
sincerumque sit, id esse naturae hominis  
aptissimum.

quod <sup>true, real</sup> verum, <sup>simple</sup> simplex <sup>genuine</sup> sincerumque sit —  
(neuter) (neuter)

#Without relative clause: Et quod <sup>?</sup> intellegitur id esse  
naturae hominis aptissimum → id <sup>?</sup> intellegitur esse  
aptissimum naturae hominis → it is understood to be  
↳ most suitable, apt the most suitable of  
↳ aptus, apta, aptum the nature of man

(13 cont) <sup>dat. sing.</sup> Huic veri videndi cupiditati <sup>dat. sing.</sup> adiuncta est  
appetitio quaedam principatus, <sup>desire; lust, passion;</sup>  
<sup>cupidity, avarice, greed</sup>

appetitio (appetitionis) 3<sup>rd</sup> dec — the act of grasping at or  
reaching after something; (figuratively) a passionate  
longing or striving for something, strong desire,  
impulse or inclination

quaedam — a certain someone, something  
↳ nom fem sing.  
pl.  
neut. pl.  
acc neut pl.

principatus — m. (1<sup>st</sup> dec) first place, rule, leadership,  
supremacy



13 cont. ut <sup>nom.</sup> nemini <sup>acc.</sup> parere animus bene bene (4)  
informatus a natura <sup>subjunctive</sup> velit <sup>dat.</sup> nisi praecipienti aut  
docenti aut utilitatis causa iuste et legitime  
imperanti; #parere nemini nisi praecipienti aut docenti aut utilitas.  
aut utilitatis causa iuste et legitime imperanti

nemini - dative of nemo, which means "nobody" or "no one"  
parere - could be of paro

pareo - (in dative) I obey, I submit to  
pario

animus - (m) 1. that life-giving aspect which animates: life, life for  
soul, vitality etc. E.g. Tibi bene ex animo volo.  
I wish you well from my soul.  
2. the intellectual dimension of the human mind  
(the seat of rational & other thoughts): intellect,  
mind, conscience

velit → 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular present active subjunctive of volo

informatus - formed, moulded, fashioned

informo, informare, informari - I form, I fashion, I mould, I give shape to

ut nemini parere animus bene informatus a  
natura velit → ut animus bene informatus a  
natura velit nemini parere → nemini  
so that the mind well-moulded by nature  
would want to obey nobody

praecipienti - present participle of "praecipio" - I teach,  
I instruct, I advise, I inform

docenti - present participle of "doceo" - I teach

utilitatis - gen. sing. of "utilitas" - usefulness, utility, expediency



causa - (Cause, reason; motive, reason, pretext) ⑤

- (postposition) for the sake of (takes genitive)  
e.g. urbis causa - for the sake of the city

imperans - present active participle of "impero" - I command  
→ commanding, giving orders to, ruling, governing, demanding, imposing

adverb  
iuste - (adv) formed from "iustus" - just, righteous, lawful, legal

legitime - (adv) lawfully, legitimately, according to law

13 cont. ex quo <sup>nom sing</sup> magnitudo animi <sup>3rd person sing.</sup> existit humanarumque rerum contemptio

animus (m); second dec.		
	sing	plural
nom	animus	-i
gen	-i	-orum
dat	-i	-is
acc	-um	-os
abl	-o	-is
voc	-e	-i

animi - either nom pl or gen sing

existit -> see existo  
→ he exists, it exists; there is; appear, arise, emerge

contemptio - (f-3rd dec) contempt, scorn

magnitudo - (f-3rd dec) greatness:  
either in size, bulk, etc;  
or as in sheer amount or  
number of something - abundance

# ex quo magnitudo animi existit humanarumque rerum contemptio.  
ex quo existit magnitudo animi et contemptio humanarum rerum.  
from this there is greatness of the soul & scorn of human things  
emerges

(14) Nec vero illa parva <sup>vis</sup> naturae est rationisque, (B)  
 quid unum hoc animal sentit,  
 quid sit ordo,  
 quid sit,  
 quid deceat,  
 in factis dictisque qui modus.

NEC - (adv) not, and not, not, neither, not even  
 (conj) " " " " " "

VERO - (adv) verily, truly, really, (as a postpositive) But

illa - nom fem sing  
 nom neu pl.  
 acc neu pl

unum - nom neuter sing of "unus" - (adj) one, single, sole  
 acc masc sing  
 acc neuter sing

animal - (n) animal, living creature

ordo - (m) 3rd dec; a class, station, condition, rank; a group (of ppl,  
 of the same class, caste, station, rank etc. viz senatorii ordinis

deceat - 3rd person sing present active subjunctive of "deco"

deceat, decēre, decuit - second dec conj, no passive, no supine, 3rd pers. om,  
 - it adorns.  
 - it is decent, suitable, seemly, proper

# Nec vero illa parva vis naturae est rationisque RCs  
 in factis dictisque qui <sup>nom</sup>modus (est).  
 in what is done and what is said.

(14 cont) Itaque <sup>thereit</sup> eorum <sup>gen pl</sup> ipsorum, <sup>gen</sup> quae <sup>ablative</sup> aspectu

3rd person pl.  
passive present  
indicative

sentiuntur,

no other - nom neuter sing  
acc neuter sing  
neuter  
1 nom  
acc

nullum aliud animal

acc  
pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam  
acc  
partium sentit;

pulchritudinem → pulchritudo - (f) beauty, attractiveness, excellence

venustatem → venustas - (f) loveliness, comeliness, charm, grace, beauty, elegance, attractiveness

convenientiam → (f) accord, harmony, symmetry, agreement, conformity  
(f gen pl)

partium - gen. plural of "pars" - part, portion, piece, share

(ablative) aspectu → aspectus → aspicio - I look at, I behold, I view, see;  
um aspiciere  
aspici I observe, notice, catch sight of

~~14 cont~~ # Itaque eorum ipsorum

quae aspectu sentiuntur,  
nullum aliud animal .:. sentit

Therefore these things them-  
selves,  
which are felt by sight  
no other animal feels



(14 cont) *quam similitudinem natura ratioque* (8)  
*ab oculis ad animum transferens* <sup>nom/neuter acc</sup> <sup>adv by much</sup> *multo*  
*etiam* <sup>(adv) more</sup> *magis* <sup>f - acc sing</sup> *pulchritudinem*, <sup>f - acc sing</sup> *constantiam*,  
*ordinem*. in <sup>neuter - 2nd acc</sup> <sup>abl-pl</sup> *consiliis* *factisque* *conservandam*  
*putat* <sup>indicative</sup> *cavetque*, <sup>subjunctive?</sup> *ne* *quid* *indecorē* <sup>(adv)</sup> *effeminate* <sup>neclitic?</sup> *faciat*, *tum* *in* *omnibus* *et*

*opinionibus* *et* *factis* *ne* *quid* *libidinose* <sup>(adv)</sup>  
*aut* *faciat* *aut* *cogitet*.  
 ↳ libidinosely  
 ↳ licentiously  
 ↳ lecherously

*putat* → *putō, putāre, putāvī, putātum* - (figuratively) arrange, set up; (figuratively) value, esteem, deem, regard, consider, (figuratively) judge, suspect, suppose; (figuratively) ponder, consider, think about

*cavet* → *cavō, cavāre, cavāvī, cavātum* - I make hollow, hollow out, excavate; I perforate, pierce

*Мальчиками рождутся, а мужиком становится*

licentious - (adj) lacking restraint, or ignoring societal rules/standards, particularly in sexual conduct

14 cont. Quibus ex rebus conflatur et (9)  
efficitur id, quod <sup>we ask</sup> quaerimus,  
 honestum, quod <sup>even if</sup> etiamsi <sup>having been made known or ennobled</sup> nobilitatum  
 non sit, <sup>although/yet</sup> tamen honestum sit,  
 quodque <sup>(vero) truly, verily</sup> vere dicimus, etiamsi <sup>even if</sup>  
a nullo <sup>by nobody</sup> laudatur, <sup>passive subjunctive</sup> natura <sup>abl?</sup> esse <sup>nom/acc neuter sing</sup> laudabile.  
<sup>acc. inf. constructio</sup>

conflatur → cōflō, cōflāre, cōflāvī, cōflātum — I kindle (a fire)  
 I forge, fuse or melt (metal), I refine or purify, I inflame,  
 (passions)

efficiō — I make or work out; effect, execute, complete, accomplish, make,  
 ex+facio) form, compose; or I cause to occur, effect, bring about, realize  
 I produce, bear, yield; (philosophy) I make out, show, prove

etiamsi — (conj) even if, although, albeit

honestus, honesta, honestum — full or regarded w  
 honor; honorable; of high birth, noble, distinguished,  
 ed), respectable, eminent  
 — bringing or deserving honor; worthy; virtuous