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Italy, s. XV²

Giovanni del Virgilio, *Allegoriae librorum Ovidii Metamorphoseos*

ff. 1r-44v [... ingressa est] // [R]eligionem et facta est bona et perconstans habita fuit dea, et data est in uxorem deo Ostri [l. Osiri], qui tunc colebatur ibi, unde dictum est: Virgo prudens vibrante deo coniungitur illi, / Brutescit mundo quando soluta datur ... Tunc dixit ei Sybilla: Videsne tu illum? Ille venturus est Deus et verus rex. Tandem Augustus Cesar reversus est Rhomam et prohibuit ut pro deo populus adoraret eum in secula seculorum. Amen. *Finis.* ff. 45-49 ruled but blank

Iohannes de Virgilio (Giovanni del Virgilio, s. XIV¹), *Allegoriae librorum Ovidii Metamorphoseos*, in prose and verse. F. Ghisalberti, ed., *Giovanni del Virgilio espositore delle Metamorfosi* (Florence, 1933; printed separately from *Giornale dantesco*, 34), pp. 43-107. Begins incomplete with allegory 10 of Book I, dealing with Io (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 1.568-747). Allegory VIII.9 is missing. In allegories I.11, VII.22 and XI.9 the verses are missing; the verses in allegories III.2, IV.4, IV.28 and VII.2 are incomplete. About the author, see *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, v. 38 (Rome, 1990), pp. 404-409. About the work: F.T. Coulson, "A Checklist of Newly Identified Manuscripts of the *Allegoriae* of Giovanni del Virgilio, *Studi Medievali*, 3d Ser., 37 (1996), pp. 443-453 (describes our manuscript pp. 446-447); M. Ferretti, "Per la *recensio* e la prima diffusione delle *Allegoriae* sulle *Metamorfosi* di Giovanni del Virgilio" (.....), pp. 1-16 (describes our manuscript p. 6). A full list of manuscripts in Coulson and Roy, 424. The Latin spelling is quite unusual; the scribe e.g. writes "optava" for "octava"; the text in many places deviates from Ghisalberti's edition.

An error occurred in the transition between quires I and II: the text of the top 10 lines of f. 11r is also found in the bottom 10 lines of f. 10v; on the latter page the passage in question is deleted by means of a cross and the word "vacat". In quire III (ff. 21-30) an error in the composition occurred: the right order of the text is ff. 21-22-24-23-25 etc. The corrector has used crosses and the letters "a"- "d" to indicate the right sequence of the 6 pages involved (ff. 22v-25r). The numbering of the allegories is more than once erroneous or misleading: V.4 and V.5 are both titled "quinta transformatio" (f. 12r); V.20 is titled "vigesima tertia" (f. 15r), and VI.10 "decima tertia transformatio" (f. 18r); VI.32 and VI.33 are titled "secunda" and "tertia transformatio" respectively (f. 21r-v); similarly, XIV.14 and XIV.15 are titled "quarta" and "quinta transformatio" (f. 40v).

Paper, ff. II + 49, 210 x 145 mm. 4° folding. There are remnants of an early foliation in arabic numerals, showing that the beginning of the text was already missing at the time the manuscript was foliated. Watermark: tower, var. Piccard, Turmwasserzeichen 611-613; var. Briquet, 15911??. Worm holes in the first and in the last leaves of the manuscript.

I-V¹⁰ (ff. 1-49 and rear pastedown). Vertical catchwords close to the lower edge.

Board ruling (impression on the verso pages) for one column of 31 lines above top line. Ruling type 36, 145 x 65 mm.

Copied by one hand in extremely small Humanistica Semitextualis Libraria. In the poetical sections the majuscules at the opening of each verse are set apart. Marginal captions in pale red ink. At the top of f. 17r the scribe wrote “Yhesus Christus”.

Headings (“liber secundus” etc.) in clumsy Capitalis (several times erroneous: “LIBE”). Space for a 2-line initial left free on the first line of f. 1r, although this is not the beginning of the text.

Binding s. XV. Brown leather (sheepskin?) over cardboard (replacing worm-eaten wooden boards), blind-tooled with a frame of fillets and rolls; in the central panel a motif made of small rhomboid stamps. Parchment front pastedown. Remnants or marks of four clasps attached to the front cover.

Probably in the *exemplar* of our manuscript the beginning of the text was equally missing; otherwise the idea to open the codex with an initial, in the middle of a sentence, would be hard to explain. The other textual anomalies may also have occurred in the *exemplar* already. On the rear pastedown, in Humanistica Cursiva Formata s. XV/XVI: “Qui infoelix est semper timet” and “Rerum omnium vicissitudo est etc.” [Terence, *Eunuchus* 276]. Sold at auction at Sotheby Parke Bernet & Co. on 11 Dec. 1979 (*Catalogue of Western Manuscripts and Miniatures*, lot 44) to the Swiss dealer Braunschwig. Purchased from Bernard M. Rosenthal, Berkeley (MS 86 in his collection), on the Edwin J. Beinecke Fund.

R 13.04.10

Albert Derolez