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Otranto (Apulia), 13 Febr. 1466

**Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones***

1. f. 1r *Hec Augustinus*. De his dici potest aliquid eos non consonum, qui non precipiendi auctoritate, sed proficiendi exercitacione scribuntur a nobis ... quapropter eatenus divinarum tractatoribus scripturarum fides adhibenda est, quoadusque eidem fidei tenor veritatis astipulantur.

Augustinus Hipponensis (St. Augustine, 354-430), note on Lactantius, shortened version of *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (CPL 321), 11.5, J. Zycha, ed., CSEL 25 (1891), pp. 320-321; followed by an extract from the same author, *Epistula* 82.3, A. Goldbacher, ed., CSEL 34.2 (1898), p. 354 and from Claudianus Mamertus (d. c. 474), *De statu animae* (CPL 983), 2.9, A. Engelbrecht, ed., CSEL 11 (1885), p. 135.

2. f. 1r *Lactantius*. Nimis perverse seipsum amat qui et alios vult errare, ut suus error lateat ... quod omnia non penitenda dixisse peniteat que cognoverit dicenda non fuisse.

Augustinus Hipponensis (St. Augustine), note on Lactantius, shortened after *Epistula* 143.2-3, A. Goldbacher ed., CSEL 44 (1904), pp. 251-253.

3. f. 1r-v *Hec ex verbis Ieronimi*. Hactenus [*l. Lactantius*] quasi quidam fluvius eloquencie Tulliane Crispum [*sic*] filium Constantini latinis litteris erudit ... tam nostra affirmare potuisse quam facile aliena destruxit.

Hieronimus Stridonensis (St. Jerome), note on Lactantius, from *Epistula* 58.10, I. Hilberg, ed., CSEL 54 (1910), p. 539, followed by an unidentified note .

4. f. 1v *Item Ieronimus*. Lactantium propter erudicionem sic interdum legendum arbitror, quomodo Origenem, Arnobium et nonnullos ecclesiasticos scriptores ... qui de ira quoque Dei et de opificio duo volumina edidit, quos si legere volueris dialog<or>um Ciceronis excerptum reperies.

Hieronimus Stridonensis (St. Jerome), note on Lactantius (in fact on Origen), after *Epistula* 62.2, I. Hilberg, ed., CSEL 54 (1910), p. 583, followed by an excerpt from *Epistula* 70.5, p. 707.

5. f. 1v *Ieronimus de viris illustribus sic dicit de Lactantio*. Firmianus, qui et Lactantius [*sic*] Arnobii discipulus, sub Dioclitiano principe accitus cum gramatico ... hic in extrema senectute magister Caesaris Crispi, filii Econstantini [*sic*], in Gallia fuit, qui postea a patre interfectus est.

Hieronimus Stridonensis (St. Jerome), note on Lactantius, from *De viris illustribus*, 80 (CPL 616), E.C. Richardson, ed., *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, v. 14.1a (1896), pp. 42-43; PL 23.687-689.

6. ff. 1v-9r *De falsa religione contra gentes Lactantii Firmiani divinarum institutionum libri primi tituli. Capitulum primum*. Quanti sit et fuerit semper cognitio veritatis; et quod nec sine religione sapientia, nec sine sapientia sit probanda religio ...

Exortacio ut omnes properent ad suscipiendam cum religione sapientiam, per quam ad beatissimam pervenitur eterne vite hereditatem.

Table of Contents (list of chapters) of art. 7.

7. ff. 10r-335v *Institutionum divinarum Lactantii Firmiani liber primus incipit. Quanti sit et fuerit semper cognitio veritatis; et quod nec sine religione sapientia, nec sine sapientia sit probanda religio. Capitulum primum* [heading on f. 9r; f. 9v blank]. Magno et excellenti ingenio viri, cum se doctrinae poenitus dedissent, quicquid laboris poterat impendi, contemptis omnibus et privatis et publicis accionibus, ad inquirende veritatis studium contulerunt ... [f. 335r:] Congrediamur cum hoste quem novimus fortiter ut, victores ac devicto adversario triumphantes, premium virtutis, quod ipse promissit [*sic*], a Domino consequamur. *Lactantii Firmiani divinarum institutionum adversus gentes liber septimus et ultimus foeliciter explicit. Amen.* [f. 335v:] Presentem hunc librum a me Thoma Canthacusino Constantinopolitano scriptum sciant legentes Idronti, die XIII<sup>o</sup> Februarii, XIII<sup>o</sup> Indict., M<sup>o</sup> CCCC<sup>o</sup> LXVI<sup>o</sup>. Finis. Deo gratias. Amen. f. 336 ruled but blank

Firmianus Lactantius (d. c. 325), *Divinae institutiones* (CPL 85), S. Brandt, ed., CSEL, 19 (1890). Space for the Greek quotations has been left blank, sometimes with the note “greca” and a latin translation in the margin.

Paper, ff. III + 336 + II, 290 x 215 mm. In-folio folding. Watermarks: (1) Lion rampant holding a sword and surmounted by a fleur de lis: Piccard, *Wasserzeichen Raubtiere*, 1699-1700 (1465-1466); (2) and (3) Mountain: var. Briquet 11702, 11709 (1440, 1466).

I-XXXIII<sup>10</sup> (ff. 1-330), XXXIV<sup>6</sup> (ff. 331-336). All quires open with the invocation “Ihesus” in the upper margin. The catchwords are applied with a lot of fantasy: mostly horizontal, either in the middle or at right, but sometimes vertical or sloping at right; with flourishes in one or other pattern or undecorated, rarely framed.

Ruled with lead for writing above top line, one column ff. 1r-9v (artt. 1-6), two columns ff. 10r-336v (art. 7). Prickings are visible in the upper, lower and sometimes in the outer margins. Ruling types: 16 and 46 (the horizontal lines continuing over the intercolumnar space), 158-180 x 98-120 mm. The number of written lines varies: generally 32 lines in quires I-II (ff. 1-20, but ff. 19 and 20 have 33 lines), 31 lines in quire III (ff. 21-30), 30 lines in quire IV (ff. 31-40), 29 lines in quire V (ff. 41-50), 28 lines in quire VI (ff. 51-60), 26 lines in quire VII (ff. 61-70), 27 lines in quire VIII (ff. 71-80), 28 lines in quire IX (ff. 81-90), 27 lines in quire X (ff. 91-100), 25 lines in quire XI (ff. 101-110), 26 lines in quires XII-XVII (ff. 111-170), 25 lines in quires XVIII-XIX (ff. 171-190), 26 lines in quires XX-XXII (ff. 191-220), 25 lines in quires XXIII-XXV (ff. 221-250), 26 lines in quire XXVI (ff. 251-260), 28 lines in quires XXVII-XXXI (ff. 261-310), 29 lines in quires XXXII-XXXIV (ff. 311-335).

Copied by one hand in an idiosyncratic Gothico-Humanistica Libraria, with *f* and straight *s* with long pointed descenders, Uncial or Half-Uncial *d*, round or straight *s* in final position and *e caudata* used in a totally unorthodox way; unexplained stray letters appear in the text. The word(s) following an (unexecuted, see below) initial are in fancy Capitalis. The Greek scribe Thomas Cantacuzenus from Constantinople owned a s. X Greek manuscript of the Letters of Libanius: Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. gr. 483; see M. Vogel, V. Gardthausen, *Die*

*griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (Leipzig, 1909), p. 150 [he is of course not the scribe of that manuscript, as supposed by Vogel and Gardthausen].

Headings, paragraph marks and stroking of some majuscules in red. All other decoration is missing: there are guide letters in the margin; space for initials of various heights, but generally exceptionally wide, has been provided at the opening of Books and chapters

Quarter binding s. XX: white pigskin and oak boards with rounded edges, the leather blind-tooled with fillets and flowerets. Spine with three raised bands. Brown edges.

The text was copied by a Greek scribe in a center where very few Latin codices were produced, obviously after an *exemplar* which missed the Greek quotations and the headings of the Books and chapters. The scribe left blank spaces for both, but was afterwards able to fill in the headings, transcribing them from the Table of Contents (art. 6); the spaces in the text for these were generally too small, and the script of the headings is consequently mostly of a smaller size and compressed. Presumably first the text (art. 7) was copied in a long series of quires, starting on f. 10r and written in two columns; on the 9 preceding leaves of quire I, which apparently had remained blank, artt. 1-6 were afterwards copied in long lines. The Table of Contents, or list of headings (art. 6), is as a separate entity also found in Milan, Bibl. Ambrosiana, H 197 inf. (s. XV), ff. 37r-45v.

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Albert Derolez