

*LES ENLUMINURES, LTD*  
2970 North Lake Shore Drive 11B  
Chicago, Illinois 60657

tel. 1-773-929-5986  
fax. 1-773-528-3976  
chicago@lesenluminures.com

*LES ENLUMINURES*  
Le Louvre des Antiquaires  
2 place du Palais-Royal  
75001 Paris

tél : 33 1 42 60 15 58  
fax : 33 1 40 15 00 25  
info@lesenluminures.com

[ANONYMOUS], Commentary on Genesis; JOANNES TZETZES, *Parva Ilias* [*Antehomerica, Homeric et Posthomeric*]; ANACREON, *Ode to a young girl*; SAPPHO, *Ode to Aphrodite*. In Greek and Latin, manuscript on paper. Italy, perhaps Rome, c. 1530.

44 folios, preceded and followed by [1] paper flyleaf, complete (collation: [2] + i<sup>8</sup>, ii<sup>10</sup>, iii-iv<sup>8</sup>, v<sup>4</sup>, vi<sup>4</sup> + [2]), catchwords, on paper (watermark close to Briquet, "Agneau pascal", no. 58: Rome 1531-1535), written in brown ink in a humanistic script, with numerous abbreviations, some marginal corrections or clarifications in Greek. Unbound, covered with a contemporary paper wrapper, double filet frame traced in ink on both sides of wrapper (Some waterstaining, never affecting legibility; lower portion of f. 43 cut out, with no loss of text). Dimensions 208 x 140 mm.

Curious association of Greek texts, prose and poetic, both religious and secular, perhaps realized as a school or didactic exercise, albeit by a budding Hellenist already showing a sure mastery of Greek calligraphy. This association of texts combines Biblical and theogonic texts with epic and lyric secular poetry, of which manuscript copies appear to be rare, and it reflects well the very eclectic interests of Christian Humanists.

## PROVENANCE

1. Likely copied in the Latin West (perhaps a school exercise? or a personal Humanist copy?), the script and watermark of this manuscript suggest an Italian origin, perhaps Rome. A table of contents is copied in a later hand on the first flyleaf: "1. Anonymi de Mundi et primi hominis creatione. – 2. Joannis Tzetzae Grammatici Parva Ilias. – 3. Anacreontis Ode. – 4. Sapphûs hymnus in Venerem."

## TEXT

ff. 1-12v, [Anonymous], Commentary on the Book of Genesis; heading, "Συν θεω άρκη κτησεος και σιστάσεος και νόησις ούρανίων και έπιγειων και καταχθονιων και πως συνίσαται ολος ο κοσμος και η σίστασις του κοσμου έπειτα και ο άνθρωπος"; incipit, "Έν άρχη έποίησεν ο θεός τον ούρανον και την γην [...]" (In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth...); explicit, "[...] τό κατηργασε ο θεος";

This text is not recorded at the IRHT (Paris), Greek Section. It appears to be a commentary on the Book of Genesis, beginning with the opening Biblical words, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth..." with numerous theogonic digressions and considerations on the cosmos and the creation of man. A similar text is found with the same opening, although the texts rapidly

differ, entitled "Florilegium de S. Trinitate et de incarnatione," found in a number of manuscripts such as Vatican, Vat. gr. 687, fol. 146; Vat. gr. 1569, fol. 219; Vat. gr. 1719, fol. 77. Could the present text be a type of florilegium on Genesis?

ff. 13-42 [with f. 39v, blank], Joannes Tzetzes (ca. 1110-1180), *Parva Ilias* [*Prohomerica* or *Antehomerica*, *Homerica* and *Posthomerica*]; heading, "Ἰωάννου γραμματικου του Τζέζου ὅσα παρέλει Ὅμηρος μέχρι και της ἀλόσεως ητοι η μικρά Ἰλιάς", incipit, "Ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο μέγαν πόνον ἰλιακοιο"; *Posthomerica* with heading, "ὑπόθεσις των μέθ'ομηρον..."; explicit, "[...] οί καδέ τ'έλθέμεναι λυγρόν νόσον ἰδόντας. τέλος";

Composed in verse form, this is a copy of Ioannes Tzetzes's *Parva Ilias* also named *Prohomerica* (or *Antehomerica*), *Homerica* and *Posthomerica*. There are 20 manuscripts recorded by the IRHT (Paris), Greek Section, of which none are in North American collections. The text was published in Lehrs and Dübner, 1840, pp. 3-10, as well as in Bekker, 1816, pp. 3-21 (*Antehomerica*), pp. 25-46 (*Homerica*), pp. 49-86 (*Posthomerica*).

Poet and commentator, Joannes Tzetzes was born circa 1110 and died between 1180 and 1185. He composed voluminous commentaries on Homer, *Allegories to the Iliad and Odyssey*, *Exegesis*, and the present *Antehomerica*, *Homerica* and *Posthomerica*, in which he claimed to be more consistent than Homer himself! (see *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, New York, 1991, III, p. 2136).

f. 42, Anacreon, *Ode on a young girl*, heading, Ἀνακρέοντος ; incipit, "Πωλε θρηκική τι δει με / λοξόν ομμασι βλέπουσα [...] [Ah tell me why you turn and fly / My little Thracian filly shy...];

Anacreon (560-478 B.C.) was a Greek lyric poet included amongst the canonical list of nine lyric poets, notable for his love songs and his "drinking" songs, composed in Ionic dialect. In this poem, Anacreon complains that a young woman, whom he compares to a Thracian filly (or a young female horse), does not recognize his amatory skills. Published in M.L. West, *Carmina Anacreontea edidit*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1984, no. 60; see also *Anacreon, Anacreonta*, tr. David A. Campbell, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1988 (Loeb Classical Library, 143).

f. 42v, Sappho, *Ode to Aphrodite*, heading, Σάπφους λεσβίαις; incipit, "Ποιλόθρον ἀθάνατ' Ἀφροδιτα [...]" [Iridescent-throned Aphrodite, deathless / Child of Zeus, wile-weaver, I now implore you / Don't – I beg you, Lady – with pains and torments / Crush down my spirit (...)];

The *Ode to Aphrodite* or *Hymn to Aphrodite* is written in the meter the poet Sappho (fl. c. 650-590 B.C.) most commonly used, which are "Sapphics." The present *Ode to Aphrodite* is published in numerous editions; we quote here T. Reinach and A. Puech, *Alcée. Sappho*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1937, p. 190-191.

We cannot say how long after the seventh century Sappho was read, but in the Middle Ages, readers were either entirely ignorant of her or had erroneous ideas. The critic and compiler Photius refers only to the tradition of her love for Phaon and the famous Leucadian Leap, as well as to the hypothesis that she was different from Sappho the courtesan. Plato referred to her two centuries after her death as the tenth muse. The father of the Church Tatian (c. 140 A.D.) called her a female

harlot, an idea which led to the burning of her books under Gregory of Nazianzen in c. 380 A.D. According to Scaliger, more burning took place in Constantinople and Rome in 1073. In any case, no manuscript has survived in Europe.

This particular ode has survived in its entirety, rather than the more common fragmentary nature of Sappho's verses, through Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writing in Rome c. 25 B.C., who quotes in his *On Literary Composition* the present *Ode to Aphrodite* as a perfect illustration of the elaborately finished style of poetry, showing in detail how its grace and beauty lie in the subtle harmony between words and ideas. Editors have based their edition on two early manuscripts of the treatise (in Greek, *Περὶ συνθέσεως*), respectively (P) Parisinus gr. 1741, mid 10<sup>th</sup> c., and (F) Laurentianus, 59 (15), end of the 10<sup>th</sup>-beginning 11<sup>th</sup> c. Both these manuscripts were rediscovered in Italy in the fifteenth century, and the Laurentiana manuscript (F) was bought in Constantinople by Johannes Lascaris for Laurentius of Medicis (entered the Laurentiana in 1495) (see G. Aujac and M. Lebel, eds., *Denys d'Halicarnasse. Opuscules rhétoriques, tome III, La composition stylistique*, Paris, Belles Lettres, 1981, pp. 166-167); W. Rhuyss Roberts (ed.), *Dionysius of Halicarnassus. On Literary Composition...*, London, Macmillan, 1910).

f. 43v, blank;

f. 44, Notes on Heroic Poetry, in Latin and Greek, heading, *De heroici carminis speciebus* [On the different kinds of Heroic hymns], incipit, "Tres sunt heroici carminis species...".

Short added notes providing metric indications to compose Heroic or epic hymns, with examples in Greek.

## LITERATURE

Bekker, I. *Ioannis Tzetzae Antehomerica, Homerica et Posthomerica*, Berlin, 1816.

Cesaretti, P. *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano, 1991.

Lehrs, F.S. and F. Dübner, *Hesiodi carmina, Apollonii Argonautica, etc.*, Paris, 1841.

Sandys, J.E. *A History of classical scholarship. I. From the VIth century B. C. to the end of the middle ages. II. From the revival of learning to the end of the XVIIIth century (in Italy, France, England and the Netherlands)*, Cambridge, 1903-1908.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

On Italian Humanism:

<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/REN/HUMANISM.HTM>

Byzantines in Renaissance Italy:

<http://www.the-orb.net/encyclop/late/laterbyz/harris-ren.html>