

Le Louvre des Antiquaires
 2 Place du Palais-Royal
 75001 Paris (France)
 tel. +33 (0)1 42 60 15 58 • fax. +33 (0)1 40 15 00 25
 info@lesenluminures.com

2970 North Lake Shore Drive
 Chicago, IL 60657 (USA)
 tel. +773 929 5986
 fax. +773 528 3976
 chicago@lesenluminures.com

DECIMUS MAGNUS AUSONIUS (310?-395?), [*Opuscula*], including excerpts from *Epigrammata*; *Fasti*; *Versus Paschales*; *Epistulae*; *Eclogae*; *Gratiarum Actio*; *Technopaegnon*; *Cento Nuptialis et alia* [followed by] CLAUDIUS CLAUDIANUS (370?-404?), [Excerpts from *Carmina minora*]

In Latin and Greek, decorated manuscript on parchment
 Northern Italy, c. 1475

59 ff., preceded by two modern flyleaves and one contemporary flyleaf, followed by two modern flyleaves, missing two text leaves and missing a quire (of 10? of 8?) between ff. 45-46 (collation: i^o [10-1, missing first leaf of quire], ii^o, iii^o [10-1, missing last leaf of quire between ff. 28-29], iv-v¹⁰, vi⁸, vii³ [4-1, missing last leaf of quire, a cancelled blank]), ink foliation in upper righthand corner most likely dating before the 19th c. indicating the first leaf was missing early on [foliation 1-30, 30bis, 31-33, 33bis, 34-53, 58, 58bis], ruled in plummet, vertical catchwords, written in brown ink in an elegant italic humanistic script, on up to 28 long lines (justification 144 x 84 mm), capitals for each verse in Roman capitals set off to the left, opening initials in pale red ink also set off to the left, numerous marginal contemporary notes in various hands, some in Greek. Bound in a modern imitation binding, half-binding of white leather, back sewn on 3 raised thongs, bare wooden boards, two leather clasp straps secured by brass catches (Overall good condition, a bit of staining to parchment, some faded ink or deliberately erased lines, in particular some passages in Greek). Dimensions 203 x 135 mm.

Humanist copy of verse and prose works by the understudied Gallo-Roman school master and politician Ausonius. This compilation is representative of a group of some 20 manuscripts, all of Italian humanistic origins, presenting a similar selection of Ausonius's works, mostly his school books and his letters. Contemporary marginal notes and corrections add interest to the copy. No substantial copy of Ausonius is located in North American repositories, and, in spite of the large number of manuscripts, copies appear to be relatively rare on the market.

PROVENANCE

1. Script and preparation of parchment all suggest an Italian origin for this manuscript. The missing first leaf presumably contained a decorated or illuminated frontispiece, assumption corroborated by the presence of some faintly visible offset on the verso of the remaining front contemporary flyleaf: one can make out the tracing of an armorial shield, now wanting.

2. Contemporary inscription on blank f. 56, the unidentified name "Martinus." Another inscription on recto of front contemporary flyleaf reads: "Valentiniano V[alentiano] Gratiano Imp.[...]", likely referring to the three co-emperors of the Roman Empire that ruled in the

second half of the 4th century. In addition, one might signal the number "33" in black ink on the recto of the same front contemporary flyleaf, an early shelfmark of some sort.

3. Continental Private Collection.

TEXT

ff. 1-13v, Ausonius, *Epigrammata* and *Fasti*, beginning with Epigramma 5, incipit, "Nunc te marmoreum pro sumptu fecimus at cum Augustus frater remeaverit aureus esto" (f. 1); Epigramma 6 (f. 1); Epigramma 8 (f. 1); Epigramma 9 (f. 1); Epigramma 45 (ff. 1-1v); *Fasti* 1-4 (f. 1v); Epigramma 4 (f. 2); Epigramma 10 (f. 2); Epigramma 11 (ff. 2-2v); Epigramma 11 (f. 2v); Epigramma 12 (f. 2v); Epigramma 13 (ff. 2v-3); Epigramma 14 (f. 3); Epigramma 15 (f. 3); Epigramma 16 and 17 (ff. 3-3v); Epigramma 18 (f. 3v); Epigramma 20 (f. 3v); Epigramma 21 (f. 4); Epigramma 22 (f. 4); Epigramma 23 (f. 4); Epigramma 24 (ff. 4-4v); Epigramma 25 (f. 4v); Epigramma 26 (f. 4v); Epigramma 27 (ff. 4v-5); Epigramma 30 (f. 5); Epigramma 33, 34, 35 (f. 5); Epigramma 36 (f. 5); Address to his Creed, "Si tineas cariemque..." (f. 5v; see Green (ed.), 1991, *Praefationes variae*, 5, p. 6; Green, p. 243, *Address to his Creed*: "[...] it is fragment of a work no longer traceable..."); Epigramma 37 (f. 5v); Epigramma 28 (f. 6); Epigramma 29 (f. 6); Epigramma 39 (f. 6); Epigramma 41 (f. 6); Epigramma 43 (f. 6v); Epigramma 44 (f. 6v); Epigramma 46 (f. 6v); Epigramma 48 (f. 6v); Epigramma 50 (f. 6v); Epigramma 51 (f. 7); Epigramma 52 (f. 7); Epigramma 53 (f. 7); Epigramma 54 (f. 7); Epigramma 56 (ff. 7); Epigramma 57 (f. 7v); Epigramma 59 (f. 7v); Epigramma 60 (f. 7v); Epigramma 61 (f. 7v); Epigramma 62 (ff. 7v-8); Epigramma 63-79 (ff. 8-10); Epigramma 82-114 (ff. 10-13v) [Green (ed.), 1991, *Epigrammata*, pp. 65-96; *Fasti*, pp. 160-161];

ff. 13v-14, Ausonius, *Versus Paschales*, incipit, "Sancta salutiferi redeunt...";

ff. 14v-24v, Ausonius, *Epistulae* and *Eclogae*, Epistula 2 (f. 14v); Epistula 4 (ff. 14v-15); Epistula 5 (ff. 15v-16v); Epistula 17 (ff. 16v-17v); Epistula 10 (ff. 17v-18); Epistula 9 (ff. 21v-22); Epistula 6 (ff. 23-24); Epistula 7 (f. 24); Epistula 8 (f. 24-24v); Ecloga 17 (f. 24v) [references as published in Green (ed.), 1991, *Eclogae*, pp. 96-110; *Epistulae*, pp. 193-231];

ff. 24v-26, Ausonius, *Caesares*, incipit, "Caesares proceres in quorum regna...";

ff. 26-26v, Ausonius, *Epigrammata*, Epigramma 115 (ff. 26-26v); Epigramma 116-121 (ff. 26-26v) [Green (ed.), 1991, *Epigrammata*, pp. 95-96];

ff. 27-37, Ausonius, [*Gratiarum Actio* (Speech of Thanksgiving to the Emperor)] *Ad Gratianum imperatorem pro consulatu*, incipit, "Ago tibi gratias imperator Auguste si possem etiam referram..."; explicit, "[...] Auguste dignationis officii consecrares" [published in Schenkl, reed. 1982, pp. 19-30: *Gratiarum actio dicta domino Gratiano Augusto*];

ff. 37v-40v, Ausonius, *Technopaegnon*, incipit, "Misi ad te technopaegnon inertis otii..."; explicit, "[...] crinis velut antiphile" [published in Schenkl, reed. 1982, pp. 132-139; Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 175-183];

ff. 40v-43, Ausonius, *Griphus Ternari Numeri*, incipit, "Latebat inter nugas..." ; explicit, "[...] habeat noviesque novenos" [Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 111-115];

ff. 43-47v, Ausonius, *Cento Nuptialis*, incipit, "Perlege hoc etiam si opere est..." ; explicit, "[...] hec sacra non constant" [published in Schenkl, reed. 1982, pp. 140-146; Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 132-139];

ff. 47v-48v, Ausonius, *Epistulae*, Epistula 13 "Ausonius Theoni", incipit, "Ausonius cuius ferlam..." ; "[...] aut octo sorores..." (ends incomplete) [Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 208-210];

ff. 49-50, Ausonius, *Ephemeris* 3, [begins incomplete], incipit, "[...] quod fuit aut veniet..." ; explicit, "[...] et responsuris ferit aera vocibus. Amen" [Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 8-10];

ff. 50-51, Ausonius, *Epicedion in Patrem*, incipit, "Nomen ego Ausonius..." [Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 16-18];

ff. 51-53, Ausonius, *Protrepticus ad nepotem*, incipit, "Libellum quem ad nepotulum..." [Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 21-24];

ff. 53-55v, Ausonius, *Cupido cruciatus*, incipit, "[E]n unquam vidisti..." [Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 139-143];

ff. 55v-56v, Ausonius, *Bissula*, incipit, "[P]ervincis tamen et operta..." ; explicit, "Pingere si nostram pictor meditaris alumnam / emula cecropias ars imitetur apes" [Green (ed.), 1991, pp. 130-132];

Biography and works:

Born in modern Bordeaux (Burdigala), the son of a physician, Julius Ausonius, Decimus Magnus Ausonius taught grammar, including Greek and Latin language and literature, there, before traveling to Constantinople to serve as tutor to the family of Constantine, in c. 328. He later returned to Bordeaux to study rhetoric, and he became a "Grammaticus" in c. 334. In 364, Ausonius again received an imperial request; this time, to tutor Gratian in grammar and rhetoric. A few years later, Ausonius and Gratian went with Valentinian I on his campaign of 368/9 against the Germans. Ausonius was taken along to write about the events. In 370, Ausonius was made "comes" and in 375, he became "quaestor sacri palatii." When Gratian became emperor in 375, Ausonius advanced rapidly in the political arena, with family members following in his wake. Ausonius was made a Prefect of Gaul in 378, and in 379 he became consul and retired to Bordeaux. His most famous pupil, besides Gratian, was Paulinus who became bishop of Nola.

Although a Christian, who shows some knowledge of the Scriptures, Ausonius wrote mostly in classical Latin in various genres unrelated to Christianity. He composed epigrams, epitaphs, epistles, verse catalogues, occasional poems and prayers, macaronic verse on a wide variety of astonishingly diverse subjects. He imitated Juvenal. Noteworthy are his *Epigrams*, short poems on different subjects often translated from the Greek (which accounts for the passages in Greek); the *Parentalia*, thirty eulogies on deceased relatives, brief mnemonic poems called *Eclogues* treating trees, the months, the calendar, weights, etc.; *Technopaegnon*, a collection of verses in which each ends in a

monosyllable; pious Paschal-time prayers; *Epicedion*, a dirge on his father's death (d. 378); the *Cupido crucifixus*, a description of a painting in a dining-room at Trier, which represented Cupid as tormented in hell by the women who pursued him on earth; *Gratiarum actio*, in which Ausonius expresses in prose his thanks for having been made consul; his *Letters*, with twenty-five epistles, mostly in verse, the most interesting are addressed to St. Paulinus of Nola, in which Ausonius bewails a conversion that deprives the State and literature of the benefit of such a brilliant mind and tries to lead the saint back to worldly life at Rome; amatory verse addressed to "Bissula" about a young German girl awarded him as spoils.

Not included in the present anthology are the *Professores*, a collection of poems on the school masters of Bordeaux, and the *Ludus Septem Sapientum*, a poem devised as a game to teach children Greek in a Latin-speaking school. Both are key works for our knowledge of the schools in Gaul during the fourth century (see esp. Sivan, 1993, p. 74ff.). Typical of Ausonius's work and of approaches to learning in Gallo-Roman schools are poems containing lists which provide basic information easy for the student to memorize; his *Caesares* based on Suetonius and included here offers strategies for memorizing the Roman emperors. Sivan's excellent study of Ausonius's works has yielded much information on the nature of schooling in Roman Gaul and, in particular, on the methods of teaching of Latin.

Manuscript Tradition:

The textual tradition of Ausonius is very complex, with some 181 extant manuscripts containing compilations of works attributed to Ausonius and other manuscripts containing works effectively by Ausonius but attributed to other authors. In addition, no single manuscript contains all of Ausonius's extant works, which by nature were particularly vulnerable to fragmentation and sometimes to misunderstanding. In fact, no surviving manuscript contains even half of all the extant works.

Specialists have divided the extant manuscripts into four groups: the present manuscript apparently is closest to the group labeled "Z," a family of over 20 manuscripts, nearly all of them Italian, all of humanistic origin (fourteenth and fifteenth centuries). The earliest manuscript from this group, Florence, Bibl. Naz. Conv. Soppr. J. VI. 29, was written for Coluccio Salutati soon after 1385 (on this group, see Prete, 1960, pp. 20-22; see also Reeve, 1983, p. 27). This group is the only group to contain the *Gratiarum Actio* and the *Cento Nuptialis*, and contains far more Greek than the first group "V," a collection best represented by Leiden, Voss. Lat. F. 111 (written circa 800 A. D.). Another clue confirming that the present manuscript is to be classified in group "Z" is the presence of a piece entitled "Address to my Screeed" placed here amongst the *Epigrammata* (here on f. 5v), and placed entirely elsewhere in other groups. Also manuscripts in group "Z" include numerous works that are not in group "V" [Leiden, Rijksuniversiteit Bibliotheek, Voss. Lat. F. 111], including *Bissula*, *Cento nuptialis*, *Cupido cruciatio*, *Gratiarum Actio*, several letters and almost a hundred epigrams (see Green, 1991, p. xli).

According to a theory postulated by Prete (1985), the different families of manuscripts containing Ausonius's works correspond to different "anthologies" or "overlapping collections" of texts made from the original *Opera omnia*, which would account for the fragmentary but yet consistent series of texts within a given group. To quote Reeve: "Much work remains to be done on the text and

origin of the numerous manuscripts that contain small parts of the three collections. The nature of the tradition also makes it likely that further witnesses will turn up as hastily cataloged manuscripts are examined more thoroughly" (Reeve, 1983, p. 28). Green stresses the complexity of the textual tradition: "No classification of Ausonius's poetry can hope to be a tidy one. Whatever the criterion, there will always be anomalies, overlaps, and uncertainties" (Green, 1991, p. xv). On the manuscript tradition of Ausonius, see Green's modern critical edition, 1989, pp. xli-xlix; see also, "Catalogue des manuscrits d'Ausone," in Prete, 1985, pp. 111-157.

Prete provides a very complete list of all known manuscripts containing parts of Ausonius' works. Surprisingly, only two manuscripts in North American collections are listed, both of which contain only small amounts of his text: Bloomington, Library of the University of Indiana, MS Poole 99, Epigramma 2 (f.1); Cambridge, Harvard College Library, MS Inc. 5549, c. 1495, *Ludus septem sapientum* (ff. 140-142). Thus there are no manuscripts in America containing substantial portions of then known works by Ausonius. For a list of editions of Ausonius that appeared before 1789, see Desgraves, 1985, pp. 161-251. The *editio princeps* of Ausonius's Opera appeared in Venice, ed. Bartholomaeus Girardinus, 1472 (Goff, 1964, A-1401, p. 75). The last manuscript to appear at auction, according to the Schoenberg Database was in 1981, but, rather surprisingly, copies appeared only relatively infrequently in the century before that date.

Ausonius and Humanism:

The beginnings of Humanism in Italy brought a wave of interest in Ausonius, whose study began during the first decade of the Trecento. The present copy bears witness to the humanistic interest in Ausonius: part of the group "Z," a resolutely Italian grouping, this manuscript is interesting also for the contemporary or near-contemporary marginal notes. There are a number of notes that offer corrections or precisions to the text, but one finds also references to sources (Plutarch, Pliny, Plato), some notes in Greek (for ex. ff. 10, 14v, 15v), or references to such humanists as "Beroaldus" [ff. 40, 40v, 42v] (Filippo Beroaldo (1453-1505)). There are a few passages in Greek in the macaronic verses that have been oddly (deliberately?) effaced (see ff. 23-24).

Speaking of Ausonius, the Spanish Humanist Juan Luis Vives declared: "Everywhere clever and exciting, and he does not let the reader fall asleep" (*De Tradendis Disciplinis*, 1531). Ausonius remains, nevertheless, an unfamiliar writer and poet, although greatly admired in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by such humanists as Joseph Scaliger, Juan Luis Vives, Elie Vinet, and many others.

ff. 57-57v, [Claudius Claudianus], *De Salvatore* [Poem in honor of Christ], incipit, "Christe potens rerum redeutis..." [ed. J. Koch, *Cl. Claudiani Carmina*, Leipzig, 1893, pp. 248-249; see also U. Chevalier, *Repertorium hymnologicum...*, Louvain, 1892, vol. I, no. 2921; also in J. B. Hall (ed.), 1985, pp. 390-391; this poem is often misattributed to Claudianus Mamertus, a 5th c. theologian and man of letters];

ff. 57v-58, [Claudius Claudianus], *De piis fratribus et de statu eorum quae sunt apud Catinam*, incipit, "Adspice sudantes venerando pondere fratres..." [ed. J. Koch, *Cl. Claudiani Carmina*, Leipzig, 1893, p. 220-222; also in J. B. Hall (ed.), 1985, pp. 349-350];

f. 58v, [Claudius Claudianus], *In sphaeram Archimedis*, incipit, "Jupiter in parvo..." [Ed. J. Koch, *Cl. Claudiani Carmina*, Leipzig, 1893, p. 256-257; also in J. B. Hall (ed.), 1985, p. 403];

f. 58v, [Claudius Claudianus], *In podagricum qui carmina sua non stare dicebat*, incipit, "Quae tibi pedibus ratio..." ; explicit, "[...] stare putat podager. Finis" [ed. J. Koch, *Cl. Claudiani Carmina*, Leipzig, 1893, p. 220; also in J. B. Hall (ed.), 1985, p. 348].

Following the selection of verse and prose by Ausonius, are three poems, copied by the same hand as the rest of the manuscript, but clearly set apart as separate works, with space left blank above the first piece on f. 57, likely for a dedication or illustration of some sort, never executed. The three pieces are part of the *Carmina minora* attributed to Claudian (on Claudian and the extant manuscript tradition, see J. B. Hall, *Prolegomena to Claudian*, London, 1986). Although their authenticity has been questioned, the present three poems are included in the edition by Koch, 1893 (as quoted above) and the more recent edition of J. B. Hall, 1985. Claudian's poems survive in over 300 manuscripts, and the first edition of the *Carmina minora* dates Parma, A. Ugoletus, 1493 (see J. B. Hall, "Claudian", in *Texts and Transmission*, 1983, pp. 143-145). The present poems, as others also included in Claudian anthologies, have sometimes been attributed to Claudianus Mamertus, a later Gallo-Roman theologian who died circa 473.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Full text of Ausonius's "Opuscula":

http://www.archive.org/stream/decimimaghiavso00ausogoog/decimimaghiavso00ausogoog_djvu.txt

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