

LORENZO GIUSTINIANI, *De incendio divini amoris* [*On the Fire of the Divine Love*]  
In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper  
Northern Italy (Venice?), c. 1451-1455

ii (original endleaves) + 70 + ii (original endleaves) folios on paper (medium thickness), watermark, crossed-arrows, measuring 42 × 32 mm., placed in the center of bifolios, arranged within the quires so the direction of arrows' heads and tails alternate, and so that the book, opened on any page, shows the entire watermark with the arrows usually crossing at the fold, this watermark circulated widely in Southern Germany and Northern Italy from 1458-1506 (similar to Venice 1457 [online Piccard 123353]; Constance 1461 [online Piccard, 123354]; Ravenna 1486 [online Piccard 123341]; and Ravenna 1480 [online Piccard 123340]), foliated in ink, top center margin recto, by the original scribe, 1-67, leaving the last three blank folios unnumbered, complete, (collation i-vii<sup>10</sup>), catchwords at the end of each quire, ruled in plummet, double vertical bounding lines (about 5 mm. apart), with an extra vertical bounding line in the outer margin (about 12 mm. from the frame) used to align the decoration, (justification 134 × 105 mm.), written in twenty-four long lines in a gothico-antiqua script, table of contents on the front endleaf copied by a second scribe, probably contemporary, chapters begin with alternating red and blue initials with light purple pen decoration (completed only through f. 9v), red rubrics, majuscules stroked in red, two drawings of a hand added in the margins, ff. 7v and 65v, text in a very good state of preservation with only insignificant damage from damp and worming to endleaves and rear folios. Bound in a nineteenth-century cartonnage binding with two decorative collars or straps imitating a split cord across the spine, upper collar detached from the front board, most quires are detaching from each other and from the spine, with f. 41 completely detached, labelled on spine, "S. L[auren]tiii J[ustin]iani Incendium Amoris Jesu Cristi MS XV." Dimensions 240 × 156 mm.

St. Lorenzo Giustiniani, archbishop of Venice, was an important figure in church reform in fifteenth-century Italy. This is one of only four surviving Latin manuscripts of his last work (and the only copy recorded for sale in the Schoenberg Database), teaching the reader how to contemplate God and reach happiness through devotion. It remained unpublished for 150 years after his death, and still lacks a modern critical edition or English translation. Probably copied at the end of the author's life, the rubric stating that it was edited by the author himself is found only in this copy.

## PROVENANCE

1. A number of factors point to the origin of the manuscript in the period between 1451 and 1455 in Northern Italy, and possibly Venice. The script is accurate with relatively few ligatures. Noteworthy are the 'r' with the elongated foot, the two-stroke 'a', without the middle beam, and ß-shaped 's', all fifteenth-century forms of Gothic (Bischoff, 2009, p.159) and the 'g' with a diagonal descender to the left and a bow from the bottom of the diagonal to the right (a more elaborate form of the 'g' in the Italian Semigothic script found in Chicago, Newberry Library, MS 97.1 [after 1437]). Punctuation uses the *punctus* and the *punctus elevatus*.

The date and provenance suggested by the watermark and paleographic analysis (c. 1450-1500, Northern Italy) can be narrowed with the help of the introductory note in the present manuscript and the title of its *editio princeps* informing the reader that the *De incendio divini amoris* (*On the Fire of the Divine Love*) was Lorenzo Giustiniani's final work, and

one that was published for the first time in 1606. Our manuscript, however, says: "This is the book edited by the bishop of Venice, Lorenzo Giustiniani," followed by a title, worded differently, as *Incendium amoris Yesu Cristi* (*The Fire of the Love of Jesus Christ*). This text is quite rare, surviving in only three manuscripts besides this one (listed below), none of which include this note, which thus appears to contain precious information: it is therefore not illogical to assume that the present manuscript is a supervised copy from Giustiniani's autograph, and that both its title and text are more authentic than those found in subsequent editions.

Precisely as the first rubric says, Giustiniani wrote *and edited* his book while he already held the position of archbishop of Venice, a position he held from 1451. If Cletus Artusius, the editor of 1606 edition, is correct, and the last book of Giustiniani was indeed *nunquam antea in lucem editus*, either in manuscript or in printed form, our manuscript is the unique copy of the "first edition," likely supervised by Giustiniani himself but interrupted because of his illness and death in 1455.

It should be noted that the exceptional rarity of manuscripts of the *De Incendio*, along with the existence of the anonymous Italian fifteenth-century variant of the same book (MS Cicogna 12), led some scholars to consider the possibility of *De Incendio* being pseudepigraphical; that is, written by one of Lorenzo's contemporaries in Italian and then translated into Latin and ascribed to the famous bishop. However, an analysis of the ideas presented in the book and its language makes this possibility unlikely (see Trevisanato, 1853).

2. Ownership notes include the added title on spine (described above); the same title repeated inside with the library collection-and-shelf numbers, and a note at the bottom of the front endleaf reading: "Registerblatt des folgenden Manuskript."
3. Owned by Rosenthal, the antiquarian bookseller, Munich.

## TEXT

Front endleaf: chapter list, "De libello edito a compositore vide in cartis 1 ... De nimio ardore et mente pia in cartis 63. Finis libri huius";

ff. 1-66, *Hic libellus editus est a Reverendo domino Laurentio Justiniano Venetiarum episcopo. Incendium amoris yesu cristi*, incipit, "Quoniam infinitis pene laqueis circumsepta est humana fragilitas...; [preface] ... ipso praestante, qui nos creavit, et vivit in secula"; ff. 1v-4, [chapter 1] *Quomodo libenter debet homo passionem cristi (ms. χρῖ) meditari in quam fit utilis eius meditatio*, incipit, "Quaerite gentes undique et miramini erga nos caritatem dei ... pascatur affectus dilectione [sic] tua quae omnem supereminet creaturam"; ff. 4-7v, [chapter 2] *Verba animae clamantis contra duritiam suam...*, incipit, "Eya nunc expergiscere anima mea, enduere fortitudine, exalta vocem tuam... ibi inter amplexus requiescit dilecti"; [continuing, with chapters 3-28]; ff. 63v-66, [chapter 29] *Hic optat ardore nimio mens pia dominum...*, incipit, "Iesu domine, Iesu bone, Iesu pie ... toto caritate amplexatus sum, toto amore inhaesi. Ipsum laudo benedico adoro. Qui vivit et regnat deus in secula seculorum, amen," *Qui scripsi scribat semper cum domino vivat Finis. Vivat in felix semper cum domino in celis. Libro finito sit laus gloria Christo*" (in cursive); [ff. 67v-70, blank and unnumbered].

Lorenzo Giustiniani, *De incendio divini amoris* [*On the Fire of the Divine Love*], here with a variant title, *Incendium amoris yesu cristi* [*The Fire of the Love of Jesus Christ*]. According to his grandson, Bernardo, Lorenzo "wrote fifty books and forty sermons" (Bernardo Iustinianus, *Vita Beati Laurentii Iustiniani*,

p. 68). Probably his most influential books are *Doctrina della vita monastica* (*The Teaching of the Monastic Life*), printed in 1494 in Venice and *De spirituali et casto verbi animaeque connubio* (*The Chaste and Spiritual Marriage of the Word and the Soul*), included in the first edition of Lorenzo's *Opera omnia* in 1506 in Brescia. One century later in 1606 another Venetian editor, Cletus Artusius, reedited the *opera* of Lorenzo Giustiniani, particularly emphasizing the inclusion of *De incendio* as "novissimus" and "numquam editus," the author's last and never published book, which was likely as rare for Cletus as it is for us now: a survey of the available databases uncovered only three complete manuscripts: Bergamo, Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai, MS MA036 (1451-55), Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS VII.G.55 (s. xv<sup>2</sup>), and Nijmegen, Universiteitsbibliotheek (Bibl. d. Kath. Univ.), MS 236 (s. xv<sup>2</sup>). Another manuscript, Graz Universitätsbibliothek, MS 1546 (s. xvi) has been lost since 1945. There is one manuscript of the text in Italian, MS Cicogna 12.

The 1606 edition was reprinted in 1616 (Coloniae Agrip. [Cologne]: apud Quentelii), 1628 (Lugduni [Lió], Sumptibus Michaëlis Chevalier), 1675 (Coloniae Agrip. [Cologne]: apud Joan. Wilhelm Friessem), 1721 and 1751 (Venetiis [Venice]: apud B. de Albertis). The Italian translation of the text found in MS Cicogna 12 was published by Trevisanato in 1853; modern translations into French (1849), and Dutch (Costanza, 1965).

In recent years, there has been notable interest in the works of Lorenzo Giustiniani. The 1751 edition of his *Opera omnia* was reprinted as an anastatic facsimile in 1982; and in 2012, Costantini, Cotugno, and Tremonti published the ten-volume collection of all Giustiniani's works in Italian translation. The preparation of a critical edition of Lorenzo's works was announced by Giorgio Cracco in his preface to the 1982 facsimile edition (it has not yet appeared). Numerous discrepancies between the text printed in the editions listed above and the text of our manuscript stress its importance for Cracco's prospective edition. These discrepancies include glaring typos, such as "verumetiam" (edition) for *verum etiam* (MS) and "nima" for *anima*; minor variant reading, such as "et" (edition) for *atque* (MS); and serious mistakes, such as "currere" (edition, the first word of chapter 1) for *quaerite* (Ms.).

"The path of life is all paved with traps to our frailty: We, therefore, should travel this dangerous road with the extreme caution. But alas! Who, if not the highest light, would help us recognize treacherous enchantments driving us so violently towards our ruin and hidden pitfalls of the evil spirit in the carnal world? God is the source of all good!" So begins the *De incendio divini amoris*, the book which demonstrates the character attributed to St. Lorenzo in the clearest and most striking manner: while people are torn apart by the troubles of this world, only the faith and pure contemplation of God's presence can eventually bring joy and peace. This art of humble meditation is taught by Giustiniani's last book, conveying all faith, simple wisdom, and personal experience of the seventy-year-old author, who, being the bishop of arguably the wealthiest city in Europe, met his death on the straw bed surrounded by beggars.

Lorenzo Giustiniani (in English, Lawrence Justinian, and in Latin, Laurentius Justinianus) was born in 1381, and at an early age, inspired by piety of his mother and by teaching of his uncle Marino Querini, entered the monastery of San Giorgio on the island of Alga near Venice. In 1406 Lorenzo was ordained as a priest, and soon became a provost of the Congregation of Canons Regular of St. Augustine following his *Regula tertia* that emphasizes humility and renounces all personal property. In 1433, Pope Eugene IV appointed Lorenzo the bishop of Castello, a diocese which included Venice. After the death of Domenic Micheli, who was Patriarch of Grado and the pope's adversary, Nicolas V suppressed the metropolitan and the very title of patriarch, and in 1451 assimilated Grado with the diocese of Castello, transferring

the episcopal See to Venice. Lorenzo Giustiniani was appointed the first archbishop of the new diocese and served until his death on January 8, 1455. He was canonized in 1690.

## LITERATURE

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[Lorenzo Giustiniani], *Divi Laurentii Justiniani protopatriarchae Veneti Opera omnia: quae hactenus excusa sunt: nunc recens post omnes alias impressiones, & numero marginum multo quam prius locupletata, et innumeris penè locis vigilantiori cura, & diligentia recognita, atque emendata, quorum lectio studiosis omnibus, praesertim concionatoribus, quam sit utilis, et necessaria, tertia pagina indicabit; his accessit ejusdem authoris tractatus de Incendio Divini Amoris, nunquam antea in lucem editus, opus sanè aureum, mira devotione, soliloquiisque refertum, ad emolienda obdurata corda praesentissimum pharmacum, ut quisque in legendo facile in seipso experiri poterit: cum indice rerum, locorumque Sacrae Scripturae locupletissimo. Ac Auctoris vita in principio praemissa*, Venetiis (Venice): apud B. de Albertis, 1606; edited by Cletus Artusius (*De incendio*, 1228 ff.). Reprinted often, Cologne, 1616; Lyon, 1628; Cologne, 1675; Venice, 1721, 1751; and Florence, Leo S. Olschki, 1982 (with preface by G. Cracco).

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#### ONLINE RESOURCES

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