

MS 18

Eusebius Pamphili, bp. of Caesarea. *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

MS 18

Italy (Latin)

Fifteenth century

University of Chicago Library MS 18 contains the Latin translation by Tyrannius Rufinus (ca. 345-410), presbyter of Aquileia in North Italy, of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. Eusebius' history, the most celebrated of his numerous works, was issued in its final Greek form in 325 A.D. in ten books. It remains today the major source for the history of Christianity to 325 A.D. Rufinus' translation of the history is one of several Latin translations of early Christian works in Greek executed by him due to the contemporary decline of knowledge of Greek in the West. It was written in Aquileia at the beginning of the fourth century at the request of Chromatius (d. 406), bishop of Aquileia, to whom it is dedicated and who had requested it in order to divert the attentions of Christians in Aquileia from the invasion of the Goths under Alaric (probably the first invasion, in 402). Rufinus' translation is of considerable historic significance in its own right. In addition to changes in Eusebius' original reflecting Rufinus' theological stance and Western conceptions of such major topics as the canonical history of the New

Testament, Rufinus often introduces additions from original sources now lost, including biographical information (especially for Gregory Thaumaturgos, avoided by Eusebius) and topographical and historical details. Most important, however, is the extension of the history composed by Rufinus himself which he describes in his prologue as follows:

It should be known that I have joined the tenth book of this work [i.e., of Eusebius' original history] (since in the Greek it has little to do with the course of events, and almost all the rest of it is devoted to the panegyrics of bishops, adding nothing to our knowledge of facts) to the ninth, there embodying what little history it contained and omitting all that was superfluous: thus I have brought the narrative of Eusebius to a close.

The tenth and eleventh books I myself have composed, partly from the traditions of our forebearers and partly from facts within my own memory; and these I have added to the previous books, as the two fishes to the loaves ... The whole work now contains the events enacted in the Church from the Ascension of the Saviour and then on; my own two books, those from the days of Constantine when the persecution came to an end, down to the death of the Emperor Theodosius. (Quoted from F. X. Murphy, pp. 159-60; see Bibliographical Note.)

The title is written on folio 1r in a late hand:

*Historia Ecclesiastica Eusebii Caesariensis.* In the upper left verso of folio 1 is the following note, written in a different late hand: *At peccate deos memores fandi atque nephandi historia ecc(lesiasti)ca eusebii duo xi.*

The manuscript itself begins with a table of contents (folios 2r-9r) which is broken down by chapter headings for each of the eleven books. The books occupy the following

folios:

- Lib. 1, ff. 13r-32v
- Lib. 2, ff. 32v-52v
- Lib. 3, ff. 52v-78v
- Lib. 4, ff. 78v-103v
- Lib. 5, ff. 103v-133v
- Lib. 6, ff. 133v-164v
- Lib. 7, ff. 165r-187v
- Lib. 8, ff. 187v-207r
- Lib. 9, ff. 207v-224r
- Lib. 10, ff. 224r-250v
- Lib. 11, ff. 250v-272v

A prologue and a table of the contents of book one precedes the first book. Each subsequent book is also preceded by a table of contents. A partial attempt was made in book one to write out the chapter titles in rubrics as they occurred in the text, but, after chapter 7, only numbers (both Arabic and Roman) were used to mark the divisions.

The text, apparently in a single hand, is written in brown ink, in a late gothic style which seems to have gradually evolved into a cursive or humanistic script. Two details are noteworthy in this regard. At folio 135v is the first example in the text of a marginal capital letter used to mark a sentence beginning at the head of a line. The next example does not occur until folio 149r, but the scribe uses them frequently

after this point. Beaded capital letters begin to appear at folio 162v and continue through the text. The scribe initially beaded only I's but later expanded to include other letters.

The present folio 12 is apparently a replacement for an original folio removed from the manuscript. It contains the prologue and part of the table of contents for book one written in the scribe's developed humanistic hand. Since folio 12r is inscribed with a coat of arms (see below p. 4), the recopying was probably done to change the original arms. Moreover, a change in the type of paper used is observed at this point. Folios 1-12 are heavyweight paper watermarked with a griffin (cf. Briquet 7464). Folios 13-35, on which the script is markedly gothic, are light-weight paper watermarked with a pair of scissors. At folio 36 the use of heavy paper is resumed. Presumably the scribe began copying on light paper and later switched to heavy paper for the remainder of the text and for the table of contents and the prologue.

Marginal notes occur throughout the manuscript in several hands. One set of notes in vermilion seems to be primarily an index to names. Vermilion slashes in the first few books are used to mark capital letters and punctuation in the text. Marginal scolia in a brown spidery script occur throughout the text and are probably very late (perhaps 18th century). Even these late notes show signs of trimming and therefore must have been made before the book was rebound.

Versals in the text are written alternately in blue and vermillion with tracework in the contrasting color. Some tracework can also be found in a lavender color. Folios 2r and 12 r show elaborate illumination in gold leaf, carmen, green and blue with details picked out in white. The arms alleged to be those of Cardinal Fieschi (De Ricci) are shown on Folio 12r: a blue shield on which a tree and three eight-pointed stars are painted. A bishop's miter is painted above the blue shield. A laurel wreath encircles the arms.

This MS once belonged to the Marquis of Taccone, treasurer to the king of Naples in the late 18th century. The MS originally bore on the spine an oval label with its number in the Taccone collection written in ink, number 72. University of Chicago Library MSS 6, 12, 14, 17, 39, 47, 54, 63, and 65 and 101 also formerly belonged to the Taccone collection. All of the above manuscripts were acquired in the Berlin purchase of 1891 from the bookseller Calvary.

23 quires, of 12 folios except the first (11 folios), twenty-second (10 folios), and twenty-third (11 folios), all originally short. Folios 9v-11v are blank. The back flyleaf is watermarked with a fleur de lis (cf. Briquet 6752).

272 paper folios, watermarked, 25.8 x 19.0 cm. One column of 30-31 lines, four margins ruled with a double line. Foliated in pencil on upper right recto.

Binding: The manuscript has been rebound in vellum over cardboard covers. The spine is marked in gold leaf: *Eusebii Cæsariensis Historia Ecclesiastica* M.S. A pencilled mark in lira is found inside the back cover.