

MANUSCRIPT 33

Lucanus, Marcus Annaeus.
Pharsalia.
MS 33.

Italy (in Latin)

Ca. 1430?

A MS copy of the complete text of Lucan's epic poem on the war between Caesar and Pompey, with scholia for the first three books. The contents run as follows:

Book	I	--	fols.	1-13.	Book	VI	--	fols.	72-87.
"	II	--	"	13-27	"	VII	--	"	87-103.
"	III	--	"	27-42	"	VIII	--	"	103-119.
"	IV	--	"	42-57	"	IX	--	"	119-137.
"	V	--	"	57-72	"	X	--	"	137-146.

The Pharsalia, the young poet Lucan's sole extant work, has been printed very many times, beginning with the Rome edition of 1469 (of which there are three copies in the U.S.). The Chicago codex, which is written in a clear, upright, Gothic-type minuscule, dates from before the age of printing and originated in Italy. A crude watermark is undoubtedly of Italian origin (Briquet says that the anvil watermark design was devised exclusively by Italian papermakers), and was probably manufactured before the middle of the century. The paper may well be of Venetian manufacture, belonging to the period 1416-1426 (see Briquet, Les filigranes, watermark No. 5953). To date the codex ca.1430, while somewhat arbitrary and conjectural, seems reasonable on the evidence of calligraphy and watermarks. The codex itself may be of little textual

significance. The best version of the Pharsalia for English-speaking readers is the edition in the Loeb Classical Library (New York/London, 1928), where the Latin text is accompanied by an English translation, by J. D. Duff.

Folio, 30 x 22 cm.

146 leaves, fully foliated.

18th century Italian half-calf binding, spine tooled and lettered in gold, with covers decorated with red-and-green painted floral design (the same binding as MS 57).

Fair copy in a single unidentified hand, with scholia and marginal notes in other hands. Text preceded by the four-line Lucan epitaph ("Corduba me genuit &c."). No titlepage, table of contents or index. Rubricated, up to fol. 119, in red ink carefully ruled on each page. Water stains on most leaves. The last few leaves show damage that has been clumsily repaired.

See Goodspeed, Descriptive catalogue, p. 33; and De Ricci, Census, I, 559. Part of the Berlin Collection.

13 December 1967
T. Bentley Duncan