

MS 100

Boccaccio, Giovanni, 1313-1375. *Genealogia deorum gentilium*.

MS 100 (PQ 4271.D6 13--)

Italy (Latin)

ca. 1385-1387

University of Chicago Library MS 100 is one of the earliest extant manuscripts of Giovanni Boccaccio da Certaldo's *Genealogia deorum gentilium*, a mythological encyclopedia in Latin prose arranged strictly genealogically, Boccaccio's most widely influential Latin works. The manuscript was written for and originally owned by Coluccio Salutati. The genealogies contained in the first thirteen books (folios 14r-185r, col. 1; preceded by the proem treated as part of Book I on folios 11r-13v) remain today the most useful single source for understanding and tracing mythological references in medieval writers. Each book of genealogies is preceded by an illuminated polychrome diagrammatic genealogical tree corresponding to the contents of that book. (See the table of contents at the end of this description.) The concluding (14th and 15th) books are valuable as an expression of Boccaccio's humanistic theory. Book XIV is a humanistic defense of poetry, satirizing its current detractors and refuting their arguments, while Book XV defends the utility, accuracy and completeness of the *Genealogia* itself, naming contemporary

scholars consulted by Boccaccio and giving considerable autobiographical material on his early life. The *Genealogia* was undertaken by Boccaccio at the request of King Hugo of Cyprus who commissioned one of his soldiers, Donnino di Parma, to find someone capable of the task. After meeting with Donnino in 1347, Boccaccio began writing in 1350. A first "edition" came into the public domain in 1370 or 1371 when an unauthorized copy was made of Boccaccio's still unfinished manuscript which he had loaned to an acquaintance. Of the final edition represented by MS 100, two other manuscripts date from 1383 and 1387, and a third from 1398 or earlier; the remaining manuscripts are all later. The University of Chicago MS written for Salutati is dated to the period 1377-1395, perhaps more closely, the years 1385-1387 (see below).

In addition to the *Genealogia* the MS contains a table of rubrics compiled by Boccaccio himself (fols. 2r-9v) and at the end of the codex the *Versus* of Domenico Silvestri of Florence (fl. 1364-1407) and the alphabetical index of Domenico Bandini of Arezzo (ca. 1335-1418), both men friends of Coluccio Salutati. The *Versus* consist of a poetic description of the contents of the *Genealogia* in 17 hexameter lines, of which the 17th line and an 18th line preserved in a MS of Silvestri's poems (Florence, Bibliotheca Laurentiana LXXX Inf. 13) are attributed by a marginal note to Salutati. The omission in Salutati's own manuscript of the 18th line,

which is superfluous to the sense, indicates that this attribution is unlikely, and that the 17th line is probably original to Silvestri's poem.

The alphabetical index by Bandini is of historical interest as one of the earliest extant alphabetical indices. Since the index was compiled at Salutati's request, according to the prefaces which occur with it in this and other MSS and in the early printed editions, the text preserved in this MS is the most authoritative for the index. The novelty of the index is reflected in attempts to explain its use in some of these prefaces. It is dated by Wilkins, on the basis of information in the prefaces of this and other MSS and correspondence between Salutati and Bandini, to the period 1376-1390. The index is erroneously attributed by some (among them M. E. Cosenza; see Bibliographica Note) to Silvestri, apparently because both were personal friends of Boccaccio and because the name *Domenicus Aretinus* (=Bandini) in the *Incipit* for the index was identified with the name of the author of the *Versus* immediately preceding the index, *Domenicus Silvester*. Thus Cosenza applies the patronym *Aretinus* (d'Arezzo) to Silvestri, who was in fact usually, as in this MS, identified as *de Florentia*, or the equivalent. The reference in the index preface to Bandini's well-known encyclopedia, *Fons memorabilium universi*, however, is decisive.

Ms 100 is dated to the period 1377-1395 by Wilkins on

the basis of the date of the alphabetical index requested by Salutati, which he could only have requested when the Boccaccio MS was in, or about to be in, his possession. B. L. Ullman dates the MS more closely on the basis of the script, which is by the same hand which wrote part of another MS owned and written for Salutati, no. 59 in Ullman's catalogue of Salutati's library (Conventi Soppressi I.vi.29, fols. 117-142, Ausonius, Ennodius, Sidonius and other writers). This MS is dated, by references in Salutati's correspondence, to the years 1385-1387. Ullman concludes that this may be taken as an approximate dating also for MS 100.

The MS is written in a clear and easily legible Gothic script, according to Ullman probably by the same scribe who produced an "official" edition of Salutati's works (see the description of University of Chicago MS 187, Salutati's *De seculo et religione*). The script of this cluster of Salutati MSS is somewhat different than that found in MS 100 and the above mentioned Conventi Soppressi MS, which are definitely by the same hand. The relation between the two groups is evidenced, in Ullman's opinion, by one MS in the group containing Salutati's works, Vatican Reg. lat. 1391, containing Salutati's *De verecundia* and *De tyranno*, which shares paleographic characteristics with both and which, in Ullman's words, "seems to be a sort of bridge, as far as the script is concerned, between the Boccaccio and the corpus

of Coluccio's works." (The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati, p. 271; see Bibliographical Note). A second hand wrote in the Boccaccio MS the headings for the *Versus* of Silvestri and for the alphabetical index of Bandini (possibly, according to Ullman, the scribe who wrote folios 1-11 of another MS from Salutati's library, Vatican lat. 3110, Hyginus' *Astronomica* and other works).

MS 100 is illuminated throughout with alternating vermilion and blue versals, each with beaded trace work in the contrasting color. Each opening is marked in the upper margin with a vermilion L (*Liber*) on the verso, and on the recto with the number of the book in vermilion and blue Roman numerals. Plain blue and vermilion alternating versals begin each entry in the Bandini index.

Each of the thirteen books of genealogies is prefaced with an inverted polychrome tree, in which the names of mythological figures are placed in circles or leaves. In the former are progenitors whose progeny is represented in the same tree; in the latter, at the ends of genealogical lines, their progeny whose descendants are not represented in the tree. The trees, each with leaves of a different characteristic shape, were executed subsequent to the marginal initials and by a different artist, as indicated by the erasure of some trace work from an initial to make room for the tree for Book XII and by the visually different character of the pigments.

Each book begins with a polychrome versal against a black-outlined burnished gold field, characteristic of the humanistic period. The colors include various shades of blue, green, orange, yellow, and dull pink. Short polychrome stylized leafy vines adorn the left margins by these versals, being formed from a fantastic contorted bird, blue with red spots, from which grow the vines which adorn the adjacent margin. The initial beginning Book I is especially elaborate. Its vines, filling the margins all around and between the columns, are inhabited by a small red-speckled blue bird between the columns. In the bottom center of the page is the crest of Coluccio Salutati, partly lost from flaking. The singed eagle's claw survives executed in fluid gold, and traces of the blue field. The fleur-de-lis originally held by the claw and the four stars in the field are lost, but visible under ultra-violet light. The shield is set in a frame whose shape suggest a square diamond superimposed on a rounded quatrefoil, edged by an outer band of gray, a band of yellow, and with an inner field of deep red with tracework in orange with green dots. The marginal vines end at the tips of the diamond. The versal (S) contains a portrait of Boccaccio seated at his desk composing and wearing monk's garb. Although one of the earliest portraits of Boccaccio, the figure is traditional, the face without individualization. It thus has no documentary value as a portrait.

1st
page of
text

Int.
I Unbound
1001 of
S

The MS has little in the way of notes by later hands other than the notes of Coluccio Salutati himself and a few textual corrections. The index has been enlarged in several places by marginal insertions. Folio 1r bears the inscription (16th century?), "Die autem 6 Junii M.D.L.XXXVII" below which are the traces of an erased name, the first name beginning with C, the last with Ag (Wilkins: Cini Agostini; Ullman: ...i Agostini). Wilkins reports (*The University of Chicago Manuscript ...*, p. 77) a fruitless effort to render the name by applying a chemical reagent (ammonium sulphide). At the top of the same page is written "sub fine.XIV". The history of the manuscript after Salutati's death is unknown. The text of this MS and its apographs was not used as the basis of any of the early editions. The MS was acquired in 1911 as part of a large collection by Wilfrid M. Voynich of London, who wrote as follows regarding his acquisition in response to an inquiry from E. H. Wilkins:

The large collection of manuscripts, acquired by me from its hidden place, six years ago, consisted to my best knowledge of many collections belonging to Dukes and Princes, including part of the Malatesta Library, part of the Matthias Corvinus Library, and part of the Libraries of the Dukes of Parma, Modena and Ferrara, part of the collection of Borso, Alfonso d'Aragona, and several others. I do not know from which of these collections Boccaccio was removed. Until the close of the 18th century all these manuscripts were in Italy, but were then removed abroad in fear of Napoleon's invasion. As far as I know, from that period until discovered by me, they were not disturbed, and not seen by anyone. The place from which I purchased them I cannot disclose, due

to my promise given to the guardians of these manuscripts, whose former owners, you see, disappeared, thanks to the unification of Italy under the Savoy Dynasty. (Quoted from E. H. Wilkins, *The University of Chicago Manuscript...*, p. 78.)

According to De Ricci, it had belonged previously to the Jesuits of the Collegio Romano in Rome, where according to Di Ricci it was bound in its present binding of parchment over book board. Voynich sold it to Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus in 1915, who gave it the The University of Chicago Library in June, 1916.

22 quires of 10 folios each except the first (9 fols: 2-10) and the last (8 fols: 211-218), originally irregular; plus one originally blank front parchment flyleaf (fol 1); flesh sides out, hair and flesh sides matched; catchwords in the lower margin, verso, of the last folio of each quire.

218 parchment folios numbered 1-218; plus 3 unnumbered blank front paper flyleaves and 2 unnumbered blank back paper flyleaves; 30.3 x 22.5 cm., trimmed.

2 columns, 20.5 x 6.0 cm. with 1.3 cm. between columns; 47 lines, ruled for column margins (single lines) and text; table of rubrics with double lines for column left margins (for frequent versals and paragraph marks).

Binding: parchment over book boards (De Ricci: 18th cent., Rome).

Physical condition: mouse hole in lower margin from back through folio 141, prior to present binding.

Table of Contents for MS 100

(Abbreviations expanded; orthography as in the MS)

- fol. 1 Originally blank; 16 th cent. (?) inscriptions
on recto
- fols. 2r-9v Table of rubrics.
Inc. *Tabula rubricarum librorum genealogia
deorum gentilium incipit feliciter.*
Expl. *Expliciunt Rubrice quintidecimi de
genealogiis deorum gentilium. deo
gratias. Amen.*
- fol. 10 Blank
- fols. 11r-
185r The *Genealogia deorum gentilium.*
Inc. Genealogie deorum gentilium ad ugonem
inclitum yerusalem et cipri regem
secundum Johannem boccacium de certaldo
liber primus incipit feliciter.
Prohemium.
Expl. Genealogie deorum gentilium secundum
Johannem boccacium de certaldo a
illustrem principem Ugonem yerusalem
et cipri regem liber quintusdecimus
et ultimus explicit. de gratias amen.
- Book I: fols. 11r-27v (proem: 11r-13v;
tree: 14r)
- Book II: fols. 27v-38v (tree: 27v)
- Book III: fols. 39r-48r (tree: 39r)
- Book IV: fols. 48v-66r (tree: 48v)
- Book V: fols. 66v-78v (tree: 66r)
- Book VI: fols. 79r-88v (tree: 79r)
- Book VII: fols. 89r-99r (tree: 89r)
- Book VIII: fols. 99r-105v (tree: 99r)
- Book IX: fols. 106r-117r (tree: 106r)
- Book X: fols. 117r-127r (tree: 117r)
- Book XI: fols. 127r-137v (tree: 127r)
- Book XII: fols. 137v-149r (tree: 137v)
- Book XIII: fols. 149v-159r (tree: 149v)
- Book XIV: fols. 159r-176v
- Book XV: fols. 176v-185r, column 1

- fol. 185r,
col. 1 The *Versus* of Domenico Silvestri
Inc. *Versus editi per insignem virum ser
Dominicum silvestri de Florentia super
continentia librorum de Genealogia deorum
clarissimi viri domini Johannis boccaccii
de Certaldo.*
- fols. 185v-
217v The alphabetical index of Domenico Silvestri
Inc. Incipit tabula per alphabetum super
libris de Geanealogia deorum gentilium
compositis per clarissimum virum et
poesis lumen dominum Johannem boccaccium
de Certaldo civem florentinum edita per
egregium trivii doctorem magistrum
Dominicum de Aretio.
Rubrica.
- fol. 218 Blank

Bibliographical Note:

1. Neil F. Beardsley, "The Photography of Altered and Faded Manuscripts," *The Library Journal*, vol. 61 (1936), pp. 96-99.
2. Mario Emilio Cosenza, *Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary of the Italian Humanists and of the World of Classical Scholarship in Italy 1300-1800* (2nd edition, Boston, 1962).
3. Seymour De Ricci & W. J. Wilson, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* (New York, 1935) vol. 1, p. 564.
4. Berthold L. Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati*, in *Nedioevo E Umanesimo* no. 4 (Oadua, 1963) pp. 135, 201 (no. 109 in Ullman's catalogue of the Library of Coluccio Salutati), 219, 268-270.
5. The University of Chicago Library, *A Catalogue to an Exhibition of Notable Books and Manuscripts from the Collections of The University of Chicago Library* (Chicago, 1970), pp. 22, no. 20.

6. Ernest H. Wilkins, "Early Alphabetical Indexes," *The Manly Anniversary Studies in Language and Literature* (Chicago, 1923) pp. 315-322.
7. _____, "The Genealogy of the Early Editions of the *Genealogia Deorum*," *Modern Philology* vol. 17 (1919) pp. 425-438; reprinted in E. H. Wilkins, *The Invention of the Sonnet and other Studies in Italian Literature* (Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1959) pp. 147-162.
8. _____, "The Genealogy of the Genealogical Trees of the *Genealogia Deorum*," *Modern Philology* vol. 23 (1925) pp. 61-65; reprinted with changes from chapter 6 of item 9 below; reprinted again in E. H. Wilkins, *The Invention of the Sonnet and other Studies in Italian Literature*. (Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1959), pp. 163-167.
9. _____, *The Trees of the "Genealogia deorum" of Boccaccio* (Chicago, Caxton Club Limited Edition, 1923).
10. _____, *The University of Chicago Manuscript of the Genealogia Deorum Gentilium of Boccaccio*, in *The Modern Philology Monographs of The University of Chicago* (Chicago, 1927).

PUBLISHED FACSIMILES:

1. Niel F. Beardsley (item no. 1 above), p. 99 (fol. 11r; Salutati crest by ultra violet fluorescent lighting, showing lost fleur-de-lis and stars).
2. B. L. Ullman (item 4 above), plates XVI, 2 (fol. 16r compared with Florence, Conventi Soppressi I.vi.29, fol. 132r, by the same scribe) and XVIII,1 (fol. 217v).
3. The University of Chicago Library (item 5 above), cover (fol. 48v: genealogical tree for Book IV).
4. E. H. Wilkins (item 9 above), plates II-XIV (the 13 genealogical trees in MS 100).
5. _____ (item 10 above), frontispiece (fol. 99r), plates I (fol. 2r: beginning of table of rubrics), II (fol. 11r: beginning of proem), III (11r: Salutati crest), IV (16r: Salutati marginal note), V (fol. 23r), VI (fol. 39r: tree for Book III), VIII (fol. 46r: Greek quotation), IX (fol. 80v), X (fol. 99v: versal beginning Book VIII), XI (fol. 149v: tree for Book XIII), XII (fol. 185r: beginning of Silvestri's *Versus*), XIII (fol. 185v: beginning of Bandini's alphabetical index).