

## GENNADEION NOTES, II

### INCUNABULA IN THE GENNADIUS LIBRARY

Βαῖα μὲν, ἀλλὰ ῥόδα

JOHN Gennadius' interest in incunabula was strictly subordinated to the general program of his collection, and he made no effort to acquire books merely for their rarity or early date. As compared with, say, the five thousand or more "cradle-books" in the Huntington Library, our holdings are very modest indeed. Nevertheless, a recent survey made for inclusion in the forthcoming *Third Census of Incunabula in American Libraries*—we were not represented in the 1940 *Census*—revealed that our collection is, happily, somewhat larger than had been assumed, and demonstrated afresh (if this were needed) its high quality and distinctive interest. A detailed listing will be included in the projected catalogue of incunabula and of sixteenth-century editions of Greek classics in the Gennadeion. Meanwhile, a brief account of the collection, especially as it relates to classical studies, may be of interest to readers of *Hesperia*.

The final tally now stands at sixty-two items,<sup>1</sup> of which three were not previously recorded in American ownership. The largest group, numbering twenty-seven, consists of editions or translations of classical Greek texts. Seventeen volumes relate in one way or another to Turkish affairs and the consequences of the Fall of Constantinople, nine are Renaissance Greek grammars or manuals (one of which, since it includes the work of two ancient grammarians, is also tabulated above), and the remaining ten are miscellaneous.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Gennadeion incunabula as a group is their superb condition. Gennadius did not like mutilated or grubby books, and as a collector he must often have passed up volumes relevant to his collection, simply because they did not measure up to his exacting standards. Nor was he interested in possessing duplicates, and more than once when he succeeded in acquiring a superior copy of a given work he disposed of its predecessor. The only seriously defective book in the group is the Aesop (H.C. 267), printed in Venice about 1498, which lacks

<sup>1</sup> This figure represents the works that have been recorded in one or another of the standard catalogues of incunabula and that will therefore be listed in the *Census*. At least one volume, Bartholomaeus de Montearduo's *Donatio Constantini* (Hain 5650) is clearly later, since it is dedicated to Pope Julius II (1503-1513). Two other undated texts, Reichling 266 and Copinger 5121—Reichling 1365, have also been assigned by some later scholars to the sixteenth century. References, henceforth abbreviated, are to L. Hain, *Repertorium Bibliographicum*, Stuttgart, 1826-1838, W. A. Copinger, *Supplement to Hain's Repertorium . . .*, London, 1895-1902, and D. Reichling, *Appendices ad Hainii-Copingeri Repertorium . . .*, Monachii, 1905-1914.

24 of the 48 folios. Nearly all of the others are not only complete and perfect, but have evidently been treasured with loving care through the centuries.

Most of our incunabula of the classical authors are also *editiones principes*, beginning with the two-volume Homer of 1488 (H.C. 8772), splendidly illuminated, and including the 1493 Isocrates (H.C. 9312), and both impressions of the first complete Theocritus, printed by Aldus at Venice in 1495/6 (H.C. 15477). We are fortunate also in having four of the seven classical texts edited by Janus Lascaris at Florence in 1494-1496: the *Anthologia Graeca* of August 11, 1494 (H.C. 1145), with one page illuminated, but lacking folios 273-279, which had the dedication to Pietro di Medici, deleted in most copies following the banishment of the Medici on November 9 of that year; the Apollonius Rhodius of 1496 (H.C. 1292); the undated *Tabula* of Cebes (Hain 4820-21), which also contains works by St. Basil, Plutarch, and Xenophon; and above all the Lucian of 1496 (H.C. 10258). This last is one of two copies printed on vellum, the other being in the Laurentian Library in Florence; it once belonged to a Cardinal Trivulzio, one of the several of that name, whose arms, with other elaborate ornamentation in india ink, appear on page 1, but the intended illumination was never completed, perhaps because of the owner's death. Another outstanding item is the five-volume set of Aristotle and Theophrastus, published by Aldus in 1495-1498 (H.C. 1657), all in their original bindings, and containing numerous marginal notes, apparently in the hand of the great Aristotelian scholar, Nicolaus Leonicus Thomaeus (1456-1531).<sup>2</sup> Mention should also be made of three volumes from the press of Zacharias Kallierges in Venice, regarded by some as among the most beautiful books ever printed: the *Etymologicum Magnum* of 1499 (H.C. 6691), the Simplicius of 1499 (H.C. 14757), and the Galen of 1500 (H.C. 7426).

Gennadius was not concerned with the Latin authors, nor even with Latin translations from the Greek, except as they were the work of the great Greek humanists who found refuge in Italy. In these categories we have, therefore, only George of Trebizond's *Commentarii in Philippicos Ciceronis*, ca. 1475 (Hain 7610), and two translations of Aristotle, Theodore of Gaza's *De Animalibus* of 1476 (H.C. 1699), and the *Ethica ad Nichomachum*, Florence, ca. 1480, by Ioannes Argyropoulos (H.C. 1753), the latter with fine sixteenth-century illuminations.<sup>3</sup>

An important, but half-forgotten contribution of the Greek refugee scholars is well represented by the collection of fifteenth-century Greek grammars. It comes as something of a surprise to discover that grammars and dictionaries account for a full third of the Greek books printed in or before 1500.<sup>4</sup> The Greek texts so eagerly

<sup>2</sup> For Leonico Tomeo, as he is often called, see J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, II, Cambridge, 1908, pp. 110-111.

<sup>3</sup> All three of these men belong to the earliest group of arrivals from the East: Sandys, *op. cit.* pp. 62-64.

<sup>4</sup> According to the list given by R. Proctor, *The Printing of Greek in the Fifteenth Century*, Oxford, 1900, pp. 49-51, the figures are 23 out of 63. This excludes, moreover, the works of the

sought after by the Italian humanists were of little use without a knowledge of the language, and the pioneer work of Manuel Chrysoloras (1355-1415), Theodore of Gaza (*ca.* 1400-1475), Demetrius Chalcondylas (*ca.* 1424-1511), and Constantine Lascaris (1434-1501) as teachers of Greek won them a respect that their modern successors might well envy. Their manuals were reprinted again and again, and our collection, though by no means complete, contains at least one edition of all four, as well as the *Institutiones Graecae Grammatices* of Urbanus Bellunensis. This last, published by Aldus in 1497/8 (H.C. 16098), is notable as the first Greek grammar written in Latin, though some earlier works had already appeared with a Latin translation accompanying the Greek text.<sup>5</sup>

The most interesting of the nine grammars, however, is Lascaris' *Grammatices Graecae Epitome*, printed at Milan by Dionysius Paravisinus and dated January 30, 1476 (H.C. 9920), which is generally cited as the first book printed in Greek. Occasional Greek words, and even short passages, had of course been printed earlier, from 1465 on, in Latin texts. Possibly, too, as Proctor argues, the unique *Batrachomyomachia* of the John Rylands Library and the Vicenza Chrysoloras, both of them Graeco-Latin texts and both undated, may be slightly earlier than the Lascaris.<sup>6</sup> But the fact remains that Lascaris' *Epitome* is the earliest *dated* Greek book, and it is certainly the earliest wholly in Greek.

The second oldest Greek book in the Gennadeion, and indeed the second oldest dated Greek book, is a Psalter printed at Milan by Bonus Accursius in 1481, with the Greek and Latin texts in parallel columns (H.C. 13454). This volume, too, is noteworthy as the first printed book to contain a portion of the Greek Scriptures.

Though our collection contains only slightly more than half of the Greek books printed in the period (35 of Proctor's list of 63),<sup>7</sup> it well illustrates the varieties of Greek fonts employed, including the interesting experiments of Janus Lascaris with accented capitals. Most of the important presses are represented, and for one press, historically the most important, the collection barely falls short of being complete. Of the nineteen Greek works printed by Aldus Manutius in 1495-1499 (none were issued in 1500), we lack only four, the Musaeus and the *Galeomyomachia*, both un-

ancient grammarians and lexicographers. Unfortunately, we have none of the seven fifteenth-century editions of Craston's Greek-Latin *Lexicon*.

<sup>5</sup> The author, Urbano Bolzanio, was born at Belluno in 1440 or 1443 and died in Venice in 1524. A Franciscan, he spent some time in the Greek East, served as tutor to the future Pope Leo X, and was an intimate associate of Aldus Manutius and a member of the Aldine Academy. Strangely, he is all but ignored by Sandys, but receives due recognition in A. Firmin-Didot's *Alde Manuce et l'Hellénisme à Venise*, Paris, 1875, and in D. J. Geanakoplos' *Greek Scholars in Venice*, Cambridge, Mass., 1962.

<sup>6</sup> Proctor, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-86.

<sup>7</sup> Counting the second impression of the Aldine Theocritus and Moschos' *Ad Helenam*, which Proctor does not list, our Greek printings total 37.

dated, the Craston Lexicon of 1497, and the last of the series, the Dioscorides of July, 1499. Actually, Gennadius did at one time possess copies of the Musaeus and the Dioscorides, as well as of eight other Greek incunabula not represented in the present collection, but these were among the 3200 volumes sold by him at Sotheby's in 1895, and, unlike many of the other treasures he was then forced to part with, never bought back or replaced.

The remaining items can be dealt with briefly. The "Turkish" collection, while of great value and interest, is of less immediate concern to the classicist, except for the presence among the authors of such well-known humanists as Pius II (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini), Cardinal Bessarion, and Giannantonio Campano, the shepherd boy who became a pupil of Valla and produced the first editions of Quintilian and of Suetonius. Our oldest dated book (1471) is an Italian version of Bessarion's polemical exhortations against the Turks, in one of which is incorporated a translation of Demosthenes' *First Olynthiac* (H.C. 3007). A 1480 bull of indulgence by Sixtus IV, "for the expulsion of the Turks from Italy," seems to be of exceptional rarity. It is not recorded in either Hain or Copinger, the two basic reference works available here, but Mr. Frederick R. Goff of the Rare Books Division of the Library of Congress has kindly identified it for me as Collijn: Stockholm 984, where it is attributed to the Roman press of Eucharius Silber. This is one of the three items not hitherto recorded for an American library, the others being the undated Chrysoloras ascribed to the Florentine press of Benedictus Ricardinus (H.C. 5015), and the anonymous and undated *Tractatus quidam de Turcis* (H.C. 15680), printed in Rome by J. Schurener in about 1475.

Finally, two works of Renaissance belles-lettres may be noted, the Greek poem *Ad Helenam et Alexandrum* by Demetrios Moschos, published with a Latin translation by Ponticus Virunius at Reggio d'Emilia, ca. 1497 (H.C. 11620), and the 1497 edition of the Latin *Hymni et Epigrammata* of Michael Tarchaniotes Marullus (H.C. 10880). Both poets were of Greek origin. Little is known of Moschos' career, but Marullus was a well-known figure in the circle of Lorenzo di Medici, an ardent admirer of the Latin poets, and best remembered perhaps as the successful rival, in love, of Angelo Poliziano.

Gennadius' range as a collector, and especially as a collector of incunabula, was purposely narrow. His passion was Greece alone, and whatever concerned Greece. Yet one cannot survey even so limited a group of books as these sixty-odd incunabula without realizing afresh the tragedy of the Fall of Constantinople, and at the same time the great contribution made by the refugees from the East, as editors, printers, scholars, and teachers, to Italy and to all of western culture.

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