The following pages contain brief descriptions of all the manuscripts on display in the exhibition. In addition to the conventional information, the descriptions state briefly the role each manuscript played in the process of Bessarion’s work on *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, record its location in Bessarion’s library (locus or topos) and, on the basis of Llotte Labowsky’s study, indicate whether it has been identified with an item in Inventory A, which accompanied the act of donation, and/or Inventory B, which documents the transferal of the books to Venice, both during Bessarion’s lifetime and after his death. The description of each manuscript found in Inventories A and/or B is also quoted.

All this information is relevant for a variety of reasons. The fact that the locus (“pressmark”, as Labowsky calls it) is present in a particular manuscript could be interpreted as an indication that we have a completed work (as opposed to a mere draft or a working copy), which had its place in Bessarion’s library at his residence in Rome. The absence of such information can be an indication that we are dealing with a working copy or a draft that was used in the process of composing the *ICP* by Bessarion himself or by members of his learned circle. It is not unreasonable to suppose that works without a locus were at some point on Bessarion’s desk or circulated among the members of his entourage. In some other rare cases, this information is missing simply as a result of rebinding and, its absence has no interpretative value. It is important to stress that the locus is an indication of a place where the book was supposed to be stored, rather than a unique ‘ID-number’ assigned to a single book, as the number of manuscripts allocated to a single locus vary from 2 (locus 63) to 21 (locus 33). Sometimes the book was reassigned by Bessarion from one locus to the other, as in the case, for example, with Gr. Z. 187 (742). The information obtained from the inventories edited by Labowsky is also revealing. However, it should be noted that the identification of a manuscript with an item in the inventories is by no means straightforward. It might have been so, if Bessarion or his collaborators had given each manuscript a unique number or code that appeared both on the manuscript and in the inventory. However, there is no such unequivocal link between actual manuscripts and the entries in the inventories. The identification of the entries with the manuscripts is one important outcome of the titanic project completed by Labowsky. It was she who solved the complicated “puzzle” as to which manuscript now extant in the Marciana is most probably indicated by each descriptive entry in the inventories. Undoubtedly, Labowsky’s solution is correct in the majority of cases. However, in a few instances, it must remain a hypothesis and not a certainty (e.g. Lat. V, 16 below). I quote these descriptions to highlight the available evidence collected by Labowsky in her study. The inclusion of these quotes does not imply that, in all cases, I agree with Labowsky’s identification or have verified it myself.

Finally, the “Literature” section of each entry contains selected references to the secondary literature where more detailed descriptions of each manuscript may be found. In the age of electronic databases, it appeared superfluous to include a full secondary bibliography to each manuscript as it would probably become incomplete and even obsolete before the first printed copies of the catalogue leave the publishing house.
1 Final Redaction

Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. Z. 198 (744)

Parchment, middle of XV c., mm 280 × 195 × 95, ff. 318, lines plenis 29, spatium scripturae mm 170 × 110. Titles, incipit and explicit, marginal notes are in red. Initials at the beginning of each of the six books are red and gilded.

It contains six books of In Calumniatorem Platonis (versio graeca) in its final redaction. Bk. 1, ff. 3-31v; Bk. 2, ff. 31v-84; Bk. 3, ff. 84-162; Bk. 4, ff. 162-242v; Bk. 5, ff. 243-294; Bk. 6, ff. 294v-316v; ff. 317-318v + II are empty.

Bessarion’s library locus 56
Inventory A absent
Inventory B 536 “Opus domini Reverendissimi in calumniatorem Platonis, in pergamenis”
Literature More 1981, 101
2 Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. Z. 229 (1695)

Parchment, middle of XV c., mm 280 × 195 × 95, spatium scripturae mm 180 × 110, minore pleno 28, ff. IV, 364 with reclamants on f. 10 (i), 20 (ii), 30 (iii), 40 (iv), 50 (v), 60 (vi), 70 (vii), 80 (viii), 90 (ix), 100 (x), 110 (xi) (at the edge of the page), 120 (minimal traces of the Roman numeral barely discernible at the edge of the page), 130 (Roman numeral cut off, minimal traces), 140 (viii), 150 (ix), 160 (x) cut, 170 (xvii), 180 (xviii), 190 (xix), 200 (xx), 210 (xxi), 220 (xxii), 230 (xxiii), 240 (xxiv), 250 (xxv), 260 (xxvi), 270 (xxvii), 280 (xxviii), 290 (xxix), 300 (xxx), 310 (xxxi), 320 (xxxii), 330 (xxxiii), 340 (xxxiv), 350 (xxxv); ff. 10v-270, 337v-338v, 360-364 are empty. Round humanist script, titles, incipit and explicit, marginal notes and Greek words and phrases embedded in Latin text are in red. Coloured and gilded initials at the beginning of each book.

It contains six books of In Calumniatorem Platonis (versio latina) in its final redaction. Bk. 1, ff. 1-36; Bk. 2, ff. 36v-101; Bk. 3, ff. 101-181; Bk. 4, ff. 181-269; Bk. 5, ff. 271-337; Bk. 6, ff. 339-359.

Bessarion’s Library

Inventory A absent

Inventory B 717

“Opus Dominici Reverendissimi in calumniatorem Platonis in pergamenio, pulchrum”

Literature

Valentinelli 1871, 4-5; Mohler 1923-42, 1: 364, 2: 98; Gasparini Leporace, Monti 1868, 14-15.
II Bessarion and Georgios Trapezuntios

3 Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. VI, 76 (2848)

Paper, middle of XV c. (1458), mm 223 × 53 × 45, spatium scripturae mm 159 × 85 remains relatively constant across fascicles, number of lines varies according to the scribe of each fascicle from 23 to 29, ff. II + 178 + II ff., 18 fascicles written by 15 different scribes, ff. 6-8, 29-30, 37-40, 79-80, 96v-100, 116v-118, 137v-138, 164v-168 are empty, titles of the first three chapters (in ff. 1, 3, 4), catchword on f. 5v, and “finis” on f. 178v are written in brown ink by Bessarion, titles throughout the book in red ink, damage to the upper part of the page from f. 159 becomes progressively worse until f. 178, which is preserved only in part.

It contains Comparatio Philosophorum Platonis et Aristotelis. Bk. 1, ff. 1-27; Bk. 2, ff. 27v-107; Bk. 3, ff. 107v-178.

Bessarion’s library no locus

Inventory A absent

Inventory B 893 "Trapezunti contra Platonem, in papiro, sine tabulis" (identification with this item in the inventory is based on Labowsky 1979, 115, 238, sed cf. Monfasani 2021b, 366-7)

Literature Valentinelli 1871, 4, 10, Mordacci 2011b, 305-7
In difesa di Platone

4 Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, 79.D.107

Printed in 1523, mm 155 × 115 × 25, ff. 168. Modern binding, probably in the 1950s. Title on f. 1: “Comparationes philoshophorum Aristotelis et Platonis a Georgio Trapezuntio viro clarissimo”. Colophon on f. 168: “Venetiis per Iacobum pentium de Leuco, a partu Virgineo MDXXIII nonis Ianuarii”.

It contains a printed version of Georgios Trapezuntios’s *Comparatio Platonis et Aristotelis*.

This book was never part of Bessarion’s library (printed in 1523).
5  Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, 161.D.10


This book was never part of Bessarion’s library (printed in 1577).
III Working with Plato

6 Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. Z. 199 (604)


It contains Bessarion’s working copy of the Greek version of Bk. 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the ICP (Bk. 1, ff. 1-39v; Bk. 2, ff. 39v-97; Bk. 4, ff. 97v-182v; Bk. 5, 183-224v).

Bessarion’s library: no locus

Inventory: A. 518

Inventory: B. 518

"Eadem [i.e. ‘Defensio Platonis’ ut B. 516] in papiro, prima manus, constita in coperto pergamen." (Fulvio Panicale, notes)

Literature: Gasparrini, Leporace, Mioni 1968, 7-8; Mioni 1981, 310-11; Mariev 2022 (forthcoming)
In difesa di Platone

Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. Z. 526 (776)

Paper, middle of XV c., mm 220 × 145 (mm 200 × 145 on ff. 64-100, 108-111), ff. 1-225, lineis plenis 26-39, spatium scripturae ca. mm 160/190 × 130/90. F. 1 v index; 2-3 v Plutarchus Vītae parallelorum, excerpta ex vita Timonis, Luculli et Themistocli; 4-24 v Herodotus Historiae Excerpta; 25-47 Thucydides; 48-59 Xenophon historiarum Hellenicorum Excerpta; ff. 60-63 v are empty; 64-97 v Plutarchus Vītae parallelorum; 97 v Porphyrius Vita Plotini; 100-107 v Plato Leges; ff. 108-111 v are empty; 112-135 v Compendium operum Platonis; 136-146 v Hermogenes rhetor De inventione Excerpta; 147-150 v Plutarchus Apophthegmata Laconica; 150-151 v Lucianus De ablatione Excerptum; 152-164 v Proclus philosophus Institutio physica; 164-167 v Sententiae ex auctibus ecclesiasticis collectae; f. 167 v is empty; 176-175 v Ptolemaeus Claudius Synagoge mathematica; praemittitur varia geometrica et astronomica in lingua latina (ff. 168-175 v); sequuntur definitiones mathematicae lateine (ff. 196-199 v); ff. 199-207 v are empty; sequuntur geometrica et quaedam calculatoria (ff. 208-211 v and 216-225 v); ff. 211-215 v are empty. Bessarion has been identified as the scribe of the entire volume with the exception of ff. 152-167.

It contains, most importantly, a collection of excerpts from Plato’s Laws, attesting Bessarion’s particular interest in this dialogue and his profound knowledge of it.

Bessarion’s library

Inventory A

absent

Inventory B: 592


Literature


It contains, most importantly, a collection of excerpts from Plato’s Laws, attesting Bessarion’s particular interest in this dialogue and his profound knowledge of it.

Bessarion’s library

Inventory A

absent

Inventory B: 592


Literature

Parchment, middle of XV c., mm 260 × 175, fl. III. 311 (+ 287 bis), f. 1rv index; 2-107 Plato Respublica; 107v-139v Plato Timaeus; 136-139v Timaeus De animis mundi et naturae; f. 141 is empty; 141-152v Plutarchus De animae procreatione in Timaeo; 154-159v Plato Critias; 159v-162v Ps.-Plato Minos; f. 163-166v are empty; 167-282v Plato Leges; 283-289 Ps.-Plato Epinomis; 289v-309 Ps.-Plato Epistolae. Numerous annotations in Bessarion’s hand. It contains, most importantly, Plato’s Laws, which were used by Bessarion in the process of correcting Georgios Trapezuntios’ translation into Latin.

Bessarion’s library

Inventario A 410: “item Platonis repubblica, legis et epistolae, in pergamo, liber pulcherrimus”

Inventario B 525: “Quedam repubblica, legis et epistolae, in pergamo”

Literature

Mioni 1981, 299; Pagani 2011
Paper, beginning of the XV c., mm 245 x 170, ff. 1-178, lineis plenis 31/32, spatium scripturae 185 x 110. 1-131 Plato / Ps.-Plato Epinomis; 136-141v Ps.-Plato Demodocus; 141-143v Ps.-Plato Sisyphus; 144-145v Lucianus Malipon; 145-152v Ps.-Plato Eryxiss; 152v-155v Definitions; 155v-176 Plato / Ps.-Plato Epistulae; 176v-178 Excerpta brevis ex operibus Luciani sortis matut Bessarionis.

It contains, most importantly, Plato’s Laws, with some passages that had been ‘censored’ by Bessarion’s teacher Georgios Gemistos (Plethon).

Bessarion’s library

Inventory A 421

“Item leges Platonis, dialogi quattuor noti, et epistolae eius, in papyro”

Inventory B 528

“Platonis leges, epistolae et dialogi notae, in papyro”

Literature

Mioni 1981, 300; Pagani 2009
In difesa di Platone

10 Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. Z. 226 (1636)

Paper; middle of XV c., mm 315 × 230 × 40, f.l. 152, spazio scripturae mm 220 × 130, lineis plenis 25-27. The folios are numbered in the upper corner and in the lower corners (modern). The modern numbering is reported here with an asterisk. Numbers without asterisk refer to the older folio numbers in the upper corner. Viktor Tiftixoglou made a note about the foliation of this codex on the inner cover, his note is dated May 23 1985. 1*-12*=1-12; 13*-48*=49-84; 49*-84*=13-48; 85*-151*=86-152. Bk. 1 of Liber defensionum begins on f. 1*=1; Bk. 2 on 31*v=68v; Bk. 3 on 84*v=48v; f. 139r=139r contains the letter of Johannis de Rupeforti, iudicis maioris Fuxi civitatis, cardinali Albiensi. The codex is written in Bessarion’s hand (Mohler 1923-42, 1: 364; Gasparrini Leporace, Milano 1968, 10).

It contains an early version of Bessarion’s reply to Georgios Trapezuntios’ Comparatio Platonis et Aristotelis in Latin with the title Liber defensionum contra obiectiones in Platonem. After extensive revision, Bk. 1 and 2 of the Liber defensionum became Bk. 1 and 2 of the ICP, Bk. 3 became Bk. 4 of the ICP.

Bessarion’s library

Inventory A

absent

Inventory B 889

"De eadem materia [sic: ‘Defensio Platonis’ cfr B 886], tres libri, in quaternionibus, litteris ser Petri"

Literature

Valentini 1870, 4:5; Mohler 1923-42, 1: 364 and 2: VII; Gasparrini Leporace, Milano 1968, 10.
Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. VI, 61 (2592)

Paper, middle of XV c. (ff. 1-152) and XVII c. (ff. 153-158) ff. II + 158 + I, mm 300 × 220 × 40. The following description refers to the first part (ff. 1-152) of the codex only. Spatium scripturae ff. 1-70: mm 200 × 150, lineis plenis 31-32, var. Spatium scripturae ff. 71-152 185 × 115, lineis plenis 24.

It contains: ff. 1-70 a draft version of Bk. 3 of the ICP, 71-152 Giovanni Gatti Notata ex libro ineptis et deliramentis pleno, qui inscribitur De comparatione philosophorum (on the significance of this work and its relation to Bk. 3 in the final redaction of the ICP, cf. the article of John Monfasani at the end of this volume). The quires are misbound, as established by Monfasani 2021a, XLIX, the correct order of folios is 103-104, 102, 109-111, 112, 107, 105-106, 113-152, 71-181, 108.

Bessarion's library no/bess
Inventory A absent
Inventory B 892 "Secundus liber pro Platone, in papiro"

Literature
Valentrelli 1871, A 6-7; Gasparrini Leporace, Mioni 1968, 10-11, Monfasani 2021a, XLI-XLII
Paper, middle of XV c., mm 210 × 145, ff. 1-247 (+ 160 bis, 197 bis, 200 bis), linese plastico 24-29, spectum scripturae ca. mm 143/160 × 80/100. Ff. 1-16 De processione Spiritus Sancti; 17-44v Oratio dogmatica de unione; 45r Ad dicta Platonis in Aristotelem; ff. 46-49v are empty; 50-54v Refutatio syllogismorum Platonici De Spiritu sancto; f. 54v is empty; 53-103 Marcus Eugenicius Cupidit syllogistico adversus Latinos. Ff. 103v-105 are empty; 106-142v De sacramentis Eucharistiae; 143-153v Encyclica ad Graecos. Ff. 154-159v are empty; 160-174v In Ioannem 21:22-23; f. 175 is empty; 176-201v De natura et arte (versio latina); 240-244v Epistolae; ff. 245-247v are empty. A number of rubrications throughout the text. Several texts in Bessarion’s hand, both in Greek and in Latin.

It contains the Greek version of *De natura et arte* (= Bk. 6 of the ICP) and an earlier Latin redaction of this work written in Bessarion’s hand (published for the first time in Mariev, Marchetto, Luchner 2015), without the changes by Niccolò Perotti that characterise the final Latin version of this work.

Bessarion’s library (ff. 12-132)

Inventory A absent

Inventory B 510: “Opera Domini Reverendissimi de spiritu sancto, et de sacramento eucharistia, et de ‘sic eum vult mansisse’ in papiro”

Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. Z. 228 (1671)

Paper, middle of XV c., mm 295 × 201 × 50, spatium scripturae mm 175 × 115, lineis plenis 28, ff. 182. Each quire is given a letter and its folios are numbered, e.g. A1-5 for the first quire (ff. 1-10), B1-5 (ff. 11-20), etc. The last recto folio of each quire bears a catchword (f. 10v, f. 20v) that conventionally prefigures the first word of the recto of the next quire. This is the case for the composition of ff. 1-96 (labelled with letters A-X). There is no catchword on f. 96v and the next quire is numbered V1-5 (ff. 97-108), which means that there is a gap in between. The absence of a catchword on f. 96v may indicate that Bk. 3 of the ICP, which would fit this gap and for which it probably was made, actually never constituted part of this codex. However, the fact that next quire in order is labelled with a letter V may indicate that a certain space (L-V) was already allotted for this book. The final words of Bk. 4 on f. 180v confirm that, in the design of the work, this was already a book 4: “... quarto quoque volumine finem imponamus”. Ff. 1-96 are written in a cursive script; ff. 97-180v in a humanistic round script.

Already Valentinelli (1871, 4: 6) identified the black stains visible throughout the later part of the codex from f. 97 on as typographorum maculae. Hellinga (2015, 102 fn. 4) confirmed that this one of the exceptionally rare cases where a copy that was actually used for printing is preserved. It contains a nearly complete version of Bk. 1, 2 and 4 of the ICP. Bk. 1, ff. 1-33; Bk. 2, ff. 33v-96; Bk. 4, ff. 96v-180v.

Bessarion’s library: no locus

Inventory A: absent

Inventory B IIII: “De eadem materia (i.e. ‘De defensione Platonis’ at B 886) quinque libros, in quattuor codicibus, in papis, manu nostrorum diversis”

Literature: Valentinelli 1871, 4: 6; Sapori-Lupo, Museo 1968, 13 ff.; Hellinga 2015, 102 fn. 4
VIII Editio princeps

Printed in 1469, mm 335 x 230 x 70, ff. 233, f. 1 and f. 233 are empty. Colophon: "Aspisibus illustris lectricus quicunque libellis (...)."

It contains ICP Bk. 1, ff. 16-36v; Bk. 2 37-74v; Bk. 3 75-124v; Bk. 4 125-176v; Bk. 5 176v-219v; Bk. 6 220-232v.

Bessarion's library: no locus

Inventory A: absent

Inventory B 806/807 " Duo volumina defenses platonicae, in papyri"
In difesa di Platone

Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Inc. 219

Printed in 1469, mm 335 × 230 × 70, ff. [I-VX] + 218, ff. 217-218 are empty; on f. 21v signs of a longer text that has been erased and is no longer legible; on f. 113v an extensive marginal note; on f. 49v at the bottom a long note in red ink "Quae sit auctoris in hoc tertio libro intentio"; on f. 204 an extensive marginal note. Colophon: see description of Inc. 218 above. Initial letters added on ff. 1 (red, blue and black), 22 (red), 50 (black), 110 (red), 160v (black), 204 (red). Corrections in Bessarion’s hand throughout the text.

It contains ICP Bk. 1, ff. 1-21v; Bk. 2, ff. 22-49v; Bk. 3, ff. 50-109v; Bk. 4, ff. 110-160v; Bk. 5, ff. 160v-203v; Bk. 6, ff. 204-216v.

Bessarion’s library: no locus

Inventory A: absent

Inventory B 835/307 "Quo volumina defendunt platonicae, in papere"
Reprints of the editio princeps

Printed in 1503, mm 320 x 215 x 27, ff. (IX) + 111 + (2). Colophon: "Venetiis in aedib. Aldi Romani, Iulio mense MDIII". It contains introductory material and "index eorum omnium, quae singulis libris pertractatur" (ff. I-IX, not numbered, first page is empty) and Bessarion’s In Calumniatorem Platonis in six books (ff. 1-111). Final two pages are empty.

This book was never part of Bessarion’s library (printed in 1503).
In difesa di Platone

Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, 387.D.29


This book was never part of Bessarion’s library (printed in 1516).
Bibliography


