



Fig. 1 Xylographic title-page (block 215 × 145 mm)

Celtis, Conrad

Wipfeld bei Schweinfurt 1459 – 1508 Vienna

Quatuor libri amorum secundum quatuor latera Germanie feliciter incipiunt [and other writings].

Nuremberg, Printer for the Sodalitas Celtica, 1502 (5 April)

QUARTO (240 × 176 mm), (120)ff. signed a–b⁸ c–d⁶ e–f⁸ g⁴ h⁶ i⁸ k⁶ l–m⁸ n⁶ o–q⁸ r⁶ and foliated [1–8] 9–73 [74–120]. Xylographic title-page, nine full-page woodcuts printed with the text (on folios a1 verso, a6 verso, a7 recto, a8 verso, d3 recto, f6 recto, i3 verso, p8 recto, r6 recto), folding woodcut view of Nuremberg having on its verso three woodcuts of imperial and civic insignia imposed with letterpress (outside collation, bound after folio m2), white-on-black woodcut device of the Sodalitas Celtica (folio r4 verso). Printed with Roman, Greek, and Hebrew types (Hebrew on folios a4–a5 only).

PAPER watermark monogram MA (Maria) with a cross, like Meder 316.¹

PROVENANCE contemporary marginalia (author's dedication and 'Elegia prima' exclusively) — bibliographical references written on front free-endpaper in two eighteenth-century hands — violet circular inkstamp in corner of lower pastedown Z [entrale] *Stelle f[ür] Denkmalschutz* (rest erased) — Oswald Graf von Seilern (1901–1967) — Christie's, 'Important medieval manuscripts, early printed books and atlases from the library of the late Count Oswald Seilern', London, 26 March 2003, lot 45²

Early repairs in margins of folios c6 and l8, two unrepaired tears, occasional staining, and a few wormholes, otherwise an attractive and generally well-preserved copy.

BINDING eighteenth-century German calf, back decorated in gilt.

FIRST PRINTING of the *Amores*, four books of vivid erotic poems, the major work of the imperial poet laureate Conrad Celtis, in which he sings the praises of his fatherland, choosing a heroine and a principal city for each book: to the East, Hasilina of Cracow; to the South, Elsula of Regensburg; to the West, Ursula of Mainz, and to the North, Barbara of Lübeck. Some critics interpret the poems as autobiographical, however only Hasilina so far has been identified, and the others may be composite figures drawn from many women. The preceding dedicatory

¹ Reproduced by Joseph Meder, *Dürer-Katalog* (Vienna 1932), p.319, Tafel XLVII

² Dieter Wuttke, 'Celtis bei Christie's' in *Pirckheimer-Jahrbuch für Renaissance- und Humanismusforschung* 19 (2004), p.182.

address to the Emperor Maximilian I is 'the most impressive statement of Celtis's Neoplatonist belief in Love as the vital principle of the universe'.³

The other texts printed in the volume are 'Generalis Germaniae descriptio carmine heroico', a work by Celtis previously printed together with Tacitus' *De origine et situ Germanorum* at Vienna between 1498 and 1500; 'De origine, situ, moribus & institutis Norimbergae', Celtis's eulogy to the city's government, citizens, buildings, and history, written in 1496, printed here for the first time; 'Hymnus Saphicus in Vitam Sancti Sebaldi', composed by Celtis for the Sebaldusfest of 1493, formerly printed at Basel circa 1494 and Nuremberg circa 1501; 'Ludus Dyanae', a *Festspiel* by Celtis performed at Linz before the Emperor and Bianca Maria Sforza by twenty-four members of the Sodalitas Danubiana, on 1 March 1501, previously printed at Nuremberg 15 May 1501; 'Privilegium erectionis Collegii Poetarum et Mathematicorum', the imperial charter founding a college of poets and mathematicians within the university of Vienna, dated 1501; Vinzenz Lang's 'Panegyricus ad Maximilianum pro instituto & erecto collegio poetarum & mathematicorum', dated 2 February 1502; an address by Sebald Schreyer, Celtis's benefactor, dated 1 March 1500, followed by Celtis's reply, dated at Vienna, 1 February 1502. Although Celtis envisaged the *Quatuor libri amorum* as the prologue of a greater corpus, a *Germania illustrata*, the remaining volumes were never written.

Three woodcuts appear among the preliminaries, each explicated in verses by Vinzenz Lang. The first woodcut depicts Celtis presenting his book to the Emperor (see Fig. 3); the second is an 'Allegory of Philosophy', inspired by the description in Boethius' *Consolatione Philosophiae* and defining the four great human cultures as Egyptian, Greek, Roman and German; and the third shows the author at his desk: on nearby shelves are six volumes of the Latin poets, and in surrounding compartments the muses Thalia and Clio, Minerva, Mercury, Hercules, Cytharea, Phoebus, and Bacchus. Each of the four allegorical love poems is accompanied by a woodcut topographical view of the heroine's native city.⁴ The treatise on Nuremberg, dedicated 'Ad Senatum', has a folding view 'Vrbs Norinberga Quadrifinia' (borderline 180 × 295 mm), based on one produced in 1493 in the workshop of Michael Wolgemut for Schedel's *Weltchronik*; printed on its verso are imperial insignia and the insignia of Nuremberg. The verses on Saint Sebaldus, Nuremberg's principal patron saint, are illustrated by a copy of the woodcut executed by Dürer for the edition published in 1501. On the last leaf is a woodcut of 'Apollo and Daphne' with inscriptions in Greek and Latin and the insignia of Willibald Pirckheimer (Fig. 2).

³ Leonard Forster, *Selections from Conrad Celtis* (Cambridge 1948), pp.82–83.

⁴ Peter Meurer, *Corpus der älteren Germania-Karten. Ein annotierter Katalog* (Alphen aan den Rijn 2001), pp.39–43.



Fig. 2 Woodcut of 'Apollo and Daphne' with inscriptions in Greek and Latin, and the insignia of Willibald Pirckheimer.



PANEGY. PRIMA PARS AD. M. R.

AD DIVVM MAXMYLIANVM IN
uicissimū & sereniss. Rhom. Regē & cēsa
rē Augustum Con. C. in libros amorū suo
rum p̄fatio. & Panegyrici prima pars.

Libros amorē n̄orū: decēnali pegrinatioē a me
cōscriptos: cui merito (tanq̄ primicias agrestis &
rudis mei ingenii) dedicare & offerre debeo Rex
sereniss. q̄s sacratissimā tuā maiestati & inlustri
domui tuā Austria: quā me ante aliquot annos p̄
genitorē tuū Fridericū terciū diuinā memoriā ad
Poeticę disciplinā coronā & impialē laus euexit
Cogitabā ego interea apud me frequētissime ut su
sceptrā meā a Cēsare dignitati aliquod dignū ex
cuderē: & nō tantū inanē quendā huius dignitatis
titulū & ymbra (ut multi nostri seculi homines so
lent) gestarem, perq̄ hoc Genitori tuo: & celsitu
dini tuā apud posteritatem dignas gratiarū actio
nes p̄soluerē. Qui errātes mulas: & quasi iam ali
quorū imperitorū hominū calūniis in germania in
fames & extorres hoc anno cōlegio & perpetuo sti
pēdio cū duobus mathematicis liberalissime dona
sti. Data etiā mihi & successoribus meis vice tuā:
ut in eodē cōlegio (ut nostro seculo Rhomā fuerat)
creādi & insigniendi poetas auctoritatē habeamus.
Sed nec in meis hactenus facultatibus & ingenii
virib⁹ erat: ut aliquo a me absoluto in poetica ope
rā celsitudini dedicādo respōderē. neq̄ p̄ hoc vllō
pacto p̄ magnitudine tuorū i me beneficorū satisfi
eri tibi posse itelligēbā: q̄ i tāta fortuna et felicitate:
et i humāi generis fastigio posuēdes & ita emies
ut ab hominē priuato & tenui: doctrinaq̄ & eloquē
tia triuiali aliquid tale tuā maiestati offerri possit:
qd' dignū tāto p̄cipi & christiāi orbis ipatori foret.

a ii

Fig. 3 Woodcut depicting the author presenting his book to the Emperor, by Dürer (woodcut 216 × 150 mm)

The title (**Fig. 1**), the woodcut of the author in his study, and four topographical woodcuts are virtually the same size (borderlines 215 × 145 mm) and are believed to have been devised by Celtis himself, and executed by a single cutter, variously identified as Peter Visscher the elder, Peter Visscher the younger, Jacopo de'Barbari, and Hans Süss von Kulmbach.⁵ The 'Allegory of Philosophy' (219 × 148 mm, folio A6 verso) bears Dürer's familiar monogram and it and the unsigned dedication woodcut (216 × 150 mm, folio A1 verso) are universally acknowledged as his work.⁶

This is second of three books issued by the still-unidentified 'Printer for the Sodaltas Celtica'. All three employ an ambiguous printer's device bearing the initials 'A.P.', of which there are two cuttings, one black-on-white and the other white-on-black (the device in this copy is cut white-on-black). Meder saw a copy of the *Amores* displaying the alternative cutting and took it as evidence of two separate editions of the *Amores*.⁷ Frank Hieronymus noted the absence in a few copies of the 'Apollo and Daphne' woodcut and postulated another separate issue or edition.⁸ A unique copy, containing on an otherwise blank unsigned bifolium an additional woodcut of 'Apollo on Parnassus' (used in two later books associated with Celtis, both printed at Augsburg by Erhard Ogelin in 1507), is also supposed to represent a separate issue.⁹

Although some forty copies of the *Amores* are located in public collections, the book is rare in commerce: only five complete copies can be traced by the writer in auction sale records

- the Albert Freiherr von Lanna — Charles Fairfax Murray copy, bound in oak boards (sold by Sotheby's, 10 December 1917, lot 116)¹⁰
- the coloured Ambroise Firmin-Didot copy, bound in calf antique (twice sold by Sotheby's, 21 April 1937, lot 873; and 17 November 1937, lot 554)
- the Thomas Brooke — Fritz Kreisler copy, bound in crushed Levant morocco (Parke-Bernet, 27 January 1949, lot 41; resold by Hartung & Hartung, 5 May 2008, lot 154)
- a coloured copy in a contemporary vellum binding (Karl & Faber, 21 November 1960, lot 14)
- a copy in a 19th-century binding (Reiss, 6 October 1981, lot 2321).

It therefore is no surprise that very few copies have entered North American libraries

- Bloomington, Lilly Library, 8485.C48 Q2
- Cambridge, Harvard University, Houghton Library, Typ 520.02.269¹¹
- New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Gr8 122
- Washington, DC, Library of Congress PA 8485.C48 Q3¹²
- Washington, DC, Folger Shakespeare Library.

These copies have featured in recent exhibitions

- Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek, 4° NL Celtes 1502¹³
- Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Inc. typ. Ic .II. 21¹⁴
- Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, DJ III 8¹⁵
- Göttingen, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 8 P. Lat. Rec. II, 467 Rara¹⁶
- Melbourne,

¹⁰ Hugh W. Davies, *Catalogue of a collection of early German books in the library of C. Fairfax Murray* (reprint London 1962), no. 106.

¹¹ Presented by Philip Hofer in 1973; see Roger S. Wieck, 'An exhibition of German illustrated books from the sixteenth century; the gift of Philip Hofer' in *Harvard Library Bulletin* 29 (1981), p.333; Roger E. Stoddard, 'Latin verse of the Renaissance: the collection and exhibition at the Houghton Library [16 December 1985–14 February 1986]' in *Harvard Library Bulletin*, new series, 1 (1990), p.25 no. 15.

¹² Presented by Lessing Rosenwald; see *A Catalog of the gifts of Lessing J. Rosenwald to the Library of Congress, 1943 to 1975* (Washington, DC 1977), no. 592; see *Dürer in America: his graphic art*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC 1971), p.351 no. 212; *Nuremberg: a Renaissance city, 1500–1618*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Archer M. Huntington Gallery, University of Texas, by Jeffrey Chipps Smith (Austin 1983), p.103 no. 10.

¹³ *Albrecht Dürer 1471–1971*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Nuremberg 1971), p.39 no. 34.

¹⁴ *Caritas Pirckheimer 1467–1532*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Kaiserburg, Nuremberg (Munich 1982), pp.133–134 no. 134.

¹⁵ Dieter Koeplin and Tilman Falk, *Lukas Cranach: Gemälde, Zeichnungen, Druckgraphik*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Kunstmuseum (Basel 1974), p.123 no. 52.

¹⁶ *Dürers Dinge. Einblattgraphik und Buchillustrationen Albrecht Dürers aus dem Besitz der Georg-August-Universität Göttingen*, catalogue of an exhibition, edited by Gerd Unverfehrt (Göttingen 1997), pp.201–202, 425 no. 34.

⁵ Matthias Mende, 'Dürer und der Meister der Celtis-Illustrationen' in *Amor als Topograph. 500 Jahre Amores des Conrad Celtis*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Bibliothek Otto Schäfer (Schweinfurt 2002), pp.27–37; Peter Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet: die unvollendete Werk-ausgabe des Conrad Celtis und ihre Holzschnitte* (Frankfurt am Main 2001).

⁶ Campbell Dodgson, *Catalogue of early German and Flemish woodcuts... in the British Museum* (London 1903), I, pp.279–283; Meder, *op. cit.*, pp.202–203 nos. 244–245; Maria Lanckorońska, 'Die Holzschnitte zu den "Amores" des Conrad Celtis' in *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 1971 pp.323–337; *Albrecht Dürer: Das druckgraphische Werk, Band III: Buchillustrationen*, compiled by Rainer Schoch, Matthias Mende, and Anna Scherbaum (Munich 2004), pp.136–144 nos. 269–270.

⁷ Meder, *op. cit.*, p.280 no. XV.

⁸ Frank Hieronymus, *Oberrheinische Buchillustration, 2: Basler Buchillustration 1500–1545*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Universitätsbibliothek Basel (Basel 1984), nos. 151b, 213.

⁹ Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg, L.460; see *Meister um Albrecht Dürer*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Nuremberg 1961), nos. 226, 228; Anthony Hobson, *Apollo and Pegasus* (Amsterdam 1975), pp.25–26, 28.

National Gallery of Victoria¹⁷ • Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 434¹⁸ • Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Solg. 2084.4¹⁹ • Schweinfurt, Bibliothek Otto Schäfer, OS 80²⁰ • Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Inv. C.P.2.c.18²¹ • Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, A:3.5 Poet²²

REFERENCES *Index Aureliensis: Catalogus librorum sedecimo saeculo impressorum* (Baden-Baden 1976), VI, 135.114; *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart 1984), C–1901 and C–1911; David Paisey, *Catalogue of German printed books to 1900* [in the British Museum, Department of Prints & Drawings] (London 2002), no. 100 (acquired in 1904; the British Library's copy was not obtained until 1953); John L. Flood, *Poets laureate in the Holy Roman Empire: a bio-bibliographical handbook* (Berlin 2006), I, pp.303–311 no. C–16

¹⁷ *Albrecht Dürer in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria*, catalogue of an exhibition, by Irena Zdanowicz (Melbourne 1994), pp.73–74, 214 no. 12 (provenance: T.D. Barlow, 1883–1964; acquired by the Gallery in 1956).

¹⁸ Béatrice Hernad, *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Munich 1990), pp.296–297 no. 107.

¹⁹ *Albrecht Dürer 1471–1971, op. cit.*, p.164 no. 289.

²⁰ *Dürer als Erzähler: Holzschnitte, Kupferstiche und Radierungen aus der Sammlung-Otto-Schäfer-II*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Bibliothek Otto Schäfer (Schweinfurt 1995), pp.158–159 no. 62; *Dürer: Himmel und Erde. Gottes- und Menschenbild in Dürers druckgraphischem Werk*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Bibliothek Otto Schäfer (Schweinfurt 1999), pp.172–173 no. 87; *Albrecht Dürer: 80 Meisterblätter: Holzschnitte, Kupferstiche und Radierungen aus der Sammlung Otto Schäfer*, catalogue of an exhibition held in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Nuremberg 2000), pp.74–75 no. 28; *Amor als Topograph, op. cit.*, nos. 1–2, 16, 19–23, 25.

²¹ *Dürero y Cranach: arte y humanismo en la Alemania del Renacimiento*, catalogue of an exhibition held at the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, 9 October 2007–6 January 2008 (Madrid 2007), p.169 no. 92.

²² *Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation, 962 bis 1806: 29. Ausstellung des Europarates in Magdeburg und Berlin und Landesausstellung Sachsen-Anhalt: Von Otto dem Grossen bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters*, edited by Matthias Puhle and Claus-Peter Hasse (Dresden 2006), I, pp.561–562 no. VI–48.