

Lettere

Letters

historic and entertaining
on the past and present conditions
of the Island of Cyprus

written by

Namindiu

La Manon in Provence, Year 1785

Edited by Rita C. Severis

Translated by Sylvain Béraud

NAMINDIU

La Manon in Provenza l'Anno 1785

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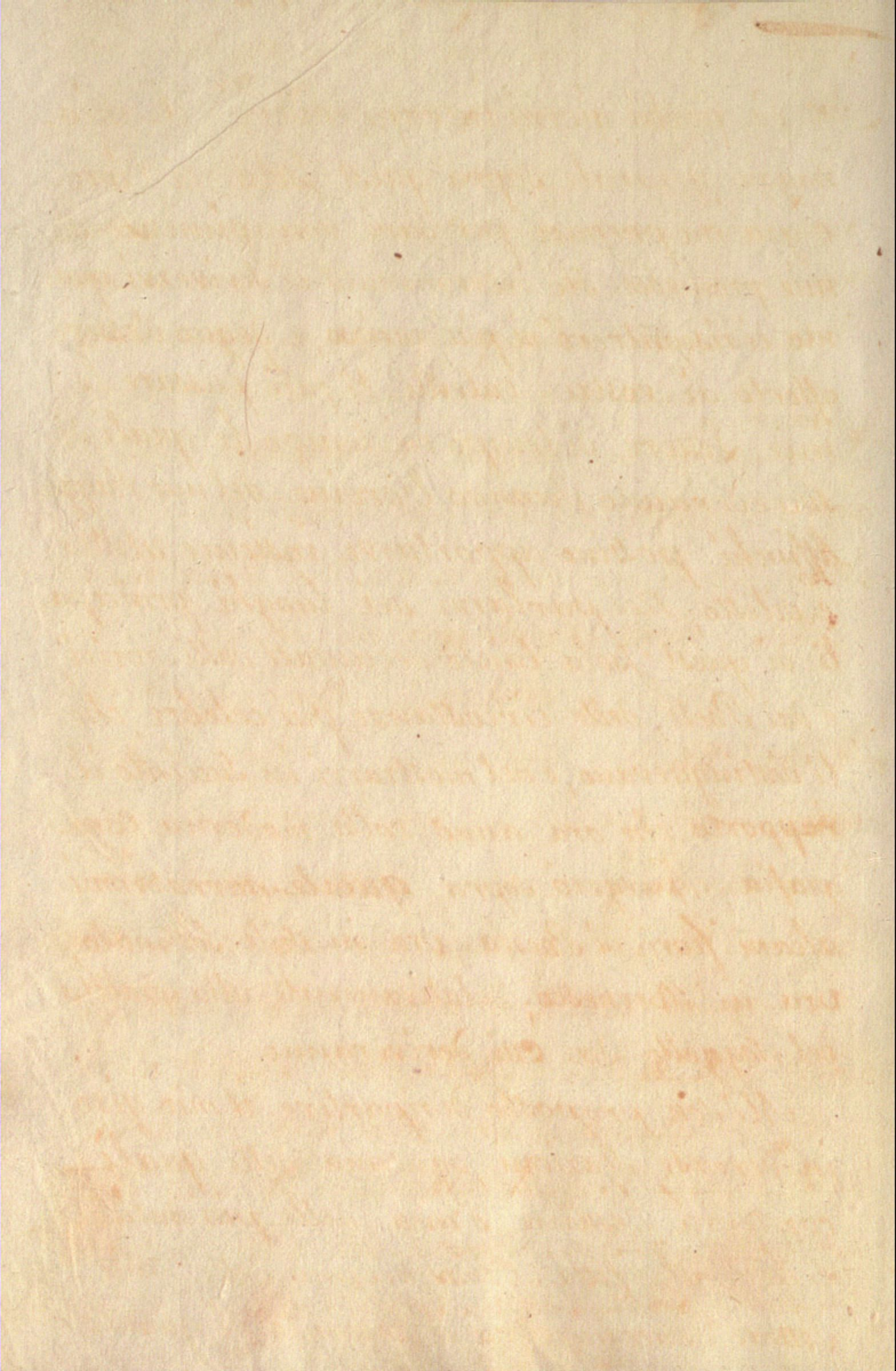
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immaginati gl' Antichi, passo a descrivervi
qualsia la sua figura e la sua
costruzione.

Questo è un piccolo animale chiamato
dai Latini Chamæleon, nasce nella Siria,
nell' Arabia, in alcuni luoghi dell' Egitto,
e nell' Isola di Cipro; la sua figura è
conforme al presente disegno, il quale
ho stimato a proposito di tracciarvi,



perchè non credo che si trovi ^{nel Regno} dei quadrupedi
nessun altro animalletto consimile a lui, per
potervelo proporre in paragone. A una
testa straordinaria, in proporzione del
suo corpo, è ricoperta d'una pelle dura
e sciagrinosa; gl'occhi ancora sono molto

with yellow stains and finally iridescent flowing under their skin like a painter who tries to put in his picture, on a human face, half tints reflecting feelings of fear or shame. (page 281) Fancy drawings mixed with grey - 305 - diluted in different half tints were in complete unique harmony. I took them again and put them down, they were scared and took their previous dark colour. I let them go, but they moved slowly and once free, they became green, spread with the usual yellow and disappeared among the grass.

Now that I have described to you the phenomenon of their colours, I am sure that you will agree with me that this change comes from their passions and not from the objects on which they rest as believed by the (page 282) Ancient; now I will give you some details about their shape and constitution:⁴⁴³

It is a small animal called by the Latins Chamoeleon, you can find it in Syria, Arabia in some places of Egypt and in the island of Cyprus. Its appearance is in conformity with the present illustration, which I found necessary to draw, because I do not believe that one can find in the kingdom of four footed animals a similar beast. It has a conge

⁴⁴³ It appears that many travellers were fascinated by the chamaeleons in Cyprus. Alexander Drummond also gave a lengthy description of the creature in his book and also included a drawing of it. (See Alexander Drummond, *Travels through different cities of Germany, Italy, Greece and several parts of Asia*, London, 1754, facing p. 181).



Lettere

Historiche, e dilettevoli

Sullo Stato passato, e pres.^{te}

dell'Isola di Cipro

Composte dal

MARCO MARIANI

La Manon in Provenza l'Anno 1785