

V. Some Facts about the Puteanus of Prudentius¹

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Codex Parisinus latinus 8084 (Puteanus, Bergman's A) of Prudentius is a sixth century manuscript in rustic capitals containing the *Cathemerinon*, *Apotheosis*, *Hamartigenia*, *Psychomachia*, and *Peristephanon* 1 to 5.142.² Bound in the back are six leaves in sixth-century uncials containing a poem known under the titles *Carmen adversus paganos* or *Carmen adversus Flavianum*. My knowledge of the MS. is based upon the study of photographs on microfilm and on the reports of others who have examined the MS. personally.

A number of facts about this MS. have been either obscured by misinformation or inadequately interpreted. In this paper I discuss half a dozen or so such facts which are of especial interest for the history of the text of Prudentius. Since the diplomatic basis for the text of Prudentius is especially full, the history of the transmission of the text of his poems offers valuable insight into typical ways in which the texts of manuscripts of late antiquity and of the early middle ages descend from more ancient sources. Consequently, I feel that the facts discussed here will prove of interest to a circle of readers far wider than that of experts in Prudentian studies.

The first fact to which I wish to call attention is that the MS. begins on fol. 1r with the title of *Cath.* 1; it lacks the *Praefatio*, the autobiographical poem which served as an author's preface to an edition of all or some of the poems of Prudentius. On this point Bergman says:³

Quod desideratur in hoc codice Praefatio, id nullius est momenti; nam decisa sunt in primo quaternione duo folia, quae certo Praefationem continebant; codex, qualis nunc est, sine initio incipit ab hymno *C 1* in tertio folio quod nunc primum est.

¹ This study has been assisted by a grant from the American Philosophical Society.

² E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores* no. 571a.

³ Joannes Bergman, "De codicum Prudentianorum generibus et virtute," *SBWien* 157, 5 (1908) 6-7; and *Aurelii Prudentii Clementis Carmina* (Vienna 1926=*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 61) xxvi.

If Bergman were right I felt that two stubs should appear before fol. 1, but they were not visible in the photographs of the MS. At my request Mlle. Chabrier of the Service photographique of the Bibliothèque Nationale made a personal examination of the codex. She writes me as follows (3 Jan. 1958):

... je puis vous faire savoir que le premier quaternion des 6 feuillets de ce manuscrit semble être complet. Après un examen complet du volume, on ne trouve, en effet, aucune trace de feuillets manquants.

As was realized by Winstedt,⁴ this is a fact of major importance. It means that there is external factual confirmation for the hypothesis that the text of the *Cathemerinon* in the Puteanus (A) represents an edition of this work published without the *Praefatio* and hence presumably earlier than that poem, which is to be dated most probably to the year 404 (although 405, the commonly accepted date, is perhaps not impossible—the problem is simply one of Roman arithmetic and inclusive counting).

The suggestion that the *Cathemerinon* was issued in two editions was, I believe, first made by Heinsius on the basis of certain manuscript variants in *Cath.* 10 (see Heinsius on *Cath.* 10.8–16). The suggestion was revived by Winstedt who, together with all others who discuss the matter, seems to assume that two editions must mean two collected editions of works of Prudentius. But the fact that the *Praefatio* is not included in the Puteanus merely suggests that the text of the *Cathemerinon* in that MS. represents an edition or issue of that work published as a separate item.

This in turn suggests that the Puteanus or the exemplar which established its form was built up out of smaller items. Confirmation for the hypothesis that it was the Puteanus itself which was put together from smaller units which had previously circulated in the book trade independently is to be found in certain curious facts about quire marks in the MS. noted by Paul Krueger and U. Robert, who also agree that they are contemporary with the text.⁵ The quires are all quaternions (8 folia) except the first and sixth (fol. 1–6 and 39–44), which consist of six

⁴ E. O. Winstedt, "The Double Recension in the Poems of Prudentius," *CR* 17 (1903) 203–7.

⁵ Paul Krueger quoted by Th. Mommsen, "Carmen codicis Parisini 8084," in *Gesammelte Schriften* 7 (1909) 488 reprinted from *Hermes* 4 (1870) 354; and U. Robert, "Notice paléographique sur le manuscrit de Prudence no. 8084 du fonds latin de la bibliothèque nationale," *Mélanges Graux* (Paris 1884) 405–13.

leaves each. The quires are numbered in three series as follows (in the microfilm I can usually confirm the existence of the quire mark and occasionally all or part of the number; a few of the marks are reportedly absent and presumably cut off in the process of binding):

Folio	Quire number	Contents and remarks
1-44	i-ii	<i>Cath.</i> 1.1 to 12.204.
45-71, 71 bis-123	i-x	Fol. 45 ^r contains <i>Cath.</i> 12.205-208; lower down occurs a name in "bd" uncials "+ Vettius agorius basilius;" 45 ^v blank. 46 ^r -73 ^r <i>Apoth.</i> ; 73 ^v blank. 74 ^r -99 ^v <i>Ham.</i> ; 99 ^v contains 5 lines only (<i>Ham.</i> 962-6), the rest is blank. 100 ^r -123 ^v <i>Psych.</i> pr. 1 to <i>Psych.</i> 895.
124-155	i-iiii	Fol. 124 ^r contains <i>Psych.</i> 896-915. The rest contains <i>Pe.</i> 1 to 5.142.

The only natural break in this MS. now appears to be between the *Hamartigenia* and the *Psychomachia*; but at that point the quire mark series is said to be continuous. The last page of the *Psychomachia* is on the first page of a new quire; *Pe.* 1 begins on the verso of this leaf and the quire begins a new series of numbers beginning with i. Robert suggested, in explanation of the three series of numbers, that the first portion of the MS. to be written was the part containing *Apoth.*, *Ham.* and *Psych.* To this core there were added the two other portions, each having its own set of quire numbers. This fails to explain what one page of the *Psychomachia* is doing on the first leaf of the quire that begins the *Peristephanon*. Any explanation is bound to sound complicated because the facts themselves are complicated. In fact, one more complication should be mentioned. There is a reasonable probability that the text of the *Psychomachia* in A was copied from an exemplar that differed in certain ways from that of the *Apoth.* and *Ham.* (and to a certain extent from that of the other poems too, but there is no need to take that up). For example, in *Psych.*, the combination CHR is regular in A if not invariable (e.g., 13, 96, 526 christicolus; 361 chresma; 854 chrysolutus; 865 chrysoprase). Elsewhere in the MS., CRH is the rule (e.g. *Pe.* 2.59 crhistiana; *Cath.* 1.68 crhistum;

Apoth. 485 crhisticolarum; 493 crhismatis; exceptions are *Apoth.* 880 and *Ham.* 787).

As I see it, the MS. reached its present status by some such process as the following. First, there were two independent units. One contained *Apoth.* and *Ham.*; the first leaf of this MS. (now fol. 45) was left blank. The second unit contained *Pe.* 1 to *Pe.* 5.142 plus an undeterminable amount of other material; the recto of the first leaf of this MS. was left blank (now fol. 124^r). Between these two items the *Psychomachia* was inserted in such a way that the final lines of that poem were written on the hitherto blank first leaf of the MS. containing the *Peristephanon*. Either before or after this had taken place, or while it was in process, it was decided to prefix a copy of the *Cathemerinon* to the now growing manuscript. The number of sheets and quires for writing the *Cathemerinon* was apparently carefully calculated so as to make the quires come out right and have the *Cathemerinon* fit neatly onto the beginning of the *Apotheosis*. The first leaf of the latter section had been left blank; the top of its recto (45^r) was used to hold the last four lines of *Cath.* 12 (205–8).

Some slight variations in this hypothesis are tenable, but in its main outlines I feel it must be correct. It accounts for the three sets of quire numbers and for the irregularity in the size of the quires in the *Cathemerinon* (two consist of six leaves each). It also permits a rational explanation of the occurrence of the name on fol. 45^r. The script in which this name is written, and presumably the hand, is the same as that which writes metrical notes in the margins throughout the MS. and occasionally a marginal gloss or note. The name is identified with that of the famous Mavortius (Vettius Agorius Basilius Mavortius), consul in 527; and much has been made of it as the possible remnant of a subscriptio to the *Cathemerinon*, though how it could be a remnant of a subscriptio while the MS. itself is contemporary with the floruit of Mavortius is not explained. If the above reconstruction of the status of the MS. is substantially correct, the likelihood is that the name was not written at the end of the *Cathemerinon* at all (in fact, it stands at quite a distance from the end of the *Cathemerinon* and is written in letters much smaller than the script of the marginalia), but was written instead on the blank front page of a copy of the *Apoth.* and *Ham.* and perhaps more of the latter part of the manuscript. Until a better explanation is suggested, I shall assume that it was

written to mark ownership of the MS. and that it was most probably put there when the portion of the MS. on which it is written was sent back to the scriptorium to have the *Cathemerinon* added to the front.

That the MS. is nevertheless homogeneous is shown by a study of the script. The same two rustic capital hands that write the text of the *Cathemerinon* are found in the second section of the MS.; I believe only one of them wrote the *Peristephanon* (many portions of the text of that work are only partially legible now). However, the physical condition of the MS., the evidence of the quire marks, and some internal evidence in the text all lead to the conclusion that the MS. was put together by copying and binding into it a number of items which had previously existed as separate books or booklets. In other words, the text of the Puteanus seems to represent the text of at least four separate and distinct manuscripts of different works of Prudentius. Contents of the four exemplars were as follows: (1) *Cathemerinon*, (2) *Apotheosis* and *Hamartigenia*, (3) *Psychomachia*, and (4) *Peristephanon* 1 to 5.142, plus an indeterminable amount of other material. These exemplars may well have nothing in common so far as textual history is concerned except that they were all copied at about the same time by the same professional scribes, and the result was bound into one codex.

In the portions of the MS. containing the *Cathemerinon* and the *Peristephanon*, there are no running heads. In the other three works there are. They take the following form (with very minor variations):

PRUDENTII LIB. Ī (verso)	APOTHEOSIS (recto)
PRUDENTII LIB. IĪ (verso)	AMARTIGENIA (recto)
PRUDENTII LIB. IIĪ (verso)	PSYCHOMACHIA (recto).

The hand or hands which write the running heads are contemporary with the text, but they do not seem to me to be identifiable with those that actually write the text. I feel that they were probably added after the text was written. They offer evidence that the *Apotheosis*, *Hamartigenia*, and *Psychomachia* were regarded as a series; but they do not prove that the three poems had already been collected in the exemplar of the Puteanus. In fact, as I have said, there is some positive evidence that the exemplar for the *Psychomachia* differed in character from that of the other two

poems. One may also doubt whether even the *Apotheosis* and *Hamartigenia* were joined in the exemplar. The blank page which separates them may be a slight indication that the poems were in the form of separate booklets, but the evidence is not sufficient to resolve the question one way or the other.

My conclusion from the facts reviewed above is that the exemplar of each of the works of Prudentius found in the Puteanus (with the possible exception of *Apoth.* and *Ham.*) was physically independent of the others. Hence it appears likely that the activity of Mavortius which influences the textual tradition of the poems of Prudentius was to collect independent issues of different works and to have them copied in a homogeneous style to be combined into a single codex. This is his book. It has his name on it written in such a way that it seems to indicate ownership. But the lack of any textual notes or corrections in a hand that can be identified as that of Mavortius tends to show that he did not concern himself with the text of Prudentius.