## XXVIII. Themes of Encomium and Invective in Claudian

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Under the rubrics of encomium and invective can be listed the major portion of Claudian's writings. Some of his longer poems are panegyrics pure and simple. Here belong the encomia on the third, on the fourth, and on the sixth consulships of the Emperor Honorius; a panegyric on the consulship of Stilicho; another on that of the brothers Probinus and Olybrius. There is still another consular encomium, this one in honor of Manlius Theodorus. To the same general group belongs the shorter and less elaborate *Laus Serenae*, praising Theodosius' niece and adopted daughter, who was Stilicho's wife.

There are two full-dress invectives, one directed against Rufinus, the Praetorian Prefect of the East from 392 to 395, the other against his successor in power, the eunuch Eutropius. Two other works, ostensibly brief historical epics, are in reality largely encomia of Stilicho and Honorius, intermingled with invectives against two enemies of Stilicho's regime. In the *De bello Gildonico* the villain is the African insurgent Gildo; in the *De bello Gothico* the target of the poet's attack is the Gothic chieftain Alaric.

These encomia and invectives have been carefully studied from the standpoint of their rhetorical structure, and have been found to conform with great fidelity to the patterns prescribed for the enkômion or laus and for the psogos or vituperatio by the rhetoricians of the Second Sophistic. It will surprise no one to find that Claudian has drawn not only the structural pattern but also a large proportion of the themes of his panegyrics and vituperations from the prescriptions of the rhetoricians. That his heroes are often described as of gentle birth and of superb upbringing, as doers of noble deeds, both in peace and in war, with peaceful accomplishments exemplifying justice, moderation, and wisdom, and warlike feats demonstrating manly bravery; that these men

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> L. B. Struthers, "The Rhetorical Structure of the Encomia of Claudius Claudian," HSCP 30 (1919) 49-87; P. Fargues, Claudien (Paris 1933) 191-218; H. L. Levy, "Claudian's In Rufinum and the Rhetorical Psogos," TAPA 77 (1946) 57-65.

are compared with traditional heroes, often to the latter's disadvantage: all these features can be paralleled in the works of any classical panegyrist one may choose. Conversely, at least one of Claudian's villains is reviled as being of ignoble birth; and all are attacked as unjust, immoderate, and unwise. They are often compared to the tyrants of history and the monsters of mythology, whom, it is said, they excel in foul destructiveness.<sup>2</sup>

It is not, I hasten to assert, with these stock rhetorical themes that we shall here be concerned. The purpose of this paper is rather to examine the special and fairly original themes which Claudian has introduced into his panegyrics and invectives. We shall discuss, for the period of his productivity (approximately 394–404 A.D.), the relationships of these themes to the political, social, and religious conditions of his times.

Our task has been made considerably easier by a publication which appeared some seven years ago. In this work we find a detailed account of fifteen years of Roman history, a period in large part coextensive with that we have just mentioned. Mlle. Emillienne Demougeot discusses in this volume the imperial Roman government of the years 395–410, years which she presents as having led from the unity to the division of the Roman Empire.<sup>3</sup> Though some critics have taken exception to Mlle. Demougeot's thesis that this decade and a half were absolutely crucial in determining the final split between the Western and the Eastern parts of the Empire, few have failed to praise the thoroughness with which she has illuminated the period from the death of Theodosius the Great to the sack of Rome by Alaric.<sup>4</sup>

Theodosius, dying in 395, left his Empire, it will be remembered, to be governed by his two ineffectual sons, the Augusti Arcadius and Honorius. The former was established in Constantinople, the latter in Milan. The Vandal general Stilicho, Theodosius' pupil and chief military commander—magister utriusque militiae—was charged by the dying Emperor, not only with the protection of the boy Honorius, but also—at least so ran the official version, supported by St. Ambrose—with a measure of responsibility for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Fargues (above, note 1) 191-231.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> E. Demougeot, De l'unité à la division de l'empire romain (Paris 1951).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Cf. e.g. reviews by W. C. Bark, American Historical Review 57 (1951/2) 416-7; W. Ensslin, Deutsche Literaturzeitung 73 (1952) 356-63; J. A. McGeachy, Jr., CP 49 (1954) 57-9.

the welfare of Arcadius.<sup>5</sup> Stilicho was actually the dominant figure in the West from 395 until his downfall in 408, but he was never able to establish control of the Eastern court.

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Thus nine of the ten years of Claudian's literary productivity fall within the period of Stilicho's supremacy in the West, and it was as the Vandal's laureate that our poet wrote the bulk of the verses with which we are concerned. Glover long ago pointed out the importance to the fourth century Roman rulers of their panegyrists. However emptily rhetorical their productions may seem to us, these writers were actually what we should now call public relations officers.

In so far as Claudian's encomia and invectives are addressed to the Latin-reading public of the Empire as a whole, the theme of their propaganda is simple, and requires little comment. There runs through all the major poems of this group the constant motif that Stilicho is the loyal supporter of an Empire unified by Theodosius, and left by him to his two sons, under the powerful guidance of their affinal relative, the son-in-law of Theodosius and the father-in-law of Honorius<sup>7</sup>: under the guidance, that is, of Stilicho, protector of one Empire, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.<sup>8</sup>

But apart from this general message, on which the poet rings a dozen changes, we may be able to discern certain themes directed toward a particular group. Here we may ask two questions: With what segments of the public did Stilicho's regime stand in special need of the work of a publicist? Of these segments, with which was Claudian equipped to help him? Now Stilicho had no special need of help to bolster his position with the immediate entourage of the young Emperor of the West. At least for the decade following Theodosius' death, the memory of the great Emperor's close connection with Stilicho, and the living embodiment of that connection, Stilicho's wife, Honorius' adoptive sister, Serena, were powerful enough factors to prevent any difficulty in that quarter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> H. L. Levy, *The Invective in Rufinum of Claudius Claudianus* (Geneva [New York] 1935) 7, 19. For the whole period, see E. Stein, *Geschichte des spätrömischen Reiches* 1 (Vienna 1928) 345–87.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> T. R. Glover, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century* (Cambridge 1901) 120. Cf. also Fargues (above, note 1) 57–8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> E.g. In Ruf. 1 Pr. 15-8, 2.4-6; 4 Cons. Hon. 432-3; Cons. Stil. 2.52-60. Cf. also Fargues (above, note 1) 58.

<sup>8</sup> Cons. Stil. 3.113-5, 2.103-5, 3.159.

Again, for the same decade, Stilicho's control of the Western army seems to have been unchallenged. However much Stilicho may have needed or wanted to influence the powerful churchmen of Italy, Claudian, paganus pervicacissimus, as Orosius (7.35.21) calls him, could have been of no help in this direction. The one group with which it was both feasible and possibly advantageous for Claudian's pen to support Stilicho's sword was the pagan aristocracy of the old capital, the Roman senators among whom Ouintus Aurelius Symmachus was a leading figure. Though Christianity was overwhelmingly in the ascendant, especially since Gratian's edicts of 382,9 the pagan senators formed an influential group, with which Theodosius had been sufficiently impressed during his visit to Rome in 389 to appoint several of its members to positions of authority and honor. 10 McGeachy has shown us Symmachus and his coterie as a group of high-born conservatives, deeply attached to the city of Rome as the traditional capital of the Empire, strongly nationalistic in their devotion to their ancestral Roman culture, and firmly, though not fanatically, attached to the inherited religion of pagan Rome, albeit rather as a symbol of Romanitas than as a living creed. 11

In this circle, despite his Christian faith, Theodosius could move as of right, for he was a native of a completely Romanized part of the Empire, a Spaniard, as Trajan had been before him—Claudian proudly points out the parallel (4 Cons. Hon. 18–20). But what of Stilicho? He was, as we have seen, a Vandal. That his father had served under the Roman banner did not make Stilicho any less a man of German blood, a semi-barbarian, as St. Jerome calls him (Epist. 123.16.2). Now Stroheker has shown in a recent article<sup>12</sup> that a type of alliance existed in the last quarter of the fourth century between the pagan artistocracy of Rome and the military leaders of German blood, chieftains whose services the Emperors of the period had been using with increasing frequency. I suggest, however, that this was an alliance of convenience rather than of inclination on the part of the Roman nobility.

<sup>9</sup> Stein (above, note 5) 309.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 321.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> J. A. McGeachy, Jr., Quintus Aurelius Symmachus and the Senatorial Aristocracy of the West (Chicago 1942).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> K. F. Stroheker, "Zur Rolle der Heermeister fränkischer Abstammung im späten vierten Jahrhundert," *Historia* 4 (1955) 314–30.

The pro-German policy of Theodosius, exemplified most pertinently for our purposes by his appointment of Stilicho as magister utriusque militiae, if it did not meet in the West with the strong and well-organized anti-German reaction which it encountered in the East, 13 must none the less have been one of the least attractive aspects of Theodosius' regime in the minds of the senatorial circles of Rome. 14

The particular task, then, which I believe faced Stilicho's publicist Claudian was a formidable one: to gain for his patron, a Vandal parvenu, born in the Eastern part of the Empire (Laus Serenae 82–3), and at least a nominal Christian (for otherwise, as Ensslin has pointed out, <sup>15</sup> Theodosius would never have permitted Serena to marry him)—to gain for a man thus handicapped the favor of an aristocratic, nationalistic, Rome-centered, pagan segment of Roman society.

What themes did Claudian weave into his encomia and invectives to accomplish his mission of cloaking the barbarian aspect of Stilicho multo nebulae amictu, in a thick cloud of Romanitas? Glover lists two of them: "... the eternal grandeur of Rome and the beauty and sufficiency of the old religion." A third, I suggest, is the hatefulness of the barbarians, and the abominable criminality of those who would incite their hordes to attack the Roman realm.

Let us take these themes one by one, though in a changed order, and see how they are reflected in Claudian's verses, and how their handling reflects the ethos of the senatorial aristocracy toward which I suggest they were directed. Claudian was an Alexandrian Greek who had imbued himself with Latin letters in a manner perhaps paralleled only by Joseph Conrad's feat in making himself a master writer of English prose. Our Alexandrian migrant to Rome apparently found in the city on the Tiber a fatherland of the spirit. For Rome is to him more than the tangible city of his own day which, although its structural glories were unimpaired, had yielded as a seat of government to Milan and Constantinople—to him it was still the Rome of Curius and Fabricius, of the Scipios and of Regulus, of Marius and of Pompey; it is the Rome of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Stein (above, note 5) 300, 377.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 347.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Apud S. Mazzarino, Stilicone (Rome 1942) 231, note 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Glover (above, note 6) 236.

Cicero and of Vergil—in a word, it is our Rome, the Rome of the classical philologist. Almost always the heroic past of Rome is evoked, as Moore long ago pointed out,<sup>17</sup> to bolster the poet's praise of Stilicho as one who equalled if he did not exceed the feats of the old Roman heroes. The conclusion of the *De bello Gothico* (645–7) may be taken as a sample: it is a pretended epitaph over the bones both of the Cimbri of a half-millennium before, and of the Goths whom Stilicho had just slaughtered:

Hic Cimbros fortesque Getas, Stilichone peremptos et Mario claris ducibus, tegit Itala tellus. Discite vesanae Romam non temnere gentes!

In another passage in the same poem (138–44) Stilicho is said to have fulfilled, in his defeat of Alaric, the functions of a Fabius, of a Marcellus, and of a Scipio: of the first in that he weakened Alaric by delaying— *cunctando*; of the second in that he defeated him in combat; and of the third in that he drove him out of Italy.

It is not only the military glories, but the civic pride of old Rome which Claudian celebrates. The consulship, long since deprived of governmental power, remained as a prestige-conferring symbol of Rome's republican past. It is by invoking its ancestral glories that Claudian contrives to give some substance to his panegyrics on Probinus and Olybrius in 394, and on Manlius Theodorus in In the consulships of Honorius, and particularly in that of Stilicho, real power was of course temporarily joined with the forms of ancient civic office. The stress which Claudian places on the civic aspect cannot have failed to gratify the conservative nobles. But there is a more striking bit of evidence to show that the encomia may well have been planned to please the senatorial ear. In the panegyric on the fourth consulship of Honorius (312-9) Theodosius is represented as admonishing his young son to avoid the excesses of the Julio-Claudian line, and to model himself on Trajan—not so much upon his military exploits, as upon the fact that he had been gentle to his native land. Here I suggest that we interpret patriae...mitis in the sense of "considerate to the senatorial order."18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> C. H. Moore, "Rome's Heroic Past in the Poems of Claudian," C7 6 (1910/11) 108-15. Cf. also H. Steinbeiss, Das Geschichtsbild Claudians (Halle [Saale] 1936).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> A. Alföldi (tr. H. Mattingly), A Conflict of Ideas in the Late Roman Empire (Oxford 1952) 125-7.

In one instance Claudian has an opportunity to celebrate an overt act on Stilicho's part which restored to the Senate some semblance, for the moment, of its ancient partnership in imperial government. In 397, when Gildo, the comes rei militaris of Africa, revolted against the West, and thereby threatened Rome with a grain-famine, Stilicho had the Senate declare Gildo hostis publicus, <sup>19</sup> quite as in the days of Cicero's Philippics. Now here, I believe, a suggestion which Mlle. Demougeot<sup>20</sup> made in general terms may be given a specific application: that Claudian might have been the initiator rather than merely the publicizer of some elements of Stilicho's policy. At any rate, the poet extols, with obvious relish, Stilicho's restoration of the neglectum . . . per tot iam saecula morem whereby the senators ordered the military leaders to war: ut ducibus mandarent proelia patres (Cons. Stil. 1.325–32).

That Claudian's concern for *Romanitas* was not merely official, but quite personal, I attempted to show in a previous paper.<sup>21</sup> I should like now to draw into connection with this a point, trivial in itself, but perhaps of some symbolic significance. In the distich of the *De bello Gothico* (546–7) in which Claudian sets forth the deceptive prophecy by which Alaric was led to believe that he would conquer Rome in 401,

Rumpe omnes, Alarice, moras: hoc impiger anno Alpibus Italiae ruptis penetrabis ad urbem!

Koch long ago noted<sup>22</sup> that the first and last letters of the two verses form the anagram of Roma. I later added to this finding the observation<sup>23</sup> that the same anagram is worked three times into the first line of the prophecy, once into each third of the verse. Surely such preoccupation with the very name of Rome is an indication that Claudian brought not only his poetic and rhetorical skill but his heart as well to the task of praising the eternal city.

In the invectives, true to rhetorical precepts, Claudian uses the same theme in the reverse sense. He expresses indignation and sorrow that a city with Rome's ancient and glorious history should be threatened by the insubordination of a Gildo (*Bell. Gild.* 76–109)

<sup>19</sup> Stein (above, note 5) 355.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Mélanges de la Société toulousaine d'études classiques 1 (1946) 205.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> H. L. Levy, "Claudian's Neglect of Magic as a Motif," TAPA 79 (1948) 87-91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> J. Koch, Claudii Claudiani Carmina (Leipzig 1893) 211.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> H. L. Levy, CW 28 (1934/5) 7.

or disgraced by the consulship of a Eutropius (In Eutr. 1.435–65). The last-mentioned topic gives Claudian a chance to cater to the understandably bitter jealousy which the senators of Rome on the Tiber felt toward the new Rome on the Bosporus. He ridicules the nobility of Constantinople for their acceptance of a eunuch as consul (In Eutr. 2.135–7):

... Plaudentem cerne senatum et Byzantinos proceres Graiosque Quirites! O patribus plebes, o digni consule patres!

Throughout the invective against Eutropius the oriental effeminacy of Constantinople is contrasted with the masculine severity of Latium. In another poem (Cons. Stil. 3.129) Claudian credits Stilicho with restoring Rome to its ancient place of supremacy—with returning to the head of the Empire its scattered limbs: capitique errantia membra reponit.

So much, then, for *Romanitas* in its positive aspect. But Claudian does more than associate Stilicho with the ancient glories of Rome. To counter anti-Germanism directed against his patron, Claudian, I suggest, fights fire with fire by himself adopting a vigorously antibarbarian line. This motif, which we shall treat as the second of our three themes, first appears in the invective against Rufinus. Not only is the Praetorian Prefect of the East (a native of southern Gaul, and thus, for that period, a man of impeccably Roman antecedents)—not only is Rufinus criticized for consorting with Goths and for wearing Gothic clothing as a means of currying favor with the barbarians; he is also accused of inciting the barbarians to attack the Empire. All the horrors of the savage invasions which occurred in the East during the severe winter of 394–5, as well as the revolt of Alaric, are imputed to Rufinus' malevolent policies.<sup>24</sup>

It may be said parenthetically that the inhabitants of the Roman Empire at this time were quite unable to understand the nature of the vast folk migrations which were bringing successive waves of barbarians crashing against the Roman *limites*. The tendency to find a scapegoat for these incomprehensible catastrophes was understandably irresistible. It is ironic that Stilicho, who for Claudian is the staunch defender of the Empire against the barbarian hordes, was destined to be cast by another poet in the role

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Levy (above, note 5) 22-3.

of prime inciter of the barbarians. Early in the fifth century, Rutilius Namatianus devotes thirty lines of his *De reditu suo* (2.31–60) to an attack upon Stilicho as a barbarian betrayer of the Empire. This passage has, in fact, been elaborately analyzed as a rhetorical *vituperatio* in miniature.<sup>25</sup>

To return to Claudian, we may note that Stilicho's Vandal ancestry is never mentioned by our poet; his father is dismissed with a few perfunctory lines of praise (*Cons. Stil.* 1.35–9). A similar veil of silence covers the name of Stilicho's Gothic collaborator, the military commander Gainas. It was he who actually gave the signal for Rufinus' assassination,26 an act which Claudian praises rhapsodically (In Ruf. 1.20-1) as one which justifies the ways of gods to men! Yet Gainas appears only as a vox . . . ingens, with attribution neither of name nor of nation (In Ruf. 2.384). Theodosius, who was notably lenient toward barbarian peoples, is praised by Claudian as one at whose hand gentes cecidere ferae (Bell. Gild. 232). In another passage, Theodosius' failure utterly to annihilate the barbarians is explained as the result of perfidious advice given the Emperor by a treacherous subordinate (Cons. Stil. 1.112-5).

For Stilicho, the poet goes even further: in the panegyric on the sixth consulship of Honorius (220–2) Claudian credits his patron with the clever policy of pitting loyal barbarian against barbarian invader, without a care for the former's losses—for on whichever side a barbarian dies, it is a gain to the Empire! In a similar vein, he excuses Stilicho's sparing of Alaric's life after the battle of Pollentia on the ground of public policy (rerum sic admonet usus, 6 Cons. Hon. 128, cf. 228), and later calls it just pretended mercy almost literally a case of killing him with kindness: tunc mihi, tunc letum pepigi, he has Alaric say (ibid. 305). Again, Claudian speaks of the glorious days when the Senate had no need of barbarian auxiliaries, but flourished with Roman soldiery: proprio late florerent milite patres (Bell. Goth. 106). The skin-clad senate of the Goths is ridiculed in another passage (ibid. 481-2). Even when Claudian feels impelled to praise the bravery of a loyal Alan of Stilicho's command, describing his personal appearance, and lauding him as worthy of the Elysian fields and of Claudian's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> O. Schissel von Fleschenberg, "Claudius Rutilius Namatianus gegen Stilicho," Janus 2 (1920) 1–74.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Stein (above, note 5) 352.

verse, he still begrudges him the mention of his name, undoubtedly a barbaric one (*ibid*. 583–93). Thus, by commission and omission, does Claudian build into his encomia and invectives an antibarbarian ethos. To some, this type of deceptive propaganda might seem so transparent as to be futile, until we remember that we Americans in 1917–8 soberly fought a war to make the world safe for democracy, in staunch alliance with the Autocrat of All the Russias and the heaven-born Emperor of Japan!

We come now to the third and last theme, the old Roman religion. In the spirit of the pagan literature of the period, 27 Claudian nowhere in his major poems refers to Christianity, but writes as if the old Roman state religion were in full bloom throughout the Empire. In praising Theodosius, a devout Christian. lauded by St. Augustine for his faith and piety, 28 Claudian represents him as praying to Jupiter, and later as apotheosized into a star—novum sidus—in the Roman heavens (3 Cons. Hon. 33-8, 172). Stilicho prays to Mars, who comes down to fight by his side (In Ruf. 1.334-53). The goddess Rome complains to the assembled gods about the deprivations which Gildo's revolt has forced upon her; she is reassured by Jupiter, and she and the goddess Africa depart in amity (Bell. Gild. 17-212). The maiden goddess of Victory is saluted as custos imperii (Cons. Stil. 3.206), quite as if Symmachus' plea had been successful,29 and her altar had been restored to the senate-house-or rather, as if it had never left there! Here again, silence is as significant as speech. In all his catalogue of Rufinus' crimes, Claudian never mentions the prefect's cruel persecution of heretics, though this is amply attested by constitutions of the Theodosian code.<sup>30</sup> Did we not have information from other sources, we should never guess that the Aegyptia somnia of the eunuch Eutropius (In Eutr. 1.312-3) were in fact connected with a Christian prophet named John, as reported by Sozomen.<sup>31</sup>

Claudian, it should be added, is not alone in his use of the silent treatment for the religious beliefs of the opposite party.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> McGeachy (above, note 11) 138.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Augustine, De civitate Dei 5.26; cf. the next paragraph of the text of this article Cf. also C. N. Cochrane, Christianity and Classical Culture (Oxford 1944) 318–57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> McGeachy (above, note 11) 140-6.

<sup>30</sup> Levy (above, note 5) 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Hist. eccl. 7.22; cf. P. Fargues, Claudien: Invectives contre Eu rope (Paris 1933) 67. 12+T.A.P.

St. Augustine, in the section of the *De civitate Dei* referred to above, actually quotes from Claudian's panegyric on the third consulship of Honorius what appear to be two complete hexameters:

O nimium dilecte deo, cui militat aether, et coniurati veniunt ad classica venti.

Only a comparison with Claudian's complete text (3 Cons. Hon. 96–8) discloses that Augustine has cleverly snipped out the end of the verse beginning with O nimium, and the beginning of that which ends militat aether: the excised portion reads cui fundit ab antris/Aeolus armatas hiemes. Though the City of God was written after both Stilicho and Claudian had disappeared from the Roman scene, it may possibly have given some lingering pagans or cryptopagans among the Roman nobility a sense of ironic satisfaction to behold the powerful Bishop of Hippo constrained delicately to skirt the caves of Aeolus in order to garner a pagan poet's praise for his Christian hero.

If anyone is disposed to accept my hypothesis that the elaboration of the three themes discussed above was intended to win for Stilicho's regime the approbation, or at least the tolerance, of the pagan aristocracy of Rome, he is entitled to ask, "Did the poet succeed?" This question it is impossible to answer directly. We may be disposed toward an affirmative answer by one fact: Claudian's poetry did win the favor of the senators for the poet himself. We still have the inscription (CIL vi.1710 = ILS 2949) on a stone which served as a base for a statue of Claudian—the statue itself has disappeared, but the base is extant—which was erected in 400 or 401 in the Forum of Trajan, in the name of the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius, at the request of the Roman Senate itself! The inscription, after admitting that Claudian's eternal fame is sufficiently guaranteed by his verses, goes on to declare, with an encomiastic exuberance worthy of Claudian himself, that the poet combines in his one person the genius of Vergil and the muse of Homer:

Εἰν ένὶ Βιργιλίοιο νόον καὶ μοῦσαν 'Ομήρου Κλαυδιανὸν 'Ρώμη καὶ Βασιλῆς ἔθεσαν.

Stilicho's regime outlived the period of Claudian's activity, possibly that of his life, for none of his works can be dated later

than 404. As Stein<sup>32</sup> points out, Claudian's end is shrouded in insoluble mystery. Vollmer<sup>33</sup> believes that he died in 404. If he did not, was he disgraced and silenced? If he was alive in 407, what relation of cause and effect, if any, is there between his silence and the change in Stilicho's policy which led the Vandal general, in the last biennium of his regime, to turn on the pagans, whom he had previously treated leniently, and burn their revered Sibylline books?<sup>34</sup> These questions remain to tantalize the literary as well as the political historian of the early fifth century. But for the period of Claudian's productivity, I trust that I have established an organic connection between certain themes of the poet's encomia and invectives and a definite segment of the confused and turbulent political, religious, and social life of his time.

<sup>32</sup> Stein (above, note 5) 349, note 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> RE 3.2655.46-53.

<sup>34</sup> Stein (above, note 5) 348, 382-3.