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The Double Recension in the Poems of Prudentius

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NOTE ON HORACE, *Ep.* I. 2. 31.

It will be found convenient perhaps, if I set down the context of this line first.

Nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati,
sponsi Penelopae nebulones Alcinoique
in cute curanda plus aequo operata iuuentus,
cui pulcrum fuit in medios dormire dies et
ad strepitum citharae cessatum ducere
 { curam.
 { somnum.

In considering this passage we should of course first try to account for the dittography *curam*.

Unless we suppose Horace wrote *somnum*. Both in different editions, we must say that either *curam* is a gloss on *somnum* or *somnum* on *curam*. That *curam* is a gloss on *somnum* is incredible, except as a practical joke played on posterity just as some folk invent conundrums that have no answer. But that *somnum* is a gloss on *curam* is explicable; thus:—‘What is *curam*?’ ‘The business of the Phaeacians.’ ‘What is their business?’ ‘Somnus.’ This is in fact, I think, an answer on the right lines; for their ‘*cura*’ was really ‘*curare cutem*’ i.e. indolence and self-indulgence which they made a business of, as Horace says in v. 29 ‘in cute curanda...operata; sleep was of course a part of this but not the chief or essential part of this ‘*cura*’; they slept till noon, ‘then hastened to be drunk, the business of the day’ to use Dryden’s phrase. ‘*Curam*’ however is generally, I believe, rendered ‘anxiety’; but in the first place is Horace likely to have echoed ‘*curanda*’ with ‘*cura*’ in this sense? secondly, what anxiety had the Phaeacians? obviously none.

Assuming then that ‘*curam*’ means ‘their business’, we have still to account for *cessatum*. The explanation usually offered is that it is a supine; and the translation given ‘to induce anxiety to cease’ involves an extremely unlikely use of the supine and

necessitates the taking of *curam* in a sense which, as we have seen, is at least improbable. A simple change will, I believe, put all right. Read *cessatam ducere curam*.

Palaeographically this of course presents no difficulty; and *somnum* if it did not cause the error would help to perpetuate it. Nor grammatically does the passive *cessatam* present a difficulty: Ovid writes (*Fasti* 4. 617.) ‘largaque prouenit *cessatis* messis in aruis,’ ‘fields that have lain fallow,’ and also (*Met.* 10. 6. 69) ‘illa moram celeri *cessataque tempora* cursu corrigit,’ ‘makes up lost time’; and the author of *Aetna* has two instances vv. 69 and 389, the former being ‘*cessata* uenit per sidera’ where *cessata* is explained as *quiescentia*. Horace himself is rather free with strange passives e.g. (especially) triumphatus (*Od.* 3. 3. 43), and might well have used the passive ‘*cessatam*’ here exactly in the sense that Ovid used it in the *Atalanta* passage.¹

The Phaeacians’ idea of correct conduct in life was to sleep to midday and then to have a long spell of the other forms of indulgence, their real business, that sleep had interrupted: with the passage thus interpreted, *ducere* too has a natural and in the context an expected sense, and there is the required balance to ‘in medios dormire dies’: a long spell of sleep, then a long spell of the day’s chief business, sensuous enjoyments.

Another interpretation possible for my ‘*cessatam curam*’ would be ‘idled business,’ i.e. they idle through the business of the day; but the run of the passage and Ovid’s ‘*cessata tempora*’ favour more the sense of ‘interrupted.’

I am also inclined to think ‘*somno*’ was the original form of the gloss.

W. C. F. WALTERS.

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¹ *Cessatum* as a passive but in agreement with *somnum* is, I find, favoured by Kiessling.

THE DOUBLE RECENSION IN THE POEMS OF PRUDENTIUS.

FROM the point of view of textual criticism the late Latin Christian authors have enjoyed far better fortune than their great classical forerunners. But in this

respect few of them can compare with Rome’s earliest and greatest Christian poet, Prudentius. Dr. Kenyon has recently pointed out how Virgil, richly represented

by early MSS as he is, has not fared so well as the New Testament, but so far as the shortness of the interval between the composition and the earliest extant MS. is concerned, the New Testament itself has not fared so well as Prudentius. The MSS.-tradition of the New Testament begins some two hundred and fifty years after its composition; Prudentius was born in 348 A.D., and published, as we learn from his preface, a collected edition of his poems in 405 A.D., and yet we have a MS. written most probably in the first half of the sixth century, written, that is, little more than a hundred years after the publication of the poems. Apart from the MS. Prudentius would still be fortunate. We possess a considerable portion of another MS. of the seventh century, and from the ninth century onward there is a host of MSS. scattered throughout the monastic world. No other book except the Bible can boast of so many MSS. containing German glosses; some six MSS. contain Old English glosses; and perhaps no other author can show an equal number of early illuminated MSS.

Yet in spite of—or perhaps I should rather say because of—its exceptionally good tradition, the text of Prudentius, though it offers no scope for the ingenuities of emendation, is not altogether lacking in problems to puzzle the critic.

As in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, so here there are clear and unmistakable traces of a double recension of the poems. Take for example the following passages:—

Cath. iii. 100: flauit et indidit ore animam]. Dressel and most MSS. ore animam dedit ex proprio. Put. o. P⁵ and as a variant a. P⁶.

Cath. vi. 6: uis una, lumen unum]. uis ac potestas una Put. P⁵. 2A. 2R. and as a variant a. a. sched. graev.

¹ The following abbreviations of the titles of MSS. will be found—some from Dressel's edition, some from my own collations:—

Put. = Paris Lat. 8688; a = Vat. 3859; o = Alex. 58 A = Guelferbytt; R = Rottendorp; i = Alex. 348; p = Alex. 74; Prag. = Pragensis; q = Alex. 1702; u = Urbin 666; m = Vat. 5821; P² = Paris Lat. 8085; P⁵ = Par. Lat. 8086; P⁶ = Par. Lat. 8088; P⁷ = Par. Lat. 8305; P⁹ = Par. Lat. 8307; K = Köln Dom-bibl. 81; Stutt. = Stuttgart post in 4^{to}. 6; B² = Bern. 394; Duss. = Düsseldorf F. 1; O = Bodleian Auct. F. 3, 6; N = Nomsianus; Laur. = Laurentianus; Ang = Angelicus; H = Heilsbronnensis (now Bodleian Auct. T. 2, 22); Om = St Omer; W = Viennensis; Boh. I = Boheri I (now at Montpellier); T = Thuanus (now Paris Lat. 8087); P¹ = Paris Lat. 8318.

Cath. ix. 58–60:

quinque panibus peresis et gemellis piscibus
adfatum refecta iam sunt adcubantum milia,
ferteque qualus ter quaternus ferculorum
fragmina].

Dressel from R. Prag. a. ñ p.

ferte qualis ter quaternis ferculorum
fragmina,
adfatum refecta iam sunt adcubantum milia
quinque panibus peresis et gemellis piscibus.

Put. (adcubentum), and most of the MSS.

This is a puzzling passage and perhaps not an instance of a double recension by the poet. Three views occur to one as possible solutions of the passage: either Prudentius—even Christian hymn writers are not infallible—forgot his Bible and afterwards corrected himself: or a later copyist corrected the mistake and invented Dressel's reading; or thirdly we may acquit Prudentius of the mistake, assuming that *ferteque qualus ter quaternus* got gradually altered into *ferte qualis ter quaternis*, and then the transposition was made to improve the sense. The difficulty in this third suggestion is that the reading is already found in the Puteanus, and there hardly seems time for the proverbial stupidity of copyists to have made so considerable a change; besides it is strange even for a copyist, if he took sufficient trouble to make an emendation of that kind, not to have taken the trouble to discover that it was quite against the sense of the passage referred to.

Cath. x. 9–16:

Rescissa sed ista seorsum
soluunt hominem perimuntque,
humus excipit arida corpus,
animae rapit aura liquorem.
Quia cuncta creata necesse est
labefacta senescere tandem,
compactaque dissociari
et dissona texta retexi.

Dressel from A. a a. p. q.

Resoluta sed ista seorsum
proprius reuocantur in ortus,
petit halitus aera feruens
humus excipit arida corpus.
Sic cuncta creata necesse est
obitum tolerare supremum,
ut semina dissociata
sibi sumat origo resorbens.

Put. R. a P⁵. H and in the margin Duss. K. P². ⁹. Stutt. Other MSS. combine the two readings in various ways.

Cath. x. 130: factoris ab ore creatae]. cui nobilis ex patre fons est. Put. O. P^{5.6} and as a variant A. a. p. B². P^{2.7}. Duss. Stutt. In N and H both are given, though in H cui etc. is in a different hand.

Apoth. 247 foll.:

nec sit genitor sibi filius ipse
siue pater natus fuerit, siue ipse repente.
perquam ridiculum est et futile, natus ut
ex se
nascendi noua materies ac se deus ultro
ediderit.

Dressel from Laur-m. q. u.

nec sit genitor sibi filius ipse,
perquam ridiculum est et futile natus ut
ex se
siue supernatus fuerit sibi ipse repente
nascendi etc.

Put. and most MSS. except that they read siue pater natus.

Hamart. Praef. 43: hic se caduco dedicans mysterio].

Many German MSS. insert after this verse hic qui caduci rem laboris offerens (or simply qui caduci etc.), which is obviously an alternative version, unless it is a line manufactured from glosses.

Hamart. 488:

quem non aerato machina rostro
arietat insiliens, nec ferrea uerbera quas-
sant.

Put. and others. Other readings are
quem non fragor hosticus aut arietis
uis impacta quatit

or

quem non fragor hosticus arietis aut uis
constitit impacta aut aerato etc.

and many other variations and combinations.

Psych. Praef. 60: parente inenarrabili
atque uno satus] Dressel from A. P. R. cett.
Ang. a.

parente natus alto et ineffabili. Put. and
others.

Psych. 726 foll.:

compositis igitur rerum morumque secundis
in commune bonis, postquam intra tuta
morari

contigit ac statione frui ualloeque foueri
pacificos sensus et in otia soluere curas,
extruitur media castrorum sede tribunal.

Dressel from the marginal reading of a. w.
NO. CL. VOL. XVII.

in commune bonis tranquillae plebis ad
unum
sensibus in tuta ualli statione locatis
extruitur, etc.

Put. and others. Many combinations are
found in the MSS.

Sym. II. 142-3:

ne torpens et non exercita uirtus
robur ineruatum gereret sine laude palaes-
trae.

Several MSS. add two verses which are
obviously an alternative for v. 143:

eneruare suum corrupta per otia robur
posset et in nullo luctamine pigra iaceret.

Per. X. 302: quos lana terret discolora in
stipite]. Dressel with most of his MSS.

quos uerum latet qui fidunt in stipite,
others.

Epilog. I.: Immolat deo patri is omitted
or occurs only as part of the title of the
poem in many MSS., which then have the
line 'quo regente uiuimus' at the end. It
is probable however that in this case these
words were added later to complete the
metre when the first verse had got mixed
up with the title.

Again there is some doubt in several
passages about the insertion or omission of
a particular line, e.g. after

Ap. 937 quid peccatorum prosapia corpore
in illo, is omitted by Put. and many MSS.

Ham. 69:

ne quis duo numina credat
[imperitere uagis mundi per inania formis]
om. Put. and many MSS.

Ham. 191.: qui cunctum regeret proprio
moderamine mundum]. Om. Put. and many
MSS. Some MSS. place it after 194.

Ham. 858:

Ast aliae, quas dira lues errorque malignus
immersit tenebris uastoque obsedit auerno,
haut impune piis semet deesse fatentur
conciliis meritas poenas per saecula ferre
quis patris antiqui aut aegri reuerentis
abyssus
exclusis mundique bonis cum morte potitis.

These verses, with many variants, occur in
some MSS., chiefly German, but they are
omitted by Put. and the French, English,
and Italian MSS.

Differences so many and so important as
P

these cannot be accounted mere copyists' blunders, nor can we reasonably with some editors speak of 'codices interpolati' and 'codices non interpolati.' There are none of those faults in language and style which stamp almost all interpolations, and anyone attempting to choose between them finds himself in the position of the theological student, who when asked for a list of the major and minor prophets hid his ignorance by refusing to make 'any invidious distinction between those holy men.' The only feasible theory is that in these passages we have clear traces of a double recension of the poems by the author himself; and in that case choice between them is entirely a matter of personal taste; and Dressel's taste, or adherence to his favourite MS., led him in almost all cases to decide against the reading of the oldest MS. Personal taste is however no criterion as to which was the first and which the second draught, for Wordsworth's alterations have shown that a poet's second thoughts are not always the happier. Our only hope is to find some clue in the MSS.

However we may choose to account for the occurrence of two recensions in our MSS., one thing at least is obvious to those who have read Stettiner's careful study of the illustrated MSS. of the *Psychomachia*, that Put. in spite of its age is not the archetype of the other MSS., and in a moment it will be seen that it could not be the archetype of them, as it omits lines which are found in all the others. Now in all the cases cited above, wherever there is a longer and a shorter version it is noticeable that Put. gives the shorter; and that in the case of doubt as to the insertion of a line, Put. invariably omits it. Beside this on three occasions it omits lines which the other MSS. contain (*Apoth.* 160. *Psych. Praef.* 41, 2. *Per.* iv. 181-8) and these lines are such as might well have been either added or excluded.¹ The care with which Put. has been corrected and missing lines added renders it improbable that these omissions were due to mere carelessness; and the possibility suggests itself that Put. preserves a recension different from that of the archetype of the other MSS., though subsequently some readings from it or another MS. of the same recension may have found their way into them. For, whereas in the case of later MSS. one can never be quite certain whether they may not be derived from a combination of several sources, the age alone of such an MS. as Put. renders such a supposition improbable.

¹ The omission of *Per.* iv. 102-105 is more difficult, though even that it is not impossible to explain.

There is one other remarkable omission in Put. the omission of the *Praefatio*. Now it is just the *Praefatio* which tells us that the other MSS. are derived from a complete edition of the poems made in the year 405 A.D.: and the absence of the *Praefatio* is at least a particle of proof in favour of the view. But the Puteanus is a copy taken from a different, and presumably earlier edition. Some slight support of this theory may be found too in the omission of the two books against Symmachus; for the reference to the battle of Pollentia (*Sym.* ii. 720) proves that these must have been some of the last work of the poet before the year 405. It must of course be admitted that the Puteanus is not complete, as it now ends at *Per.* v. 142. Still in the list given in the last lines of the *Praefatio* the books against Symmachus are placed between the *Psychomachia* and the *Peristephanon*, and this has generally been considered the correct order. It is the order of the MS. on which Dressel based his edition, and of the other MSS. Boh. I. T. P⁷. Om. and apparently Arras 670 and the MS. at D'Avranches, which are connected with the MS. P¹ of Stettiner's stemma. This class, as Stettiner proves, preserves most faithfully the tradition of the archetype as regards the illustrations of the *Psychomachia*; and so one would naturally expect it also to preserve the true order of the poems. Still more would one expect it of a MS. of the age of Put.; and so it seems probable that the two books against Symmachus were not transposed, and then lost with the rest of the *Peristephanon*, but were originally omitted: and as the *Praefatio* is also omitted, there certainly seems a great possibility, that Puteanus is a representative of an earlier edition than that of 405.

Of course it does not follow that Put. is itself older than the year 405. It is true that the early palaeographers in their enthusiasm claimed the MS. for the fourth century, the lifetime, that is to say, of the poet. But their enthusiasm carried them too far; and it may with more probability be assigned to the fifth or early sixth century. It would be difficult and precarious to attempt to decide between the fifth or sixth century on palaeographical grounds; and fortunately we have a far more definite and palpable clue to the date. On p. 45 at the end of the *Cathemerinon* occur the signature + ///tius Agorius Basilius. M. Delisle is undoubtedly right in identifying this with the Vettius Agorius Basilius Mavortius consul in the year 527 A.D. and known to us from the famous subscriptio in

the MSS. of Horace, 'Vettius Agorius Basilius Mavortius v.c. et inl. excom. dom. excons. ord. legi et ut potui emendavi conferente mihi Magistro Felice oratore urbis Romae.' Over these words much controversy has arisen, some regarding it as part of a *subscriptio* such as that just quoted, written by the hand of Mavortius himself and never completed, presumably because Mavortius was suddenly interrupted, while others hold the incompleteness to be due to the fact that it is a copy of such a *subscriptio* by a later scribe, who left it unfinished through carelessness or because the original was effaced. Neither of these explanations is convincing, and both seem rather examples of that mania for ingenuity which often afflicts the textual critic when confronted with the simplest problem. To imagine an interruption so sudden and important that Mavortius could not complete his sentence is surely rash. Nor is the theory that it is a copy of an effaced *subscriptio* much more probable; for as no one assigns the MS. to a later date than the sixth century, there was not much time for a *subscriptio*, especially in the middle of a book and consequently not much exposed, to have become effaced. Besides if it were a *subscriptio* we should expect it to be written formally under the text, whereas it is added casually after a space of about half a page. Had the name been John Henry Smith, or, as some are mystified by the omission of the name Mavortius, even John Henry alone, no one would ever have supposed that it was put there for any better reason than just because it was, or because Mr. Smith wanted to try a new pen. Why should not Mavortius be allowed the same

human weaknesses? There is little doubt that the name is in Mavortius' own handwriting; and as the marginalia are in the same hand, he was probably revising a copy made for himself. If so the date of the MS. would be the first half of the sixth century. It is not at all impossible that the first corrections of the copyist's blunders are also by his hand, though the change to capitals prevents us from asserting it positively: and in that case, though there is no *subscriptio*, the MS. would be an instructive illustration of what the 'legi et emendavi' of the ancient editors actually meant.

But 'revenons à nos moutons.' The suggested explanation of the variants cited above is that they are ultimately derived from two different editions of the poems; to one of which, the latest, made in the year 405 A.D., the archetype of most of our MSS. may be traced, while the other is represented by the Puteanus. Of course it is only a theory and a rash one; but it appears at least to be one not impossible way out of the difficulty. The difficulty is complicated by the fact that Put. in cases of double recension generally has the support of some MSS. belonging to the other class and asserting their descent from the edition of 405 by the Praefatio. But this is no deathblow to the theory. Even if Put. was the sole surviving representative of the earlier recension, of which we cannot be certain, intercourse between two different classes of MSS. is a constant phenomenon in textual criticism. Besides the ways of mediaeval copyists are many and strange, and I, at least, do not pretend to unravel them. Homo sum non Oedipus.

E. O. WINSTEDT.

A NOTE ON VIRGILIUS MARO.

Most of the commentators on this grammarian of the decadence are agreed that he is full of 'the silliest and most tasteless conceits' (Teuffel and Schwabe, translated by Warr p. 572), and 'extremely ignorant of what a grammarian should know; the rules of grammar' (Bonnet, *Le Latin de Grégoire de Tours* p. 85). But Huemer rightly remarks that useless as are the *Epitomae* of this grammarian for the purpose of throwing any light on the grammar of classical Latin, they are of the greatest importance for the information

which they give us as to the grammar and stock of words used by the Latin writers in Gaul at the time in which he wrote. Virgilius tells us that the Gauls were his compatriots (Huemer p. 137) and states that he intends to write 'de potestate (literarum) bigerro sermone,' i.e. the dialect spoken in the Celtiberian district in Aquitania inhabited by the Bigerriones: cf. Paulus Ausonio v. 246 *Dignaue pellitis habitas deserta Bigerris*. He probably flourished near the end of the seventh century (see the references in Huemer's