

The Anonymous Carmen contra paganos and the Date and Identity of the Centonist Proba¹

Vergilian centos are a generally despised technique of composition, and the variety of such interesting documents dating from the end of the 4th century has tended, in recent times, to be ignored. The most important and longest of these centos is that of a certain Proba who used the words of Vergil to retell portions of the Old and New Testament, *Vergilium cecinisse loqua pia munera Christi* (23)². The poem is extremely difficult to date on internal evidence. Even though the *Cento* is hardly a great work, it is a document of considerable and heretofore-unnoticed significance for the literary history of the later 4th C. A.D. Its very derivativeness, when used to analyse its literary sources, enables us to date it fairly precisely, and to solve a number of prosopographical problems relating to other texts, notably the anonymous *Carmen contra paganos*.

It begins with a 28-line introduction, not yet entirely composed of fragments of Vergil, in which the poetess confesses that she has already written some sort of epic which dealt with *diuersasque neces, regum crudelia bella/cognatasque acies, pollutos caede parentum* (3-4). At line 47 she returns to her former work again: *leuium spectacula rerum/semper equos atque arma uirum pugnassque canebam*. This work is generally agreed, on the basis of an ascription in a lost 10th C. MS from Modena, to have been about the power-struggle of Constantius and Magnentius³. There is, however, no evidence that the

1. I am very grateful to D. Schaller and W. Schetter for their criticism which saved me from many errors and for their hospitality in Bonn, and to Averil Cameron, T.D. Barnes, F. Dolbeau, R.A. Kaster, C.E. Murgia, and Sir Ronald Syme for reading the article in draft version and suggesting useful improvements. I. Ševčenko kindly sent me xeroxes of material unavailable in Berkeley.

2. Edited by C. Schenkl in *Poetae Latini Christiani Minores 1* = CSEL 16 (Vienna 1888) pp. 511-609.

3. This is based on the subscription in the *Codex Mutinensis* (CSEL 16, p. 513) which reads *Proba uxor Adelphi mater Olibrii et Aliepi cum Constantini bellum aduersus Magnentium conscripsisset conscripsit et hunc librum*. But even here the text is unsure, and one would be hard put to choose which name to emend (*Constantini* to *Constantii* [marginally more likely

poem was not *mythological* in content⁴, and it is possible that the reminiscence of the *Pharsalia* prompted the historicising of the ascription⁵. *Confiteor, scripsi: satis est meminisse malorum*, says the poetess. The latter half of the line vaguely refers to the deeds she sang as *mala*.

Preceding the introduction is a 15-line dedication to the emperor, *Romulidum ductor ... augusta propago* which cannot have been written by the author herself. As is clear from the words *scribendum famulo quem iusseras* (5), it is a scribal addition. Because the scribe asks Arcadius to read the poem, preserve it for a long time, and hand it on to his son who is called *Arcadio minori* (a certain sign that the child, Theodosius II, has not yet been born), a *terminus ante quem* at 395/401 can thus be established⁶. The dedication, which must postdate the composition of the poem, has a separate transmission in several manuscripts, for which see *Anthologia Latina* 1.2. no. 719^d ed. Riese (Leipzig 1906). It appears in two manuscripts of the cento, Karlsruhe, Aug. ccxvii and Zürich, Zentralbibl. C 68 (from St. Gall)⁷.

The *terminus post quem* of the poem's composition is a much trickier question and has heretofore been established purely on the basis of arguments from probability. The poetess is said to have written the poem for her children, an inference based on the false reading *natis* for *uatis* at line 12⁸. The work is then dated around 362, the date of Julian's edict *De Profes-*

because *Constantini* is a *lectio facillior*] or *Magnentii* to *Maxentii*?). See also F. ERMINI, *Il Centone di Proba e la poesia centonaria latina* (Rome 1909) p. 8 (hereafter «Ermini»).

4. *Cognatas acies, caede parentum*, and *ulduatas ciuibus urbes* (lines 4-7) clearly suggest something that, like the action of the *Pharsalia*, could be viewed as civil strife between relatives (Pompey and Caesar had been united through Julia). Neither the Italian war of 312 with its Gallic troops (See T.D. BARNES, *Constantine and Eusebius* [Cambridge Mass. 1981] p. 43) and conflict between Constantine and Maxentius nor the struggle of 351-353 (Constantius II and the usurper Magnentius) seems like a suitable candidate. As far as the information in the ascription is concerned, there is an inevitable tendency for scribes, when confronted by an unknown or fairly unknown name, to attempt to flesh it out historically — sometimes with material implied by a shallow reading of the text. An example of this may be found at the beginning of Remigius of Auxerre's commentary on Martianus Capella. He identifies the author as a contemporary of Cicero (Martianus introduces Cicero in the 5th book of the *De Nuptiis*), and says that he went to Rome. See C.E. LUTZ, *Remigii Autissiodorensis Commentum in Martianum Capellam* (Leiden 1962) p. 66.

5. *Cognatasque acies* (4) echoes the opening of the *Pharsalia* (4), and perhaps secondarily the *Thebaid*: *fraternas acies* (1).

6. *Eoa regna* (dedication line 2) must mean that Arcadius is the addressee when he is reigning emperor in the East, i.e. after 395 A.D. Because the poet refers to the future child as *Arcadio minori*, he cannot know what it was actually called. Hence the dedication must have been written before 401, the date of the birth of Theodosius II. See O. SEECK, *Symmachi Opera* (MGH AA 6.1) p. xcv-xcvi. Aschbach's identification of the dedicatee with Honorius (See J. ASCHBACH, «Die Anicii und die römische Dichterin Proba», *Sitzb. Kais. Akad. Wien. phil.-hist. Kl.* 64 [1870], pp. 420-421 [Hereafter «Aschbach»]) is an inexplicable aberration.

7. See Schenkl, *CSEL* 16, p. 520.

8. This reading is not cited by Schenkl, but is noted by A. EBERT, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Literatur des Mittelalters* (Leipzig 1889) p. 126, n. 3, and must be the source of Amatucci's state-

*soribus*⁹, and it is represented as a direct reaction to it, similar to that attested for the two Apollinari, father and son, in the East¹⁰. This view is most clearly stated by Amatucci¹¹, and is followed by Cariddi¹², and Markus¹³, as well as by Clark and Hatch¹⁴.

This analysis of the probable context of the Biblical Vergil cento has caused the poetess to be identified as Faltonia Betitia Proba 2¹⁵, wife of Clodius Celsinus Adelphius 6 (Urban Prefect in 351), and mother of Quintus Clodius Hermogenianus Olybrius 3 (consul 379) and Faltonius Probus Alypius 13 (urban prefect 391)¹⁶. The one dissenting voice is that of J. Aschbach, who identified the poetess instead as Anicia Faltonia Proba 3, the grand-daughter of Faltonia Betitia Proba¹⁷. Our earliest sources name Faltonia Betitia Proba as the centonist: Isidore of Seville (*Orig.* 1.38.25) mentions *Proba, uxor Adelphi centonem ex Vergilio de fabrica mundi et euangelii plenissime expressit*¹⁸. The subscription of MS. Vat. Reg. lat. 1666 reads *Faltoniae Vetitiae Probae cl. femine Vergiliocenton*¹⁹.

Despite these early testimonia, the identification of the poetess with Faltonia Betitia Proba 2 is likely to be incorrect. According to Schenkl, all manuscripts, whether they have the preface or not, are descended from a single exemplar, one that carried the dedication to Arcadius. One branch merely

ment (*Storia della letteratura latina cristiana*² [Torino 1955] p. 131), « Però il particolare che il carme ... fosse dedicato ai figli giovanetti ... ce ne fa porre la pubblicazione intorno al 362 ».

9. JULIAN, *Ep.* 36; *Cod. Theod.* 13.3.5.

10. SOCRATES, *Hist. Eccl.* 3.16.

11. *Op. cit. supra*, n. 8, pp. 130-131.

12. C. CARIDDI, *Il centone di Proba Petronia* (Napoli 1971) p. 18.

13. R. MARKUS, "Paganism, Christianity, and the Latin Classics in the Fourth Century", in J.W. Binns (ed.), *Latin Literature of the Fourth Century* (London-Boston 1974) p. 3 and p. 13.

14. E.A. CLARK and D.F. HATCH, *The Golden Bough, The Oaken Cross* (Ann Arbor 1981 pp. 98-99).

15. All numbers refer to *PLRE* 1 and 2.

16. So also A. EBERT (*op. cit. supra*, n. 8) p. 126; SCHANZ-HOSIUS 4.1 pp. 219-220; F. ERMINI, pp. 6-13; F. ERMINI, *Storia della Letteratura Latina Medievale* (Spoleto 1960) p. 160; R. HERZOG, *Die Biblepik der lateinischen Spätantike* 1 (München 1975) p. 3.

17. Aschbach, p. 423 however, assumes that the dedication of the poem was contemporaneous with its composition, and therefore must accept a *terminus post quem* of 395. For him it was a choice between Valeria Faltonia Proba and Anicia Faltonia Proba.

18. It is interesting to note that K¹ omits *uxor ... plenissime* and A¹ *uxor ... euangelii*. See also ISIDORE, *Vir. Ill.* 18 (PL 83. 1093 A) *Proba, uxor Adelphii proconsulis, femina idcirco inter uiros ecclesiasticos posita sola, pro eo quod in laude Christi uersata est, componens centonem de Christo, Virgilianis coaptatum uersiculis. Cuius quidem non miramur studium, sed laudamus ingenium. Quod tamen opusculum inter apocryphas scripturas inseritur. The Decretum Gelasianum* (PL 59. 162 B) also mentions a work that may be Proba's cento: *centimetrum (sic!) de Christo, Virgilianis compaginatum uersibus, apocryphum*.

19. See Schenkl, *op. cit.*, p. 514 who sees *Vetitiae* as an error for *Aniciae* — mistakenly: this in an ascription to Proba 2.

omitted the preface²⁰. If this is true, and the presence of unquestionable archetypal lacunae at lines 133 and 233 would indicate that it is, then the highly sporadic appearance of the muddled ascription of the cento to Proba 2 suggests that it was not present in the archetype, but that it was arbitrarily imported, perhaps combining information from Isidore with invention²¹. It does not have the authority of a late antique *subscription*. The information in these ascriptions is not even self-consistent²².

But other methods can be used to date the cento. That these have not been used is probably an indication of how few scholars actually read the piece, and attempt to determine its relationship to other late 4th C. poems. It has not been noted that a very close relationship exists between the *Cento* of Proba and the anonymous *Carmen Contra Paganos*. (= *Anthologia Latina* 1.1 no. 4 ed. Riese) (Hereafter *CCP*). In her *recusatio* (15-17) Proba says :

Non mihi saxa loqui uanus persuadeat error
Laurigerosque sequi tripodas et inania uota
Iurgantesque deos procerum uictosque penates :

These lines are extremely close to those of the *CCP* (vv. 20-24) :

Nuda Venus deflet, gaudet Mauortius heros,
Iuppiter in medium nescit finire querellas
Iurgantesque deos stimulat Bellona flagello.
Conuenit his ducibus, **proceres**, sperare salutem
Sacratiss, uestras liceat componere lites ?

The occurrence of the three elements, *iurgantes, deos*, and *proceres*, two of which are not particularly common, so close to one another in related contexts cannot be accidental. This is a clear indication of a genetic relationship between the two poems. I have been unable to find a third possible source of the words²³, so will work on the assumption that one must be dependent on the other.

20. See Schenkl, *op. cit.*, p. 523.

21. It is difficult to tell where Isidore obtained his information about Proba in the first place. J. FONTAINE, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique* 2 (Paris 1959) pp. 842-844 discusses relations and the exchange of books between Spain and Rome in this period.

22. Confusion is apparent in the manuscripts from the very start. The subscription of the lost *Mutinensis* (see above n. 3) is consistent on the family relations, and would suggest Proba 2. The ascription in Vat. Pal. lat. 1753 (from Lorsch), though it agrees with the codex *Mutinensis* about the name of her husband, calls Proba *Aniciorum mater*, an appellative which applies to Anicia Faltonia Proba alone. The ascription in Vat. Reg. lat. 1666 manages to confuse Proba 2's husband with her son Alypius (see Schenkl p. 514). None of this is conducive to trust in the manuscripts. It is also worth noting that the information about Proba 2's « lost poem on Constantius and Magnentius » is rendered unlikely by her husband's involvement in contemporary politics. He was Urban Prefect under Magnentius, and was accused by Dorus of conspiracy against him (AMM. MARC. 16.6.2).

23. My thanks to Johann Ramming who checked the material in the *Thesaurus Linguae*

The passage in the *CCP* has two main sources, both epic accounts of quarrels among the gods. The first is Statius, *Theb.* 10.893 the quarrel among the supporters of Argos and those of Thebes:

Flet Venus Harmoniae populos metuensque mariti
Stat procul et tacita Graduum respicit ira.
Increpat Aonios audax Tritonia diuos.
Iunonem tacitam furibunda silentia torquent
Non tamen haec turbant pacem Iouis: ecce quiescunt
Iurgia...

The second source is Vergil, *Aen.* 8.696 ff.

Regina *in mediis* patrio uocat agmina sistro
Necdum etiam geminos a tergo respicit anguis
Omnigenum deum monstra et *latrator Anubis*
...
Quam cum sanguineo sequitur *Bellona flagello*.

From Statius the *CCP* has picked up the central opposition between Mars and Venus, the phrase *Venus deflet*, Juppiter's position as *arbiter*, and the root *iurg-*, for the quarrel here is a verbal one. From Vergil come the phrases *in mediis*, *latrator Anubis* (*CCP* 95), and *Bellona flagello*. But the *CCP* alludes, above all, directly to Statius where Juppiter's peace is not disturbed. The author of the *CCP* presents a very visual image, pared down to focus on the two principals (Venus is made naked for effect), and the helpless father of the gods. The Vergilian tag, *Bellona flagello*, from a context where the fighting was physical, takes the Statian verbal wrangle a step further for satirical effect.

But who wrote first? If we assume that Proba was the first, *iurgantesque deos*, would also have no real function because these *iurgia deorum* are not specific and the phrase would not be a precise quotation to parallel the well-known *uictosque penates* (*Aen.* 1.68)²⁴. *Procerum*, which must go with *iurgantesque deos*, would also have no real function because these *iurgia deorum* are not specifically connected with the *proceres* in any previous source. If Proba wrote first, then we would have to make a very improbable assumption — that the *CCP* spontaneously expanded the slightly cryptic *iurgantesque deos procerum* into a mass of allusions to its two relevant source-passages.

The *Carmen Contra Paganos*, however, is addressed to the pagan senators of Rome, unflatteringly characterised as those who worship groves and the cave of the Sibyl. This is clear from *proceres* in the vocative (23), the plural verbs (1 ff.), and *praefectus uester* (25). "Wrangling gods" refers in context to the differing reactions of Mars and Venus to the death of Adonis, several steps

Latinae, and to Dieter Schaller who did the same with his collection of Latin poetic material in Bonn. The results were negative.

24. For frequent allusions to *Aeneid* 1.68 in anti-pagan polemic see, for example, AUGUSTINE, *Serm.* 81.9; *Civ. Dei* 1.3 discussed in H. HAGENDAHL, *Augustine and the Latin Classics* (Göteborg 1967) pp. 390 and 417-418.

down from the more lofty quarrels of the Vergilian and Statian scenes²⁵. The gods should act as examples for men, and, if the divine beings brawl above in heaven, how can the senators expect to settle their disagreements with such poor celestial leadership? The three words fit the context organically. It would be much more in the manner of the satirist of the *CCP* to pillage the *Streitszenen*, and coin the phrase *iurgantes deos* himself.

The genitive *procerum* in Proba is decisive. Given her centonistic technique, it is far more likely that she refers directly to the *Carmen Contra Paganos*: "those wrangling gods of the senators" — yet another aspect of the pagan mythical apparatus that the Christian poetess must reject — to parallel the catchword *uictosque penates*. *Procerum* in her text then is organic: it refers to the senators of the *CCP*. Proba was writing after the composition of the *CCP*.

Unfortunately the date of the *CCP* is by no means certain. Virtually all treatments of the poem have concerned themselves with the all-important question of the identity of the anonymous praefectus, who, by the time the poem was written, was already dead. Thus the *terminus post quem* of the *CCP* is dependent on his identity. Most scholars, following Mommsen²⁶, agree that the poem attacks Virius Nicomachus Flavianus, in which case it must have been written after September 5/6 394 A.D. when Flavianus committed suicide²⁷. G. Manganaro tried to identify the praefectus as Gabinius Barbarus Pompeianus, thereby achieving a *terminus post quem* of 409 A.D.²⁸. S. Mazzarino believed the praefectus to be L. Aurelius Avianus Symmachus 3, consul designate for 377 when he died²⁹. Most recently, and to my

25. See Reposianus, *De Concubitu Martis et Veneris* 33 for a grove that was pleasing to Mars because Adonis had died there: *Lucus erat Marti gratus post uulnera Adonis*.

26. Th. MOMMSEN, «Carmen Codicis Parisini 8084», *Hermes* 4 (1870) pp. 350-370 (hereafter «Mommsen»).

27. J. MATTHEWS, "The Historical Setting of the *Carmen Contra Paganos*", *Historia* 19 (1970) pp. 464-479 is the prime exponent (hereafter «Matthews»). Against Nicomachus Flavianus as the libelee, but with no really positive suggestions to offer see F. HEINZBERGER, *Heidnische und christliche Reaktion auf die Krisen des Weströmischen Reiches in den Jahren 395-410 n. Chr.* (Diss. Bonn. 1976) pp. 193-194. L. LENAZ, «Annotazioni sul 'Carmen contra paganos'», *Studia Patavina* 25 (1978) pp. 541-572 (hereafter «Lenaz») proposes no specific candidate, but shows how many of the arguments involving Flavianus are circular. Particularly salutary is his attempt (Lenaz p. 559) to show that, if one makes an "identikit" portrait of Flavianus, independent of the *CCP*, the details do not fit the image painted by the *CCP* at all. He also makes an important argument from negative evidence: that if the praefectus were Flavianus, too many characteristics of Flavianus that would have been ideal for the satirical pillory, are missing (pp. 559-570).

28. G. MANGANARO, «La Reazione pagana a Roma nel 408-9 d.c. e il poemetto anonimo 'Contra Paganos'», *GIF* 13 (1960) pp. 210-224 (hereafter «Manganaro»); followed by his edition in *Nuovo Didaskaleion* II (1961) pp. 23-45, and by his brief remarks in a review of A. CHASTAGNOL, *La Préfecture urbaine à Rome sous le Bas-Empire* (Paris 1960) in *Iura* 12 (1961) pp. 402-410 (especially p. 409 ff.). His view is untenable (see below p. 238).

29. S. MAZZARINO, *Antico, tardoantico, ed èra costantiniana* 1 (Bari 1974) p. 373 «contra

thinking most convincingly, L. Cracco-Ruggini makes a case for Vettius Agorius Praetextatus as the object of the libel³⁰. If Cracco-Ruggini is right, then the poem must have been written after January 385 A.D. It is, however, important to keep in mind that a *terminus post quem* is not a fast dating. It is true that the poem has somewhat of the character of a topical broadsheet, and that it is therefore a temptation to set the date of its composition immediately after the death of the libelee³¹, but it is always possible that a certain amount of time elapsed between the death of the Praefectus (whoever he was) and the writing of the *CCP*.

It is unlikely that the question of the identity of the Praefectus will ever be definitively solved to the satisfaction of all. All four suggested candidates present prosopographical problems, and the fact that the text of the *CCP* is highly corrupt does not facilitate matters. Many treatments of the poem are excessively diffuse: what is needed is a sort of check-list with every disputed point, and an answer applicable to the suggested candidate in another column. A hierarchy of importance must also be established for the various details. In this way it would be much easier to evaluate the ever-increasing critical literature: it would be possible to show that an explanation was clearly *inadequate*, not simply that it had one or two major difficulties.

The new parallel noted between the *Cento* and the *CCP* introduces a new element to the discussion and enables us to discard some of the proposed candidates. Pompeianus can be immediately eliminated because the preface of the

Simmaco prefetto urbano del 364/5 » (hereafter « Mazzarino »). Mazzarino's *positive* arguments are difficult to oppose: particularly strong are two points in favour of the elder Symmachus. The first is the interpretation of line 38 *unum patriae qui prodidit olim* (Mazzarino pp. 414-415) and the second is the question of Symmachus's building program (lines 39-40 *antiquasque domus, turres ac tecta priorum subvertens urbi uellet cum inferre ruinam* (Mazzarino pp. 416-417). But the greatest problems involve what Mazzarino simply does *not* discuss: the religious focus of the polemic in the *CCP*. The religious profile of the anonymous prefect does not fit what is known of Symmachus père. Too many questions are left unsolved — particularly the existence of such virulent polemic in a period that Mazzarino must argue was one of comparative *pax* (Mazzarino pp. 427-434). Mazzarino (p. 427) must confidently say « La prima polemica che, nel quarto secolo, contrapponga direttamente un cristiano a un pagano è dunque databile ai primissimi tempi del 377. » But the character of the polemic remains puzzling at a date before 384. Other prosopographical problems are skirted as well.

30. L. CRACCO-RUGGINI, « Il paganesimo romano tra religione e politica (384-394 d.C.): per una reinterpretazione del 'Carmen contra paganos', » Rome 1979 = *Memorie dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di Scienze morali, storiche, e filologiche*, Ser. VIII, 23/1 pp. 1-144 (hereafter « Ruggini »). She revives and amplifies the suggestion of R. ELLIS, "On a Recently Discovered Latin Poem of the 4th Century", *Journal of Philology* I. 2 (1868) pp. 66-80 (Hereafter « Ellis »). Cf. U. MORICCA, « Il Carme del Cod. Paris. 8084 », *Didaskaleion* 4 (1926) pp. 94-107.

31. Cf. Mazzarino, p. 404 who points to v. 27 *repandat* and v. 111 *iaces*. But the use of the present tense need not indicate contemporary time. In polemic the present tense is regularly used to invoke the opponent as if he were a prosopopoeia, see, for example, PRUDENTIUS, *Contra Symmachum* 2. 10-11 written after 402 long after Symmachus's 3rd *Relatio*. See, most recently, J. HARRIES, « Prudentius and Theodosius », *Latomus* 43 (1984) p. 74 ff.

cento proves that it already existed in 395/401 A.D., and its dependence on the CCP has already been demonstrated. Pompeianus was lynched in 409 A.D., and so cannot be the object of the CCP's libel. Other arguments against have already been made by J. Matthews³².

The main problem with Flavianus is that *tracta ... morte* (which can only mean a "drawn-out death"³³) makes absolutely no sense with reference to a man who committed suicide on the battle-field. Chronology is also against Flavianus. It is virtually certain that Jerome is attacking Proba and her cento specifically in *Ep.* 53.7 written from Bethlehem to Paulinus of Nola. She is likely to be the *garrula anus* (*Ep.* 53.7)³⁴. Courcelle makes a convincing case for the identification by pointing out that all three passages cited by Jerome are used by Proba, and that one (*Aen.* 2.650 = Proba 624) is unique in this position³⁵. This letter is dated to 394/6, which, if Nicomachus Flavianus were the prefect addressed by the CCP, would make the chronology very tight indeed³⁶. Perhaps most important of all are the problems raised by Lenaz's apt suggestion that the "identikit" picture of Flavianus provided by the CCP in no way tallies with what we know of him from other sources — even allowing for satirical exaggeration³⁷.

32. The primary objection being, naturally, that there is no evidence for a consulship of any sort. Cf. Matthews pp. 112-113.

33. See MOMMSEN p. 362 «*Tracta mors, scilicet ea quae secuta est post longos cruciatus*». His interpretation is ambiguous. Ruggini's suggestion (p. 82) that *tracta morte* can mean "the death he drew by lot" (figuratively) is most unlikely. The position of *tracta* with relationship to *uix* and *morte* clearly indicates that the adjective is emphatic, and must refer to the unpleasant nature of the death itself, not merely to the fact that it was drawn. See Mazzarino p. 401 who rightly translates «lenta», and Lenaz p. 548. For a parallel for "drawn-out" see PRUDENTIUS, *Contra Symm.* 1.667 *ne tractum sine fine ferat fastidia carmen*. This may be a late antique use of *simplex pro compositio*: hence *protractum*.

34. JÉROME, *Ep.* 53.7 *hanc garrula anus, hanc delirus senex, hanc soloecista uerbosus, hanc universi praesumant*.

35. P. COURCELLE, «Les exégèses chrétiennes de la quatrième églogue», *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 59 (1957) p. 310, «Jérôme y critique de façon directe trois passages du centon de Proba». He points to *Aen.* 1.664 = Proba 403 (also found in *De Verbi Incarnatione* 35), *Aen.* 2.650 = Proba 624 (this one is unique and is indeed used of Christ's crucifixion), and *Buc.* 4.6-7 = Proba 34 (who cites only the first part of line 7). It is only the second passage that is really decisive.

36. Courcelle (*op. cit.*) p. 310 dated the letter to 396 and not before. J. Labourt (*Saint Jerome: Lettres* vol. 3 [Paris 1953] p. 235) dated the letter between 394 and 396. Most recently however J.N.D. KELLY *Jerome* (London 1975) p. 192 accepts the dating to 394 proposed by P. NAUTIN, «Études de chronologie hiéronymienne (393-397) (suite)», *REAug.* 19 (1973) p. 213-239. See pp. 222-224 especially for the dating of *Ep.* 53 to 394. If 394 is right, then Flavianus would be categorically eliminated, since we would have to suppose Flavianus's death in September, the composition of the CCP, the composition of Proba's *Cento*, and Jerome's reading of Proba's *Cento* in Bethlehem all in the space of four months.

37. See Lenaz p. 559-570 pointing out that, if the poem had been directed against Flavianus, then the omission of references to Heracles, thaumaturgy, the wind-miracle at the Frigidus, etc. is very surprising.

There are a few apparent prosopographical problems involved with Praetextatus, but, as I hope to show, they may fairly easily be surmounted. The first is the phrase (*CCP* 112) *te consule*³⁸. The second difficulty concerns the identity of Leucadius (*CCP* 85)³⁹. But since Leucadius may well be unattested other than by the *CCP*, his identity is not a positive problem. The greatest problem involves the career of Marcianus, the only other person mentioned by name in the *CCP*. Marcianus 14 is traditionally made proconsul of Africa in 393/4 – exclusively, however, on the basis of the evidence of the *CCP*, and the identification of the prefect with Flavianus⁴⁰. Ruggini has already noted that evidence for his career is dependent on the *CCP* alone, and that it must hence be considered flexible: he could equally well have been appointed under Praetextatus⁴¹. So nothing forbids the identification of the prefect with Praetextatus. On the positive side also Praetextatus is the best of the proposed candidates. What we know of his religious interests fits very nicely except for the fact that it may be difficult to describe his magnificent burial with its elaborate inscription literally as *paruo donatus sepulcro*⁴². Even more interesting in view of Ruggini's theory is the transmission of the poem in a codex connected with the Vettii, and the specific mention of the wife of the praefectus⁴³. Nothing is known of the wives of Pompeianus, Symmachus 3, or Flavianus, but Fabia Aconia Paulina, Praetextatus's wife, was clearly a prominent figure, and Jerome seems to have been well aware of her grief at the death of her husband, amply attested in her verse inscription dedicated to him⁴⁴.

THE *CCP* AND THE LOBBES CATALOGUE

F. Dolbeau has recently tentatively proposed not merely a subject for the *CCP*, but an author as well by bringing to scholarly attention an entry in the

38. Praetextatus did not live to take up his consulship, but Ruggini p. 109 n. 327 gives clear evidence of the use of "consul" for "consul-designate".

39. *PLRE* 1 identifies him as Leucadius 2, but he is attested only by the *CCP*. He is identified, though only extremely tentatively, by Ruggini p. 101-102 with Leucadius 1.

40. See *PLRE* 1 Marcianus 14; J.F. MATTHEWS, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364-425* (Oxford 1975) p. 243.

41. See Ruggini p. 103 ff. As Professor Barnes points out to me, Marcianus could equally well have been proconsul of Africa in 384/5 (See T.D. BARNES, "Proconsuls of Africa 337-392", *Phoenix* 39 [1985] p. 153), or else possibly a proconsul of Campania. See A.H.M. JONES, *The Later Roman Empire* 1 (1964) p. 161.

42. An objection first raised by C. MOREL, *Revue Archéologique* 1868 p. 48. Ruggini p. 108 n. 323 is almost certainly right that the phrase must be a topos about the grave as "fine and private place", but does not defend her statement with examples. One might cite Dracontius, *Rom.* 9.25-30 for the contrast between the narrowness of the funeral urn and the freedom of the soul. See also *CIG* 1. 938, 5-6: ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν κεῖθι μικρὰ κόνις ἀμφιχυθεῖσα Ψυχὴν δ' ἐκ μελέων οὐρανὸς εὐρύς ἔχει.

43. See Ruggini p. 76; *CCP* 116 ff.

44. *CIL* 6. 1779-80. See Ellis p. 80 and especially Ruggini pp. 112-113 and 115 for a convincing discussion.

11th and 12th century catalogue of the Benedictine Abbey of Lobbes, no. 238⁴⁵ :

Centon Valeriae Probae Aniciae de†vigiliis†veteris ac novi
testamenti. Damasi episcopi versus de Praetextato praefecto urbis.
Libri Dracontii quos fecit in divinis laudibus et de sua paenitentia
et indulgentiis paschalibus et de nativitate et miraculis Christi.
Vol. I.

The text of the catalogue shows traces of corruption⁴⁶. The most astonishing item is the *Damasi episcopi uersus de Praetextato praefecto urbis* which Dolbeau neatly shows, by comparing parallels from Heriger of Lobbes's *Vita S. Ursuari* can only have been our CCP⁴⁷.

Since no other mediaeval readers show any knowledge of the CCP, a text heretofore thought to have been transmitted in the Puteanus of Prudentius (Paris, B.N. lat. 8084) alone, this catalogue entry raises the question of the origin of the text. The parallels in Heriger are too few to tell whether the Lobbes manuscript was an independent witness or not. If it was not independent, then the ascription must come from elsewhere, and may be the result of confusion or invention. It would be interesting to know more about the *fortuna* of the Puteanus in the early Middle Ages⁴⁸.

The identification of the prefect as Praetextatus is not as problematical as the identification of Damasus as the author. Parallels between the epigrams of Damasus and the CCP have long been noted, and have even caused various scholars to suggest that the poem comes from the circle of Damasus⁴⁹. But Damasus died on the 11th of December 384, and Praetextatus probably lived through the Saturnalia in the same month to die sometime between the feast and the first of January⁵⁰. Macrobius, true to his genre, is most unlikely to

45. F. DOLBEAU, « Damase, le Carmen contra paganos et Hériger de Lobbes », *REAug.* 27 (1981) pp. 38-43 (hereafter « Dolbeau »).

46. Like « uigiliis » rightly emended by Dolbeau, who (p. 40) notes that *et indulgentiis ... Christi* corresponds to no known work of Dracontius. I would suggest that there is a lacuna in the text of the catalogue in which stood originally Sedulius whose work is found in conjunction with Proba, e.g. Zürich, C 68 and Karlsruhe, Reichenau ccxvii.

47. Dolbeau p. 41.

48. See B. BISCHOFF, « Hadoard und die Klassikerhandschriften aus Corbie », *Mittelalterliche Studien* 1 (Stuttgart 1966) p. 58 n. 29. Unfortunately Professor Bischoff's ascription of the Puteanus to Corbie cannot be regarded as definite, since it appears to be based only on the fact that the manuscript belonged to Cl. Dupuy in the 16th C.

49. Dolbeau p. 41 with n. 23 ; Ruggini p. 116 ; M. IHM, « Zu lateinischen Dichtern », *RhM* 52 (1897) pp. 205-212.

50. See Dolbeau p. 42 n. 21 who dismisses Ruggini's arguments, preferring to accept Cavallera's dating of Jerome, *Ep.* 39 to before the death of Damasus. See F. CAVALLERA, *Saint Jérôme : sa vie et son œuvre* 1. 2 (Louvain) 1922, pp. 22-23. *Ep.* 39.3 has a clear reference (as does *Ep.* 24.3) to the death of Praetextatus. I, however, can see nothing to prove that *Ep.* 39 must have been written before Damasus's death. Cavallera bases his argument on negative evidence, suggesting that Damasus must have been alive or Jerome would not have avoided

have taken such a liberty as altering the date of his main interlocutor's death⁵¹. Furthermore the stylistic criteria suggested by Ihm as a sound basis for establishing Damasian authorship in other cases would rule out Damasus as the poet of the *CCP*⁵².

The reference to Proba (Valeriae Probae Aniciae), whether it was intended to signify Proba 2 or Proba 3, cannot be correct, and this may cast some doubt on the value of the Lobbes catalogue as evidence for the authorship of the *CCP*. This leaves, nonetheless, the intriguing, and perhaps correct identification of the prefect as Praetextatus.

Even if one accepts that the *CCP* was written after 385, and the cento consequently afterwards, whether Proba 2 might have written the cento anyway is still a possibility that must be considered. Proba 2's exact dates are not known, but her son Olybrius 3 (consul in 379 A.D. and proconsul of Africa in 361 A.D.) could have been born at the latest c. 340, making Proba 2's birthdate c. 324 had she been a mother at sixteen. She could well have been born earlier⁵³. In 384 she would have been sixty at least. Her son Olybrius 3 died

mentioning his death in contrast to that of Praetextatus. The only information *Ep.* 39 provides is that Praetextatus and Blesilla are dead. (Cavallera's dating is also accepted by J.N.D. KELLY, *Jerome* (London 1975) p. 98 n. 33). More recently D. Vera in « Lotta politica e antagonismi religiosi nella Roma tardoantica: la vittoria sarmatica di Valentiniano II », *KOINONIA* 7.2 (1983) pp. 133-155 attempts to date the death of Praetextatus more closely. Vera accepts Ruggini's identification of the prefect without discussion (p. 134), and assumes (I am not sure why) on the basis of the Lobbes catalogue that Praetextatus died before Damasus (pp. 135-136). Valentinian II's victory over the Sarmatians occasioned gladiatorial games at which Vera argues Praetextatus officiated. Symmachus's *Rel.* 47, datable after the 2nd of Dec. 384 (the beginning of the gladiatorial games) does not mention Flavius Bauto's consulship in 385, so it must have been written while Praetextatus was still alive. Praetextatus took part in the games, but his death caused the populace to forego the *sollemnes theatri uoluptates* (Vera p. 148). Vera (p. 149) identifies the theatrical spectacles as those of the 12th to the 14th December, and therefore assigns the death of Praetextatus to the 8-9-10 December (before the death of Damasus). Since Vera does not accept Cavallera's negative argument (Vera p. 135) any more than I do, and since he must conclude that the Lobbes catalogue's identification of Damasus as the author of the *CCP* is chronologically very unlikely (Vera p. 149) – was Damasus likely to have been writing the *CCP* in the last two or three days of his life? – I can see no reason to assume that Praetextatus died before Damasus. Praetextatus could equally well have taken part in the celebrations of the Sarmatian victory, and have died on or after December 17th. His death could have interrupted the second cycle of theatrical shows. One notes that Praetextatus's main speech (*sat.* 1. 17.1-1. 23.22) dominates the *first* day of Macrobius's banquet.

51. See A. CAMERON "The Date and Identity of Macrobius", *JRS* 57 (1967) pp. 28-29. Praetextatus's death was attended with great lamentation and disturbance. See JEROME, *Ep.* 24.3 *ad cuius interitum urbs uniuersa commota est*. It seems unlikely that such a notable event would be misdated by Macrobius.

52. M. IHM, « Die Epigramme des Damasus », *RhM* 50 (1895) pp. 195-200. The metrical crimes of the *CCP* cannot be entirely attributed to its transmission: one is dealing with what is, in many respects, an only marginally competent piece of writing. On some of the metrical anomalies of the *CCP* see Ellis p. 67. See also M. IHM, *RhM* 52 (1897) p. 208. Dolbeau, however, p. 42 n. 21 perhaps too charitably suggests that its Latinity is due to lack of revision.

53. I am deliberately calculating with a minimum generation of 16 years to show the strength

sometime between 384 and 395, and *CIL* 6.1712 shows that she died before her husband, Clodius Celsinus Adelphius 6. Adelphius held office before 333 A.D., and is therefore likely to have been born before c. 313, and would consequently have been over 71 if he were alive in 384. Proba 2 is thus not known to have been alive after 384, and would probably have been too old anyway to be the composer of the cento at this date.

Anicia Faltonia Proba 3, on the other hand, looks like a more promising candidate⁵⁴. Her son Olybrius 2 was very young indeed when he held the consulship with his brother Anicius Probinus 1 in 395. Claudian says of the two :

Coepistis quo finis erat. Primordia uestra
Vix pauci meruere senes, metasque tenetis
Ante genas dulces quam flos iuuenilis inumbret (*Carm.* 1. 67-69)

Yet, if *CIL* 6. 1755 is to be dated to 395 A.D., the date of Olybrius 2's consulship, then it would appear that he was already, by that date, married to Anicia Juliana 2. He is therefore unlikely to have been less than sixteen in 395, may have been born c. 379, and, assuming that Proba 3 was 16 or more when she had her son, she is likely to have been born in or before 363 A.D. In 395 she was clearly a flourishing woman of status, a *ueneranda parens*, fit to be pictured by Claudian as Latona weaving robes for her sons⁵⁵. Her husband Sex. Claudius Petronius Probus was already dead, and she was well-embarked on her role as professional widow, so noticeable in the correspondence of Augustine⁵⁶ : *Credas ex aethere lapsam/stare Pudicitiam ... (199) coniuge digna Probo nam tantum coetibus exstat/femineis quantum supereminet ille maritos*⁵⁷. And if Claudian can in 395 flatteringly call her *ueneranda parens*, then *garrula anus* from the pen of Jerome in 394 is hardly surprising⁵⁸. The extraction of biographical material from the cento is tricky. Attempts like those of Ermini to deduce that the poetess was born a pagan, and only later converted to Christianity and was baptised are unconvincing⁵⁹. All she says in her preface is that she wrote secular poetry. At vv.

of the *weakest* possible argument. The actual age of a mother giving birth is likely to be greater.

54. Anicia Proba 1, probably the daughter of Anicia Faltonia Proba 3, and therefore born no later than 388/9 (death of Sex. Cl. Petronius Probus) can probably, though not certainly, be excluded on grounds of not having been old enough to have written an epic before 395/401.

55. CLAUDIANUS, *Carm.* 1. 177-192.

56. AUGUSTINE, *Ep.* 130, *Ep.* 131, *Ep.* 150, *De Bono Vid.* 24.

57. CLAUDIANUS, *Carm.* 1. 194-195 and 199.

58. CLAUDIAN, *Carm.* 1. 177 ; see also above n. 34. I suggest a birthdate of 363 A.D. at the *absolute latest*. Given that the identification with the centonist, whom Jerome calls an *anus*, is correct, and given Claudian's use of Latona and Juno (*Carm.* 1. 196) as her divine prototypes, we are more likely to be dealing with a woman who was around 40 in 395, so Proba 3's birthdate is most likely to have on or before 355.

59. See Schenkl p. 514 ; Ermini p. 14 « Ma che la poetessa del centone fosse prima adoratrice dei numi e poi si rende cristiana sembra possa raccogliersi dalle sue stesse parole », and p. 17

415-428 where she digresses after the baptism of Christ to expatiate on the darkness which surrounded her soul, the expressions used are very ambiguous. *Nec mihi iam patriam antiquam spes ulla uidendi* need not refer to paganism. Even if *concretam exemit labem purumque reliquit aetherium sensum* (420-421), does refer to her baptism, the fact that she was baptised later does not imply that she was necessarily not a Christian before. Reluctantly one must conclude that virtually nothing can be discovered about the authoress of the cento — aside from one very important fact. At the time she was writing, her husband was still alive (v. 693 *dulcis coniunx*), and, if she is to be identified with Anicia Faltonia Proba 3, and the libelee of the CCP with Praetextatus, then the date of the cento can be fixed fairly securely between January 385, the death of Praetextatus, and c. 388, the date suggested for Petronius Probus's death⁶⁰.

THE CCP AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY POETRY

The question of relationships between the CCP and other roughly contemporary poetry needs to be re-examined. Matthews⁶¹ rejected offhand the parallels between Claudian and the CCP noted by Birt⁶², and re-proposed by Manganaro⁶³. Not entirely fairly. Some of these passages share a common parallel in Virgil, but not necessarily therefore a common source⁶⁴. In the case of others there is a genetic connection, and we may reluctantly have to admit that Claudian had read the work of the regrettable

« c'induce a pensare che Proba non fosse istruita da bambina nella nuova religione, ma la conoscesse col fervore di neofita, quando l'età e la cultura della mente l'avevano già resa atta a comprenderne tutto il valore ».

60. See PLRE 1 « Sextus Claudius Petronius Probus 5 ». Probus's death date (c. 388) is based on his birthdate (c. 328) and CIL 6. 1756a line 9 *Nam cum sex denos mensis suspenderet annos*. He died at the age of 60. J. MATTHEWS, "Continuity in a Roman Family; the Rufii Festi of Volsinii", *Historia* 16 (1967) p. 488 proposes a death-date in 390, based on a doubtful identification of the *ciuis emeritus* of Symmachus, Ep. 3. 88 with Probus. Matthew's suggestion that Claudian, *Carm.* 1. 31 ff. *uiuit adhuc, completque uagis sermonibus aures/Gloria fusa Probi quam nec uentura silebunt lustra ...* can be used as evidence that Probus has been dead for a while, though it cannot provide a definite time period, is correct. If Probus had died only shortly before 395 then the *adhuc* would have sounded ridiculous.

61. Matthews p. 468 "The parallels between the *Carmen* and Claudian adduced by Manganaro are thus, in my view, quite unconvincing".

62. Cl. Claudiani Carmina ed. T. Birt = MGH AA 10.

63. Manganaro p. 215. The fourth parallel, however, is not worth citing.

64. This is the source of Matthew's methodological fallacy. Two pieces may share what is clearly *ultimately* a Vergilian echo, but the immediate source is not necessarily Vergil. It is often possible to demonstrate that this is so, by treating an added non-Vergilian element as a « *Bindefehler* ». See below p. 245 ff. Scholars of sense have long instinctively applied textual critical techniques to verbal borrowings, but for perhaps the first explicit codification and statistical defense of the technique see C.E. MURGIA, "Imitation and Authenticity in Ovid: *Metamorphoses* 1. 477 and *Heroides* 15", *AJP* 106 (1985) pp. 459-464.

poetaster — an example of a good poet finding fodder in the work of a lesser creature⁶⁵.

Damasus and the CCP

Parallels also exist between the epigrams of Damasus and the CCP. Many can be traced back to Vergil⁶⁶. But others may be valid⁶⁷. But do parallels really exist between Proba's cento and the epigrams of Damasus, as has been claimed by Ihm, who suggested that Damasus was working from Proba⁶⁸?

Ihm points to a number of passages, for example Proba 1 *pia foedera pacis* and Damasus *Ep.* 2.5 *sanctae matris pia foedera*; and Damasus, *Ep.* 18.7 *integra cum rector seruariet foedera pacis*. This is probably an apt parallel which also has a partner in CCP 84 *Soluere... uoluit pia foedera leges*. *Pia foedera* does not appear to be attested elsewhere before Damasus.

Damasus and Proba

It is almost certain that Proba had read Damasus *Ep.* 1. Damasus uses the *iunctura ex hoste tropaea* twice (12.4 and 1.16). Proba 5 reads *nulloque ex hoste tropaea*, but we may be virtually certain that she was deriving the phrase from *Ep.* 1, because she has also picked up a range of words that are in the environment of Damasus 1 also. Proba 4 *caede parentum* is probably based on Damasus *Ep.* 1 *caede peracta*. Proba 6 *tulerat quos fama triumphos* is a composite of Damasus *Ep.* 1.17 *tuos celebrare triumphos*, and Damasus *Ep.* 1.16 *tuleratque ex hoste*. Damasus *Ep.* 1. *purgant penetralia cordis* is echoed in a virtually identical context by Proba 11 *resera penetralia cordis* (Also found in Iuvencus 4.7.) This echo pattern of composition is completely characteristic of a centoniser.

Claudian and the CCP

CCP 28 *Cum poenas scelerum tracta uix morte rependat* comes close to Claud. *In Ruf.* 2.423 *una tot milia morte rependis* of the death of Rufinus. The CCP is working from Vergil, *Aen.* 11.258 *scelerum poenas expendimus* with a variation *rependat* for *expendimus*. Since *rependat* in the CCP is suggested by the Vergilian *expendimus*, it counts as an innovative element whose presence proves that Claudian was using the CCP⁶⁹. A third, but later parallel exists: Mar. Vict. *Alethia* 2.317 *Diluit admissum, simili quod morte rependit*. *Morte* is very common in this position in the hexameter.

CCP 52 *Mille nocendi vias, totidem cum quaereret artes* resembles

65. It is more usual to assume that the worse was working from the better as, for example, Mazarino p. 400 « motivi impiegati da Claudiano con maggior ricchezza retorica ».

66. See below p. 246.

67. See below p. 246.

68. M. IHM, *RhM* 50 (1895) p. 195.

69. CLAUDIAN, *Bell. Poll.* 633 (dating to 402) *Pauperies, unoque die Romana rependit* cited by Levy (below n. 72) ad loc. shares only the single element *rependit*.

Claudian, *Carm. Min.* 30.232-4 *cum quaereret artes. Mille nocendi uias* comes from Vergil, *Aen.* 7.337 contaminated with Damasus, *Ep.* 27.2. *Quaereret* is common in this line position, but not with *artes*, used here to hint directly at *Aen.* 7.337. Claudian has not acquired the clearly originally-Vergilian *artes* from Vergil, so it is evident that here he is working from the CCP. There appear to be no other parallels for the *iunctura*.

CCP 110 *Sic miserande iaces, paruo donatus sepulcro* bears a close resemblance to Claudian's *In Eutropium* 2.460 *hic miserande iaces* and to Claudian *In Eutropium* 1. 458-9 *paruo procede sepulcro*. The first part of CCP line 110 clearly owes something to Vergil, *Aen.* 10.327 *miserande iaceres*, but this does not mean that both are independently descended from Vergil. It is the innovation *sic* (unless it should be *hic*) that is telling. Both poets did not independently begin their lines thus. One must have been working from the other. *Paruo...sepulcro* is not a common *iunctura*, and it is not Vergilian. It would be too much to expect the echoing of two separate sections of the same work of Claudian in one line by coincidence. Claudian had read the CCP.

The CCP and Damasus

Damasus, *Ep.* 27.2 *Carnificumque uias pariter tunc mille nocendi*

CCP 52 *Mille nocendi uias, totidem cum quaereret artes*

These two lines raise interesting questions. This is not a case of both authors drawing from a common source, namely Vergil, *Aen.* 7.337 *mille nocendi artes*: both of them share a non-Vergilian element, namely *uias*. In this case I would suggest that the innovation was Damasus's, and that the author of the CCP, recognising the origin of the passage in Vergil capped Damasus with not only *uias*, but also *artes*.

Damasus *Ep.* 32.2 *haec Damasus cumulat supplex altaria donis*

CCP 116 *Ipsa mola et manibus coniunx altaria supplex/Dum cumulat donis...*

Altaria supplex does not occur elsewhere other than in the CCP. *Altaria donis* is however attested much earlier and fairly frequently: Lucretius 4.1237 *adolentque altaria donis*; Verg. *Aen.* 5.54 *suis altaria donis*; *Aen.* 11.50 *cumulatque altaria donis*. The CCP is not working from Vergil alone, because it shares a fourth element *supplex* with Damasus. One cannot be completely sure, but common sense would indicate that Damasus was working directly from *Aen.* 11.50, and that he introduced one of his favourite words *supplex*⁷⁰. The CCP then copied Damasus.

There may be yet another parallel:⁷¹

Damasus *Ep.* 27.10-11 *ostendit latebra insons quae membra teneret/quae-ritur, inuentus colitur, fouet omnia praestat*

CCP 101 *Quae renet inuentum, rursum quem perdere posset.*

70. See M. IHM, *Damasi Epigrammata* (Leipzig 1895) Index 2 p. 131.

71. Also noted by Ihm (*RhM* 52 [1897]) p. 211. He also points to CCP 51 *concepta uenena*

The text of the *CCP* is corrupt at this point, but the coincidence of *quaeritur*, *inuentus* and */quae renet inuentum* is striking, as is also the similar context. In the case of Damasus, the body of the martyr Eutychius which was thrown into a *barathrum*, and in that of the *CCP*, the dismembered corpse of Osiris.

CONCLUSION

To summarise the results of this inquiry. No one has made a convincing case for dating the *CCP* before 385 A.D. A clear usage of the poem by the centonist Proba indicates that her cento must be dated over twenty years later than has been commonly supposed. It was written between 385 and c. 388 A.D. With this redating of Proba, her relationship to other authors is also affected. It is now certain that she was copying the epigrams of Damasus, not the other way around as has been supposed in the past. I have reexamined some of the parallels between Damasus and the *CCP* to try to show that the *CCP* is using Damasus, and also parallels between the *CCP* and Claudian to show against Manganaro that Claudian is working from the *Carmen*. The direction of the copying is often quite clear, and a *non liquet* is not required. Since the *In Rufinum* dates from 396 it also provides a *terminus ante quem* for the *CCP*⁷². These relationships give us an interesting picture of the circulation of literary works during this period. A noble Christian matron as well as a propagandistic court poet made use of an essentially vulgar topical broadside⁷³ whose circulation is reduced to probably only one copy just over a century later. The author of the *CCP* made use of Damasus's epigrams. Proba also knew the pontiff's lapidary inscriptions, though whether *in situ* or in manuscript cannot be established⁷⁴. This interest in poetry is not surprising, if Sextus Claudius Petronius Probus, to whom Avienius dedicated his *Ora Maritima*⁷⁵, is indeed the author of *Anth. Lat.* 1.2.783 ed. Riese which presents the author's and his ancestor's collected works to Theodosius: a pleasant picture of poetic effort in a noble Christian family may be imagined⁷⁶. And the identification of the centonist with Anicia Faltonia Proba 3

and Damasus, *Ep.* 46.7 *concepta uenena*, thereby making a convincing case for the soundness of the text, and the lack of need for emendation — strictures that have not been taken into account by Shackleton Bailey in his edition (*Anthologia Latina* 1.1 ed. D.R. Shackleton Bailey [Stuttgart 1982]) who emends to *connecta*.

72. See H. LEVY, *Claudian's In Rufinum: an Exegetical Commentary* (APA Monographs 30 [Case Western Reserve University Press 1971]) p. 257 and Alan CAMERON, *Claudian: Poetry and Propaganda at the Court of Honorius* (Oxford 1970) p. 76 discussing the second book of the *In Rufinum* which came out a year later than the first — in mid-397.

73. For an attempted stylistic defense of the *CCP* see Mazzarino p. 447.

74. See IHM, *RhM* 52 (1897) p. 211.

75. *Anth. Lat.* 1. 2 783 Buecheler-Riese mentions both the dedicatee Theodosius and the dedicator Probus. Given the dedication of Avienius's poem, the identification with Probus 5 is convincing. See J. Matthews (*op. cit.* above n. 60) pp. 487-488.

76. The poem is discussed by L. Traube («Zu alten Philologie I.3: zu Cornelius Nepos», *Vorlesungen und Abhandlungen* vol. 3 pp. 20-30) in connection with the transmission of

provides a knowing patroness to discern the quality of the newly-arrived Egyptian poet Claudian. I do not give a definitive answer to the question of the praefectus of the CCP. Many such arguments have a tendency to become circular. But it is still worth showing that a genetic study of the literary echoes in and of the CCP can definitively eliminate at least one candidate, and cast strong doubts on the possibility of the CCP's ever having been a *Carmen contra Flavianum*.

Dr. Danuta SHANZER
Dept. of Classics
5303 Dwinelle Hall
University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

RÉSUMÉ : Proba's cento is normally dated to 362 A.D. and the author is identified as Faltonia Betitia Proba. But a clear citation of the *carmen contra paganos* by "Proba" shows that the cento must date from after 384, the death of Praetextatus, the most probable candidate for the anonymous senator. Proba's cento existed in Dec. 394 for it is cited by Jerome in a dateable letter from Bethlehem. Thus the *carmen* cannot have been written against Nicomachus Flavianus or Gabinius Pompeianus Barbarus. The author of the cento is most likely to have been Anicia Faltonia Proba. Both the *carmen* and the cento may be dated between Dec. 384 and c. 388.

Cornelius Nepos. Traube (p. 24) notes, «Probus also widmet einem Kaiser Theodosius Excerpte aus Nepos...» But which Probus? And which Theodosius? Traube, on the basis of other known calligraphic work executed for Theodosius II (see O. JAHN, *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der königl.-sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wiss. phil.-hist. Kl.* 3 (1881) pp. 342-43) identifies «Theodosius» as Theodosius II and insists (p. 21) that *auctorem* in line 9 of the epigram means «scribe». But Traube also notes (p. 30) that Ausonius sent Cornelius Nepos to Petronius Probus (see AUSONIUS, *Ep.* 16 p. 175 Schenkl) thus establishing an early connection between Probus and the text of Nepos. Traube concludes (p. 30) that «Aemilius Probus» may have been a grandson of Petronius Probus thus all the same maintaining a "family tradition". The question cannot unfortunately be regarded as definitively settled. Traube's argument (p. 21) that the corpus sent by «Probus» must have been prose based on an assumption that prose is introduced by verse and vice-versa cannot stand: it is patently contradicted by the verse dedication of the *Cento Probae*.