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Commentary on Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* 1-650  
(*Peristephanon* 10)

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## Declaration

This thesis has been composed by the candidate, the work is the candidate's own and the work has not been submitted for the award of any other degree or professional qualification.

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Thomas Tsartsidis

## Abstract

This thesis is a commentary on lines 1-650 of Prudentius' hymn to the martyr Romanus. Although printed in modern editions as the tenth poem of Prudentius' *Peristephanon*, a collection of poems on various martyrs, certain features of the work in form and content differentiate it from the rest of the collection. These features include its length (1,140 verses; almost twice as long as *Peristephanon* 2, the second longest), its title, its place in manuscript transmission, the fact that the city where Romanus' martyrdom takes place is never mentioned, and the inclusion of long sections of anti-pagan invective. This commentary aims to investigate its singularity and attempts to establish how it fits into Prudentius' oeuvre. In the commentary proper I provide a general philological and historical elucidation of the text. I particularly focus on language, on identifying and interpreting allusions, and on discussing themes that recur in Prudentius' works as well as contemporary and earlier literature. In the Introduction I offer an overview of the life and works of the poet; the dating; the textual transmission; other extant sources on the martyr Romanus and the relationship between them; the question of whether this poem belonged to the collection of the *Peristephanon*; and generic and particular influences on the poem from both Christian and secular literature, which are often combined in the text in interesting ways. The exploration of all these aspects of the text together with the close reading offered in the commentary itself contribute to a fuller understanding of this remarkably complex work.

## Lay summary

This thesis is a philological commentary on lines 1-650 of Prudentius' hymn to saint Romanus of Antioch (*Peristephanon* 10). This poem in modern editions appears as part of Prudentius' *Peristephanon* (*The Crowns of Martyrdom*), a collection of 14 poems narrating the martyrdom of mainly Roman and Spanish saints. This commentary deals with language, style, intertextuality and the exploration of themes recurrent in earlier and contemporary literature. The commentary is preceded by an Introduction in order to facilitate better understanding and evaluation of the text. The Introduction offers an overview of the life of Prudentius and his works, the manuscripts that transmit this poem, the sources for Romanus and an exploration of the features that differentiate *Peristephanon* 10 from the rest of the poems in the collection. In the next sections, I scrutinise the influences from Christian and secular literature. As regards Christian literature, emphasis is laid on the Bible, martyr texts and Christian apologetics. The sections on secular literature focus on epic, tragedy and satire. The Introduction concludes with two sections that deal with language and metre respectively. This Commentary aims to enhance our knowledge not only of *Peristephanon* 10 but also of Prudentius' poetry in general and its place in the literature of Late Antiquity.

‘When I was more or less your age, I admired a man who had been an older brother to me. Like an ancient philosopher I called him Lucretius, for he, too, was a philosopher, and moreover a priest. He ended up at the stake in Toulouse, but first they tore out his tongue and strangled him. And so you see that if we philosophers are quick of tongue, it is not simply, as that gentleman said the other evening, to give ourselves *bon ton*. It is to put the tongue to good use before they rip it out. Or, rather, jesting aside, to dispel prejudice and to discover the natural cause of Creation.’

Umberto Eco, *The Island of the Day Before*. London: Vintage Books, p. 79.

## Abbreviations

## REFERENCE WORKS AND CORPORA

<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> , ed. H. Temporini. Berlin, 1972-
<i>BHG</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i> . 3 vols, ed. F. Halkin. Brussels, 1957.
<i>BHL</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina</i> . 2 vols. Brussels, 1949 (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition); <i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina: Novum supplementum</i> , ed. H. Fros. Brussels, 1986.
<i>BHO</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis</i> . Brussels, 1910.
<i>CCL</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum, series Latina</i> . Turnhout, 1954-
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> . Berlin, 1862-
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Codex Justinianus</i>
<i>CPL</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>Clavis Patrum Latinorum</i> , ed. E. Dekkers and E. Gaar. Steenbrugge, 1995.
<i>CSEL</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> . Vienna, 1866-
<i>CTh</i>	<i>Codex Theodosianus</i>
Halkin	F. Halkin. <i>Hagiographica inedita decem</i> . Turnhout, 1989.
Lampe	G. W. H. Lampe. <i>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> . Oxford, 1961.
<i>LLT</i>	Brepols Library of Latin Texts, Series A and B, online at < <a href="http://apps.brepolis.net/BrepolisPortal/default.aspx">http://apps.brepolis.net/BrepolisPortal/default.aspx</a> >
Mombritius	B. Mombritius. <i>Sanctuarium seu Vitae Sanctorum</i> . 2 vols. 15 <sup>th</sup> -century collection, re-edited in 1910. New York.
<i>OCD</i> <sup>4</sup>	<i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth, Oxford, 2012.
<i>OGR</i>	<i>Origo Gentis Romanae</i>
<i>OLD</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> , 2 vols, ed. P. G. W. Glare. Oxford, 2012.

<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1857-66.
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1844-
<i>PLRE</i>	<i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, vol. 1, A.D. 260-395</i> , ed. A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale and J. Morris. Cambridge, 1971.
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> . Stuttgart, 1941-
<i>RE</i>	<i>Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , ed. A. Wissowa et al. Stuttgart, 1893-
Souter	A. Souter. <i>A glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D.</i> Oxford, 1946.
<i>TLL</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> . Leipzig, 1900-

For abbreviations of ancient texts I have used the indices of *OCD*, *TLL* and Lampe, though I have not followed any of these systems to the letter. For the way I reference the prose passions that record the story of Romanus, see Appendix II. Titles of periodicals are abbreviated as in *L'Année philologique*. The poems of Prudentius are abbreviated as follows:

<i>Praef.</i>	<i>Praefatio</i>
<i>Cath.</i>	<i>Cathemerinon</i>
<i>Apoth.</i>	<i>Apotheosis</i>
<i>Ham.</i>	<i>Hamartigenia</i>
<i>Psych.</i>	<i>Psychomachia</i>
<i>CS</i>	<i>Contra Symmachum</i>
<i>Pe.</i>	<i>Peristephanon</i>
<i>Ti.</i>	<i>Tituli Historiarum</i>
<i>Epil.</i>	<i>Epilogus</i>



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## Introduction

This thesis is a Commentary on lines 1-650 of Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*, a text commonly known as *Peristephanon* 10 (*Pe.* 10). In the editions of Prudentius since 1527, as indicated by its more widespread title, this text is printed as the tenth poem of Prudentius' *Peristephanon*, a collection of poems on various martyrs.<sup>1</sup> In the poem, Prudentius describes his arrest, his dispute with the prefect Asclepiades, and his torture, culminating in the great miracle: that Romanus was still able to speak and preach God's word after his tongue had been cut out. The story of Romanus is interrupted by a digression on the sufferings and death of a secondary martyr, a child who, when questioned by Romanus, confesses that Christ is the real God. Finally, the martyr is strangled in prison.<sup>2</sup>

A commentary on seven poems of Prudentius' *Peristephanon* – among them is the *Hymn to Romanus* – written by Fux (2013) came to my attention when I was halfway through my thesis.<sup>3</sup> In general, my approach differs from his. Unlike Fux, I deal in detail with the relationship between *Pe.* 10 and the sources that transmit the story of Romanus. I also focus more on those themes that recur in the Christian literature of Prudentius' era, as well as on the interpretation of allusions to earlier literature in Prudentius' poem (for more on my methodology, see below). However, sometimes our comments are inevitably along similar lines.

The text I use for this Commentary comes from the edition of Bergman (1926), while I also take into account the latest edition made by Cunningham (1966). Cunningham's edition was vigorously criticised.<sup>4</sup> Among the main blunders of which he is accused is that he failed to take into consideration the criticisms made of some of Bergman's readings.<sup>5</sup> Cunningham (1971) published an article a few years after

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<sup>1</sup> In this commentary, I refer to the text both as Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*, a title that reflects its content, and *Peristephanon* 10. I discuss the title of the poem and the issue of whether it belongs to the *Peristephanon* in sections 4 and 6.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the length of the poem (1,140 lines), the limited time for which I had funding (three years), and the word limit on Edinburgh University theses (100,000 words), I decided, after discussion with my supervisors, to limit the PhD to commentary on lines 1-650. This part of the poem includes Romanus' arrest and interrogation prior to the digression on the child martyr. For a summary of the text, see section 2.

<sup>3</sup> I review this Commentary in Tsartsidis (2016).

<sup>4</sup> Especially cutting is the review of Thraede (1968).

<sup>5</sup> Klingner (1930), Meyer (1932) and (1938).

the publication of his edition, where, incorporating material from criticism made about his edition, he improves on his text. Bergman, although generally providing the more reliable text, is largely based on the two oldest manuscripts (labelled A and B) and used a far narrower range of manuscripts than Cunningham.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, a critical comparison of both editions can render more satisfactory results. Here, I should also point out that I have not personally examined the manuscripts of Prudentius. Both the text and its variants, as well as any reference I make to the manuscript transmission, come from the editions or items of secondary literature that I reference in the respective discussions.

As regards other Latin passages referenced or quoted in this commentary, I use the text of the Library of Latin Texts (*LLT*) unless otherwise indicated. I also rely on the *LLT* to give statistics for the frequency of words. The figures from the *LLT* are often approximate as for many works – Prudentius’ included – we do not have the exact date.<sup>7</sup> Biblical passages are quoted from the edition of R. Weber, R. Gryson et al., *Biblia sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam versionem* (Stuttgart, 2007<sup>5</sup>). For references to and quotations from martyr texts I use the collection of Musurillo (1972).

My Commentary is in the form of a traditional lemmatised examination of the text. It embraces a wide scope of factors from treating textual and philological matters – such as discussing variants, rhetorical devices and allusions to earlier authors – to questions of genre and interpretation, as well as broader comparison with texts on related themes. The Latin text is composed in stanzas of five verses. I present the text of each stanza followed by a lemmatised commentary.

The Commentary is preceded by a 12-part introduction.<sup>8</sup> After some preliminary remarks on the life of Prudentius (1i), focusing on the evidence provided by the poet himself, I describe the work of Prudentius, as indicated both by Prudentius and as handed down to us through the manuscript transmission (1ii). In the two following sub-sections (1iii and 1iv), I try to date some of Prudentius’ works based on the limited and for the most part debatable evidence provided in his poetry. My arguments regarding the date of *Pe.* 10 are tentative, but they might satisfy the general conviction that the poem is one of the early compositions of Prudentius (1iv).

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<sup>6</sup> For manuscripts A and B, see section 3.

<sup>7</sup> For the dating of Prudentius’ oeuvre, see section 1iii and 1iv.

<sup>8</sup> Throughout the Introduction there is a bias towards the 650 lines of the commentary.

After a summary and an outline of the structure of *Pe.* 10 (2), I offer a brief overview of the manuscript transmission of Prudentius and I also provide a list of editorial variants (3). Subsequently, I discuss the various titles with which *Pe.* 10 has been handed down to us and whether they can be traced back to the poet (4). In the next section (5), I attempt a re-evaluation of the sources for Romanus. Previous scholarship on this topic concludes that Prudentius appears to follow a Greek passion step by step without ruling out the possibility that the poet might have also taken into consideration (a) Latin passion(s). However, verbal similarities with the Latin passions suggest that Prudentius used (a) Latin passion(s) as an additional or even primary source. In section 6, I treat the vexed issue of whether Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* belonged to the collection of the *Peristephanon* poems. Despite features that differentiate *Pe.* 10 from a group of undoubtedly diverse poems, I argue for a positive answer.

Before I examine how different genres and textual traditions are integrated in the poem, I include a theoretical discussion on allusion and how I treat it in this study (7). Although the story of Romanus formed the basis for the composition of *Pe.* 10, the poet inevitably engages with a wider spectrum of Christian texts, the consideration of which contributes to a better understanding of the poem (8). Thus, in the section 'Christian literature' my first concern is to examine how Prudentius interacts with the Bible as well as how he integrates biblical exegesis, that is, modes of interpretation of the Bible (8i). Secondly, I explore Prudentius' broader engagement with martyrological literature (8ii). In the third part of this section on Christian literature, I examine the sections of the text in which Prudentius attacks paganism. In these sections the Christian poet includes many apologetic arguments drawn from a long tradition of anti-pagan invective (8iii).

In the section entitled 'Classical literature', I examine Prudentius' generic affiliations: epic poetry, tragedy and satire (9). In the three sub-sections corresponding to each of the aforementioned genres, I scrutinise the intertextual relationship of Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* with those genres. In the sub-sections on epic and tragedy (9i and 9ii), I also examine the features of *Pe.* 10 that make it resemble an epic and a tragedy respectively, including vocabulary and motifs.

In the section on language (10), I give an overview of both synchronic and diachronic linguistic elements that appear in *Pe.* 10. Thus, for the first part I focus on syntactic patterns and vocabulary that became more popular in Late Latin, and for the second on rhetorical devices inherent in the poetic tradition prior to Prudentius. Finally, in the section on metre (11), I offer a survey showing the frequency and places in the verse, where Prudentius prefers to have resolutions (anapaests, dactyls and tribrachs). I also record and often attempt to explain cases in which Prudentius seems to deviate from earlier prosody. The Introduction concludes with an overview showing how different generic and literary traditions come together in this poem (12).

## 1i. Prudentius' life

Almost everything we know about Prudentius' life derives from his own poems. Information scattered throughout the poet's oeuvre can be assembled to give us an insight into his biography. His name is mentioned in the *sphragis* for the poem dedicated to St Laurence (*Pe.* 2.582). In his *Praefatio*, believed to be the preface to an omnibus edition of his poetry published by the poet in 404 AD, he gives us some evidence about his life and his poetic programme.<sup>9</sup> There we learn that he was born when Salia was consul (*Praef.* 24-25: *Saliae consulis .../ sub quo prima dies mihi*), hence, in 348. The year of the composition of his *Praefatio* is calculated on the basis of the author's statement that he wrote it when he was 57 (*Praef.* 1-3). His Spanish extraction is inferred by his referring to three Spanish cities as 'ours': i) Calagurris (*Pe.* 1.116, 4.31), ii) Caesaraugusta (*Pe.* 4.1-4, 63, 97, 101), iii) Tarraco (*Pe.* 6.143).

Some of Prudentius' descriptions of his early life must be treated with scepticism. As expected in programmatic poems, the *Praefatio* contains elements that seem to be literary conventions rather than factual details. Such elements are the beatings he received at school and the corruptive character he ascribes to his rhetorical education (*Praef.* 7-12).<sup>10</sup> After his school days and youth, Prudentius pursued a legal career (*Praef.* 13-15). Subsequently, as he tells us himself, he 'governed cities twice' (*Praef.* 16-17: *bis .../ frenos nobilium reximus urbium*), seemingly implying that he was twice made a provincial governor. The two provinces are not specified. His career ended by his obtaining a high office given to him by the emperor (*Praef.* 19-21). His new office, only described vaguely, brought him closer to the emperor (*propius*) and placed him in the highest rank (*ordine proximo*). Given his description and former career, Prudentius must have been admitted to the rank of the *comitatus* as a *comes primi ordinis*. Towards the end of his life, the poet fully committed himself to the composition of poetry which praises God (*Praef.* 34-42).

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<sup>9</sup> There is a copious scholarship on Prudentius' biography often focusing on his *Praefatio* and its programmatic character: Lana (1962), Witke (1968), Palmer (1989: 6-31), Fux (2003: 5-9), Coşkun (2003) and (2008). On textual problems regarding the *Praefatio*, see Gnilka (2000: 138-57).

<sup>10</sup> Palmer (1989: 13-14).

Another biographical clue that can be deduced from Prudentius' oeuvre is the trip or trips he made to Rome (*Pe.* 2, 11, 12), although the timeframe of the visits is debatable.<sup>11</sup> The date of the poet's death remains unknown. 404, the date of the composition of the *Praefatio*, serves as a *terminus post quem*. Given that Prudentius never refers to the sack of Rome by Alaric in 410, it is likely that he must have died or at least stopped writing by then.

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<sup>11</sup> For all the evidence along with the bibliography on Prudentius' trip, see Coşkun (2008: 307-10, 312-14).



## 1ii. Prudentius' oeuvre

Prudentius offers a catalogue of his works in lines 37-42 of his *Praefatio*:

*hymnis continuet dies,  
nec nox ulla vacet quin Dominum canat;  
pugnet contra hereses, catholicam discutiat fidem,  
conculcet sacra gentium,  
labem, Roma, tuis inferat idolis,  
carmen martyribus devoveat, laudet apostolos,*

Lines 37-38 refer to the *Cathemerinon*, a collection of 12 hymns, in the example of Ambrose, related to different times of the day (*Cath.* 1: cock-crow, *Cath.* 2: morning, *Cath.* 3: before meal, *Cath.* 4: after meal, *Cath.* 5: lighting of the lamp, *Cath.* 6: before sleep) and other occasions or aspects of Christian life (*Cath.* 7: fasting, *Cath.* 8: after fasting, *Cath.* 9: for every hour, *Cath.* 10: burial of the dead, *Cath.* 11: Christmas, *Cath.* 12: Epiphany).<sup>12</sup> The next line alludes to the *Apotheosis* and *Hamartigenia*, two didactic poems written in hexameter, in which Prudentius attacks Trinitarian heresies. Both these poems are preceded by a *Praefatio*. The main subject of the preface to the *Apotheosis* are the metaphors of the crossroad, and the seed that is threatened by the wild oats. In the *Praefatio* of the *Hamartigenia*, we have the story of Abel and Cain. *Apotheosis* also has another preface preceding its *Praefatio*, the *Hymnus de Trinitate*. Lines 40-41 seem to refer to the two books *Contra Orationem Symmachi*, more commonly known as *Contra Symmachum*, also written in hexameter. As the title indicates, the two books appear to attack Symmachus' *Relatio* for the restoration of the altar of Victory to the emperor Valentinian II in 384.<sup>13</sup> The prefaces to the two books deal with episodes from the lives of Paul and Peter respectively. An alternative interpretation of lines 40-41 is, as Bergman (1926: xii-xiii) suggested, that line 40 refers to *CS*, and 41 to the *Hymn to*

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<sup>12</sup> For a list of Prudentius' works and the metres in which they are composed, see Appendix I.

<sup>13</sup> For more on the content of this work, see section 1iii.

*Romanus*.<sup>14</sup> Finally, line 42, clearly alludes to the *Peristephanon*, a collection of 14 poems (if we include *Pe.* 10), written in various metres, on mainly Roman and Spanish saints. More specifically, the second part of the verse (*laudet apostolos*) is a reference to *Pe.* 12, the poem on the apostles Peter and Paul.

The *Praefatio* does not make any mention of *Psychomachia*, a hexameter poem, where Vices and Virtues, portrayed as female warriors, fight over and within the human soul.<sup>15</sup> In the preface to this poem, Prudentius relates episodes from the life of Abraham. Another work that also does not appear in the *Praefatio* is *Dittochaeon* or *Tituli Historiarum*, a series of hexametric epigrams describing famous scenes from the Old and New Testament. Gennadius (*De viris illustribus* 13) attributes one more work to Prudentius, *Exameron*, which, if it indeed existed, has not come down to us.<sup>16</sup> Finally, another poem, commonly labelled *Epilogus*, has as its subject the poet's desire to compose poems as offerings to God.

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<sup>14</sup> For a discussion of whether *Pe.* 10 belongs to the *Peristephanon* or forms a separate publication, see section 6.

<sup>15</sup> For the meaning of the word *Psychomachia*, see Gnilka (1963: 19-26).

<sup>16</sup> I discuss Gennadius' testimony on pp. 26-27.

### 1iii. Dating Prudentius' oeuvre

Evidence that can be used for dating Prudentius' work is scanty and highly debatable. The programmatic list of works in the *Praefatio* of 404 suggests that Prudentius must have already written the works mentioned there.<sup>17</sup> The absence of any reference to the *Psychomachia* and *Tituli Historiarum* suggests that these poems were composed after the *Praefatio*.<sup>18</sup> Apart from 404, taken as a *terminus ante quem* for the majority of Prudentius' works, there are very few chronological indications in *Contra Symmachum* and the *Peristephanon*.

The two books of *CS*, or, more appropriately, *Contra Orationem Symmachi*, as indicated by the title, appear to be a response to Symmachus' third *Relatio* for the restoration of the altar of Victory in the senate house in 384. The altar had been removed two years earlier by Gratian. Ambrose refutes Symmachus' arguments in Letters 17 and 18. *CS* 1 is a mixture of a panegyric to Theodosius and anti-pagan invective. *CS* 2 involves Christian apologetics, praise to Arcadius and Honorius and a refutation of Symmachus' arguments. The emperors in the two books are not named, but the context leaves no doubt regarding their identities. In book 1, the Christianisation of the empire is attributed to Theodosius, whereas, in the second, to Arcadius and Honorius (678-80). The two books are preceded by prefaces containing scenes from the lives of Paul (in asclepiads) and Peter (in glyconics) respectively. Regardless of the title, only book 2 contains a refutation of Symmachus' third *Relatio*. In *CS* 1, Symmachus does not appear until towards the end of the book, where the poet apostrophises him without naming him (*CS* 1.622-57). Book 2 has a reference to the battle of Pollentia in April 402 (718-20) but not to the one in Verona, which took place soon afterwards,<sup>19</sup> suggesting that it was published soon after the former. Book 1 contains no mention of Arcadius and Honorius. The question emerging from this evidence and on which much ink has been spilt is whether the two books of *CS* were conceived and written as a unity in 402 or composed at

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<sup>17</sup> For the poems alluded to in the *Praefatio*, see section 1ii.

<sup>18</sup> Shanzer (1989a).

<sup>19</sup> Summer of 402 or 403. For the date of the battle of Verona, see Barnes (1976: 373-76) and Coşkun (2008: 310-12).

different times and then coupled together for the publication of 402.<sup>20</sup> Siding with one or the other view has divided scholars into unitarians and separatists.<sup>21</sup>

The separatists need to establish and then explain the chronological gap between the composition of the two books. In *CS* 1.410, the emperor is described as twice victorious over tyrants (*cum princeps gemini bis victor caede tyranni*), a clear reference to Theodosius' victories over Maximus at Save in 388 and Eugenius at Frigidus in 394. Harries (1984) argues that the first book of *CS* was written when Theodosius was alive; hence we have a timeframe between the battle at Frigidus in September 394 and Theodosius' death on 17 January 395. As for the coupling with the *CS* 2, she suggests a serial composition as with Claudian's two books of *In Rufinum* and *In Eutropium*.

Shanzer (1989b) argues that for book 1 Prudentius worked on a panegyric to Theodosius while the latter was alive, but did not have time to publish it before the emperor's death. Some of the passages, however, must have been written after 399, indicating that they were re-worked or added after this point (379-407 and 501-5). Book 1, as it has been handed down to us, was not circulated before 402/3, when it was published together with *CS* 2. The motivation behind the combined publication is, according to Shanzer, again Symmachus and thus a new appeal for the restoration of the altar of Victory. As regards book 1, Shanzer discerns an anti-pagan invective section (42-378), which due to the triviality of its subject is undatable, sandwiched between a panegyric to Theodosius. For the combined publication of the two books, Prudentius must have added a prologue (1-6) and an epilogue (622-57) related to Symmachus, as well as the two prefaces, thus creating a sense of unity between the two books.

Shanzer's arguments were further developed by Cameron (2011: 337-49). He proposes that the motivation for the *CS* 2 is that the victory at Pollentia now provided an answer to one of the arguments of Symmachus' *Relatio* that had remained

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<sup>20</sup> Evidence from Symmachus's letters suggests that he died in or soon after 402. See Sogno (2006: 85). It is not clear whether Symmachus was indeed or, to Prudentius' knowledge, alive when the poet wrote the sections in which he refers to him. The courtesy with which Prudentius treats him indicates, according to Cameron (2011: 340 n. 73), that he was still alive, whereas Shanzer (1989b: 459-60) suggests that the generous observation about his opus implies that he was dead (*inlaesus maneat liber excellensque volumen, CS* 1.648).

<sup>21</sup> Among the unitarians, see Döpp (1986) and Brown (2003: 8-18); among the separatists, see Harries (1984), Shanzer (1989b) and Cameron (2011: 337-49).

unanswered by Ambrose: namely, that the altar of victory gave Rome her military triumphs so far. That question must have become more and more pressing in the years following the defeat at Adrianople, given that there had been little unequivocally positive news on the military front since then. Victoria's military patronage is the first argument of Symmachus (*Relatio* 3.3) that Prudentius refutes in lines 18-66 of book 2.<sup>22</sup> According to Cameron, there is no valid reason to assume that the material of which the first book consists (a *contra paganos* section: 42-407, and a panegyric to Theodosius: 1-41, 408-621) remained unpublished before the combined publication, as Shanzer suggests. Cameron (2011: 346) argues that, 'it was when sorting and arranging his various poems for republication in the collected edition securely documented by the *praefatio* in 405 that Prudentius decided to gather his three anti-pagan hexameter works together into a single two-book poem. This would explain why he did so little rewriting'. Although the victory at Pollentia now provided a strong counter-argument against Victoria's military patronage, I think Prudentius did not have a reason to wait until the collected edition for the coupling of the two books. He could very well have announced and inserted the two books into the omnibus edition as two separate works, a panegyric on Theodosius and *CS* 2 (which would then have been entitled simply *CS*). Therefore, it seems more likely that the two books formed two parts of the same work in 402, something that was done in relation to Symmachus and a new appeal or maybe the fear of a new appeal for the restoration of the altar of Victory.<sup>23</sup> Victory at Pollentia now offered the opportunity to disprove efficiently one of Symmachus' arguments left out by Ambrose.

As mentioned above, Shanzer suggests that two passages appear to postdate 399. In one of these two (*CS* 1.501-5), Prudentius presents Theodosius to encourage the Romans to let the statues stand clean:

*marmora tabenti respergine tincta lavate,*

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<sup>22</sup> Prudentius restates Symmachus' argument in the previous lines (12-16).

<sup>23</sup> Symmachus made a trip to the court at Milan as a senatorial legate in the winter of 402, which in all probability was in relation to Alaric's invasion. See Sogno (2006: 84-85). However, it is possible that, if news about this trip reached Prudentius, wherever he was at that time, he would have assumed that the trip was about a new appeal or that maybe a new appeal would be undertaken in addition to Symmachus' existing task.

*o proceres! liceat statuas consistere puras,  
 artificum magnorum opera; haec pulcherrima nostrae  
 ornamenta fuant patriae nec decolor usus  
 in vitium versae monumenta coinquinet artis.*

Following Solmsen (1965a), the content of this passage has been considered an allusion to a law of 399 prohibiting the destruction of pagan works of art (*CTh* 16.10.15). This, however, as Cameron (2011: 347-49) points out, is not Prudentius' point here at all. The poet does not imply that the statues are in danger.<sup>24</sup> Prudentius through Theodosius urges the Romans to appreciate temples and statues as works of art detached from any association with paganism.

Another section that, according to Shanzer, must have been written after 399 are lines 379-407 on gladiatorial games. Shanzer mainly bases this on an allusion to Claudian's *Theod.* 293 (*Amphitheatrali faveat Latonia pompae*) in *CS* 1.385 (*amphitheatralis spectacula tristia pompae?*). She (1989b: 456-57) builds her argument as follows:

*'Amphitheatralis* was a rare word at the best of times (see TLL s.v. 1983, 77). It was first used in verse by Martial in *epigr.* 11,69,1 and 14,137,1. The first occurrence is the relevant one. Martial's poem is an epitaph on a *venatrix* killed by a boar: *Amphitheatrales inter nutrita magistros/ Venatrix, silvis aspera, blanda domi/ Lydia dicebar*. The second occurrence is either in Prudentius or Claudian. Claudian worked from Martial and Prudentius from Claudian. We may be sure of this because Claudian used *amphitheatralis* in a context precisely reminiscent of its original one, namely the mention of a female huntsman, whereas Prudentius does not. Claudian could not have worked from Prudentius. Thus Prudentius wrote this section of Book 1 after 399'.

However, outside poetry the word *amphitheatralis* after Martial re-appears for the first time in Ammianus describing the noun *spectaculum* (14.2.1: *in*

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<sup>24</sup> On Prudentius' treatment of statues, see commentary n. 266-295.

*amphitheatrali spectaculo feris praedatricibus obiecti sunt praeter morem*). In both Prudentius and Ammianus, *amphitheatralis* is used in the description of gladiatorial games, where men are fighting against wild animals. Other passages from Ammianus – which apart from Prudentius and Claudian are the only ones after Martial – where we come across *amphitheatralis* in a same or similar context, include: 26.3.2, 28.9.10, 29.1.17 and 31.10.19. In light of this, it is more plausible to assume that *amphitheatralis* is a word that after Martial met a brief revival in the literary circles of the late fourth century, and thus CS 1.358 does not necessarily presuppose an allusion to Claudian. To do more justice to Shanzer's argument, I should clarify that it is not the allusion *per se*, which does seem convincing, that deters me from accepting it but the fact that her argument creates more questions than it resolves. For me, it is hard to accept that Prudentius added 39 lines on gladiatorial games after 399 but not a single line to introduce Arcadius and Honorius in book 1.

In summary, CS 1 consists of an anti-pagan invective section (42-407, undatable) sandwiched between a panegyric to Theodosius with emphasis on his anti-pagan legislation (1-41, 408-621). It is uncertain whether the two sections that later formed CS 1 were coupled together for the joint publication of the two books or at some earlier stage. Nothing in CS 1 needs to be later than 395. CS 2 must have been composed in 402, soon after the battle of Pollentia. That is when Prudentius coupled the two books of CS by having them preceded by two prefaces on Paul and Peter respectively and adding an apostrophe to Symmachus at the end of book 1 (622-57).

Equally debatable is the evidence for dating provided in the *Peristephanon*. Fux (2003: 43-82) and (2013: 22 and *passim*) has attempted, based mainly on internal evidence, to establish which of the poems of the *Peristephanon* served as models for the other poems of the collection arguing for the anteriority of the former. His arguments are, therefore, often speculative.<sup>25</sup>

In contrast to CS, where we have references to specific battles and emperors, in the *Peristephanon* references to *principes* seem to be more elusive. In *Pe.* 12, Prudentius refers to the dedication of San Paolo fuori le mura by a *princeps bonus* (45-54). Harries (1984: 71) dates the poem and consequently Prudentius' trip to

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<sup>25</sup> See Tsartsidis (2016).

Rome to 391-395 on the basis that Theodosius was the emperor to dedicate the church – although Honorius finished it – and since the emperor is not named, he must have been alive at the time when the poem was composed. The emperor who is referenced, however, could also be Honorius, who completed the church between 395 and 402.<sup>26</sup>

In *Pe.* 2.473-84, Laurence prophesises the advent of a *princeps* who will shut down the temples and let the former idols made of marble and bronze be cleansed from the stain of paganism:

*video futurum principem  
quandoque, qui servus Dei  
taetris sacrorum sordibus  
servire Romam non sinat,  
qui templa claudat vectibus.  
valvas eburnas obstruat,  
nefasta damnet limina,  
obdens aenos pessulos.  
tunc pura ab omni sanguine  
tandem nitebunt marmora.  
stabunt et aera innoxia,  
quae nunc habentur idola.*

The *futurus princeps* can easily be identified with Theodosius. The content of this passage has also been considered an allusion to the law of 399 prohibiting the destruction of pagan works of art (see above). As in *CS* 1.501-5, there is no indication that the statues are in danger (see above). Prudentius simply wants the pagan works of art to be detached from any pagan associations. Furthermore, as Cameron (2011: 349) points out: ‘There are verbal as well as thematic parallels between the two passages (*puras* ~ *pura*; *consistere* ~ *stare*); in *CS* Theodosius is begged not to allow (*sinat*) Rome to sink into its ancient squalor, in *Per.* ii he does

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<sup>26</sup> Roberts (1993: 198-99 n. 93), Shanzer (1989b: 461 n. 1) who dates it to 399-405 and Coşkun (2008: 305-6 n. 39, 309-10) to 401 during Prudentius’ trip to Rome.



not allow (*sinat*) Rome to be a slave to pagan rites. The probability is that the two poems were written at about the same time'. Laurence's prophecy should be taken as a reference to Theodosius' anti-pagan legislation of 391/2 (*CTh* 16.10.10-12).<sup>27</sup> During the composition of *Pe.* 2, Theodosius seems to be alive. Otherwise, if Honorius were the emperor, I do not see why he would not attribute to him the Christianisation of the empire as he did in *CS* 2 or at least say that the sons of the *futurus princeps* will perpetuate their father's policy. This gives us a timeframe between 391 and 395 for the composition of *Pe.* 2.

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<sup>27</sup> Harries (1984: 71). Shanzer (1989: 452 n. 1, 461 n. 1), seeing an allusion to *CTh* 16.10.15, dates *Pe.* 2 to 399, before Prudentius' trip to Rome which she places between 399 and 405. Coşkun (2008: 305-6 n. 19, 309 n. 50) points to the 399 law, parallel passages from *CS* 1, and the geographical separation from Rome documented in lines 537-72 to argue that *Pe.* 2 was written after Prudentius' planning of his trip to Rome (which he dates to 401-2) or might have been composed after his return. Therefore, he gives a timeframe between 401 and 404.

#### 1iv. The date of Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*

It has been argued that *Pe.* 10 was one of the poet's earliest poems.<sup>28</sup> Meyer (1932: 253) states that *Pe.* 10 is certainly one of the earliest works of Prudentius and in terms of metre is not as strict as the rest of the poet's iambic poems. *Pe.* 10 has more anapaests, dactyls and tribrachs than the other iambics of Prudentius.<sup>29</sup> Henke (1985: 137 n. 11) rightly objects to this and points out that it simply shows that Prudentius had in mind a metrical structure of the iambic trimeter analogous to that used in Seneca.

Though metre does not allow us to reach any secure conclusions about the dating of *Pe.* 10, a reference to the emperor, as in the case of *Pe.* 2 and *Pe.* 12, might provide some sort of indication. When Asclepiades orders Romanus to sacrifice and pray for the safety of the emperor, Romanus refuses to do so and holds that he will not pray for the safety of the emperor but rather for him and his cohorts to become soldiers of faith, to be baptised and to reject paganism (426-31).

*Tunc ille: 'Numquam pro salute et maximis  
fortissimisque principis cohortibus  
aliter precabor quam fidele ut militent  
Christique lymfis ut renascantur Patri,  
capiant et ipsum caelitus Paraclitum,  
ut idolorum respuant caliginem*

Although *militent* is taken with both *princeps* and cohorts, it is obvious that emphasis is laid on the emperor, since at the end of Romanus' response, the martyr refers only to the emperor and makes no mention of the cohorts (441-45). I think we should read more into *respuant* than to just mean 'disapprove, reject'. The emperor could of course reject paganism on a personal level, in that the emperor does not want to be pagan himself. Yet what the martyr argues up to this point is how nonsensical and corrupting pagan religion is; in other words, he argues that it should

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<sup>28</sup> Coşkun (2008: 315 *et passim*).

<sup>29</sup> See the table in Meyer (1932: 254).

not be tolerated. An emperor who shares the same views would not just be pleased with being Christian at a time when the abominable pagan religion is still practised but would obviously take measures against it. *Respuant caliginem* could imply an emperor who rejects paganism in a drastic way, i.e. an emperor who, in the eyes of Prudentius at least, bans it. In *CS* 1.415-505, Prudentius puts into the mouth of Theodosius a speech in which the emperor urges Romans to reject paganism. If Laurence's prophecy (see section 1iii) about a future ideal emperor points to Theodosius, it is possible that Romanus' wish for an ideal emperor also points to the same person.

Something else that is also suggestive in the judge's order is the association of pagan offerings and victories on the battlefield (417-20).

*placanda nobis pro triumphis principis  
delubra, faustus ut secundet gloriam  
procinctus utque subiugatis hostibus  
ductor quietum frenet orbem legibus.*

In *Relatio* 3.3, Symmachus connects the altar of Victory with Rome's military victories. This argument, as Cameron points out (see section 1iii), remained unanswered by Ambrose and Prudentius could finally provide a strong counter-argument after the victory at Pollentia. Here, Asclepiades asks Romanus to pray for the emperor to defeat his enemies and reign peacefully, but Romanus is only willing to pray that he becomes Christian and rejects paganism. Prudentius (through Romanus) completely overlooks military feats in favour of *militia Christi* (*fidele ut militent*, 428). If the *princeps* of our passage reflects historical realities, Theodosius in particular, then that would be a sensible thing to do. The question of the gradual deterioration on the military front since the defeat at Adrianople must have troubled Prudentius, like many other Christians of his era, and was a question the poet was able to answer effectively after 402. But even before that, bearing in mind the battle of Frigidus in 394, the poet could refer to the emperor's deeds in both military and spiritual battles. A hymn written between 391 and 394, as I am inclined to see *Pe.* 10 as being, could make an implicit reference to the emperor's measures against

paganism, intentionally downplaying his performance on the battlefield. Thus, this approach could lie behind the martyr's answer. However, even if the emperor had been largely victorious in the immediate years prior to the composition of the poem, one might argue that a martyr's speech does not provide the appropriate context for praising it. However, why does the poet (through the judge) bring up the emperor's military performance in the first place? Christian writers favour patriotism and allegiance to the emperor but they do not accept sacrifice to idols (for references, see commentary n. 416-425).<sup>30</sup> Prudentius differentiates himself from that view. Furthermore, in other martyr narratives where the examining magistrate orders the martyr to pray or sacrifice for the safety of the emperor, there is no such connection between worshipping pagan gods and the emperor's military successes.<sup>31</sup> Most importantly, that connection is not found in the passions that record the story of Romanus.<sup>32</sup> Thus, Prudentius could have avoided it. The poet creates an opportunity to give an answer in which he dismisses military victories and puts forward the *militia Christi*. Is this a first reaction on the part of Prudentius to Symmachus' arguments that the poet incorporates into the *Hymn to Romanus*? Does Prudentius want to give a message to the reader? This overemphasis of the emperor's disapproval of paganism tells the reader of the poem, who might have the same question about the emperor's deeds on the battlefield as Prudentius, that being a faithful Christian is the only thing that matters.

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<sup>30</sup> Prolingheuer (2008: 269) points out that Prudentius deviates from Tertullian's *Apologeticum* 30-33 which argues that faithful Christians can be patriots and obey the emperor. Furthermore, he maintains that 'Romanus nennt die Bekehrung des Princeps als Bedingung für die Unterstützung des Staates durch die Christen. Dem liegt letztlich das Argument zugrunde, dass *nur ein christlicher Kaiser das Wohl der Römer garantieren kann*' (my emphasis). I take that a step further and argue that Prudentius had a specific Christian emperor in mind Theodosius.

<sup>31</sup> See e.g. *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 6 and *Passio S. Crispinae* 1 (commentary nn. 415-426).

<sup>32</sup> For passages in the prose passions where the judge alludes to the fact that Romanus' behaviour stands in contrast with the official religion and the imperial commands or orders the martyr to sacrifice to the idols, see Del. G. 6; Mom. 447.54-56, 448.2-3, 22-23, 449.14-15, 450.10; Del. L. 2, 6, 11. In the Greek passion edited by Delehay, Romanus professes that a governor who does not believe in the Christian God is nothing to him (ἔπαρχος δὲ μὴ εἰδὼς τὸν Θεὸν οὐδὲν μοί ἐστιν, 7). Prudentius makes a similar statement for the emperor: *hoc opto lumen* (sc. of Christian faith) *imperator noverit/ tuus meusque, si velit fieri meus; / nam si resistit Christiano nomini, meus ille talis imperator non erit* (441-44). It is likely that Prudentius found the detail about the governor in a Greek or Latin passion and applied it to the emperor. Alternatively, Prudentius found in his source(s) a similar statement referring to the emperor and used it in his text. Nevertheless, that does not account for the association between military success and observing the rituals of pagan religion that Prudentius makes.

## 2. Summary of Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*

Prudentius starts his narration by asking Romanus to enlighten him in order to write the martyr's *passio*; otherwise, the poet would be unable to accomplish this task (1-30). Then, the poet gives some indication about the historical framework by mentioning that it was during Galerius' rule that harsh persecutions took place, forcing the Christian flock to deny Christ. Among the Christians, Romanus stands out for his devotion to Christ and urges people to withstand and retain their faith. The soldiers are ordered to arrest Romanus, but before that happens, he offers himself to them freely (31-75). Upon reaching the court, the prefect accuses Romanus of leading people to disaster by encouraging them to follow the Christian faith, and orders that Romanus be tortured. Yet, when it is brought to the prefect's attention that Romanus is a nobleman, the prefect asks the martyr about it but Romanus rejects secular nobility in favour of a genuinely Christian nobility, i.e. being a faithful Christian (76-140). Then Romanus embarks on a long harangue against Roman offices, religious practices and the lascivious behaviour of the pagan gods as illustrated by well-known myths (141-305). This extensive polemic against pagan religion is followed by an exposition of the nature of the real God and how he wishes to be worshipped (306-75). Asclepiades counterattacks. His main argument is that the cult of pagan gods was established before the foundation of Rome, dating back to the time of the Homeric heroes, and was approved by the most revered kings such as Numa Pompilius. He concludes that rejecting the gods is synonymous with rejecting the emperor (391-425). Romanus refuses to acknowledge imperial authority unless the emperor converts to the Christian faith (426-45). Asclepiades, outraged, orders his soldiers to torment Romanus. Using their swords, his torturers wound his entire body, yet the martyr, retaining his tranquillity, teaches his torturers and the crowd – which, as the martyr informs us, has been assembled to watch his sufferings (462-465) – the importance of the soul and the contempt of the Christian for his earthly body (446-545). Asclepiades derides Christ and Romanus delivers a speech on the importance of the cross and the role of Jesus in the Christian faith. At the end of his speech, the martyr proposes that Asclepiades consult an unbiased judge, a little child, regarding whom he considers to be the real God (546-660). Asclepiades accepts the

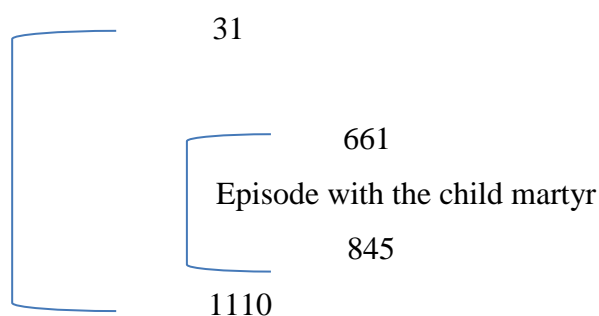
challenge. The child, questioned by the martyr, confesses what he has been taught by his mother, that Christ is the real God. The soldiers take off the child's clothes and beat him before his mother's eyes at the prefect's command. All present, including the child's torturers, are moved by the cruelty of the scene. The child's mother is the only person who stays calm (661-715). When the child asks for water, his mother instructs him to bear his torture in order to drink water from the stream of immortality and encourages her son to stand firm by giving him examples of infant martyrs from the Bible: the Innocents in Bethlehem and the sacrifice of Isaac. Then she goes off on a tangent about the seven Maccabean brothers who suffered great torments and were also encouraged by their mother to stand firm (716-90). The judge imprisons the child and Romanus' torturers deepen his wounds with sharp steel. The martyr mocks the sluggishness of Asclepiades' soldiers and the prefect decides to kill Romanus quickly, by burning him alive, and to have the child beheaded (791-825). The child meets with the death commanded by the prefect. However, Romanus, as he had predicted earlier, was not destined to be burnt alive and a miraculous burst of rain extinguishes the fire. Asclepiades, attributing the event to magic, decides to call a doctor to remove Romanus' tongue. A doctor called Aristo comes and cuts out Romanus' tongue while the martyr bears the operation without the slightest resistance or sign of pain (826-910). The prefect, convinced that Romanus is now mute, orders him to speak. The martyr is still able to speak and attributes the miracle to God, who can unmake the laws of nature. Asclepiades accuses the doctor of trickery but the latter prompts the prefect to see and touch the martyr's jaws or order the same operation to be performed on an animal (911-1005). Romanus speaks of the hideous pagan sacrifices which he contrasts with the Christian blood that has been shed because of the cruelty of the pagans. The martyr is transferred to prison where he is strangled (1006-1110). His soul is carried to heaven by an angel. The prefect sends a detailed account of Romanus' martyrdom to the emperor. Yet even if these rolls perish through the passage of time, Romanus' story will always be recorded in a heavenly book which will one day be recited by God. Finally, if Prudentius has not been selected to be among God's flock, Romanus' petition will suffice for the author of *Peristephanon* 10 to be transferred to the right side of God, namely to gain a place in heaven (1111-1140).

## Structure

Most poems on the martyrs by Prudentius adhere to a tripartite structure: introductory part, main narrative, concluding part.<sup>33</sup> The *Hymn to Romanus* follows the same structural pattern (Proem, Main narrative, and Epilogue) with the crucial difference that the main narrative part contains an episode on the torture and death of a child martyr (661-845):

1-30: Proem

31-1110: Main narrative



1111-1140: Epilogue

In the proem, the poet delineates the story he is about to unfold and hints at elements that we will come across later in the course of the story (see pp. 96-97). In the main narrative, sections in dialogue alternate with narrative parts. In the narrative parts, we have descriptions of Romanus' arrest and torments, of the torments of the child martyr as well as of the gradual intensification of the judge's anger. In the dialogue parts, Romanus speaks significantly more than Asclepiades (as well as the rest of the characters of the poem) and in his debate with the judge delivers disproportionately longer speeches than him.<sup>34</sup> The direct speech put into Romanus' mouth (528 lines) occupies almost half of the main narrative (1080 lines). The largest

<sup>33</sup> Roberts (1993: 10). See also pp. 43. The obvious exception is *Pe.* 8, a poem about a baptistry in Calahorra.

<sup>34</sup> Romanus speaks in lines 97-107, 123-390, 426-445, 459-545, 562-570, 586-660, 667-670, 801-810, 818-820, 853-855, 928-960 and 1006-1100, Asclepiades in lines 77-95, 116-120, 396-425, 446-450, 548-555, 573-585, 664-665, 680, 686-695, 794-795, 813-815, 821-825, 868-895, 922-925 and 1101-1105. The lines where Romanus speaks amount to 528, whereas those of Asclepiades to 140, slightly over one fifth of Romanus' direct speech. The direct speech given to rest of the characters of the poem is as follows: mother of the child martyr: 721-790, 833-835, 839-840, child martyr: 672-675, 681-685 and doctor Aristo: 982-1000.

part of Romanus' speeches comprises argumentation in favour of Christianity and against pagan religion. However, the way the judge responds to the martyr's arguments is to order his minions to continue or intensify their torments, but he does not actually employ counter-arguments against Romanus.<sup>35</sup> This tactic evinces the insanity and irrationality of the examining magistrate (cf. pp. 67-68), who cannot convincingly or even rationally react to Romanus' arguments, as well as the self-evident victory of the true religion, Christianity. By contrast, Romanus does not miss any opportunity successfully to refute the judge's arguments, even if that happens much later in the poem. This is explicitly shown from Romanus' refutation of the judge's argument that Christianity is a comparatively recent phenomenon and, in any case, considerably more recent than Roman religion (401-415), a refutation that occurs two hundred lines after Asclepiades' attack (611-635).<sup>36</sup> In the episode with the child martyr, Romanus' role is confined to the beginning and towards the end of the episode (661-670, 794-825), and his interaction with the child is restricted to asking whether he believes in the Christian God or in the various pagan deities (667-670). Thus, in this episode, although Romanus still has a say and the judge orders that his torments be renewed, the focus shifts to the torments of the child martyr and to his mother's encouragement to him to withstand his sufferings. Finally, in the epilogue, the poet employs self-referential topics of reflection as he does in the proem, without, however, repeating the themes of the proem.

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<sup>35</sup> 446-450, 548-555, 1101-1105 (Asclepiades orders that Romanus be killed).

<sup>36</sup> See pp. 52-53, 61-63 and commentary nn. *ad locc.*.



### 3. Manuscripts and Arrangement

The works of Prudentius were widely circulated during the Middle Ages. From the sixth through to the fifteenth century, there are over 300 manuscripts containing the whole or part of Prudentius' oeuvre.<sup>37</sup> The oldest manuscript that transmits part of Prudentius' oeuvre is the incomplete Parisinus Latinus 8084 (Puteanus), dated to the sixth century.<sup>38</sup> More specifically it contains the *Cathemerinon*, *Apotheosis*, *Hamartigenia*, *Psychomachia*, and *Peristephanon* 1 to 5.142.<sup>39</sup> The manuscript is labelled A in the editions of Bergman and Cunningham. *Pe.* 10 is not transmitted in the Puteanus.

The second oldest manuscript, referred to as B (end of the sixth-beginning of the seventh century), is the Ambrosianus (D 36 sup.) from Bobbio which contains parts of Prudentius' works with ninth or tenth century additions.<sup>40</sup> A and B are usually favoured in Bergman's edition. Apart from these early testimonies of Prudentius' textual tradition,<sup>41</sup> both Bergman's and Cunningham's editions are largely based on ninth and tenth century manuscripts.<sup>42</sup> The Ambrosianus is the first manuscript to include parts of *Pe.* 10. The old hand transmits lines 1-250 and 454-1140. The rest of the text is supplied by the later hand (see above).

The order of the poems of the *Peristephanon* differs across the manuscript tradition, as is made clear in the following scheme:<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> On Prudentius' manuscripts, see Bergman (1908), (1926: xix-xlvi), Cunningham (1966: x-xxviii) and Fux (2003: 83-90). On the illustrations of the manuscripts of Prudentius, see Stettiner (1895/1905) and Woodruff (1930).

<sup>38</sup> On this manuscript, see Cunningham (1958).

<sup>39</sup> To this codex are attached six leaves that transmit the *Carmen contra paganos*.

<sup>40</sup> Winstedt (1905).

<sup>41</sup> A textual problem identified as early as manuscripts A and B is that there are two versions for several passages of Prudentius' works. One of the most characteristic instances, which has stimulated much discussion, is *Cath.* 10.9-16. The issue that arises from these double renderings is whether they are early interpolations or different redactions made by Prudentius himself. Various scholars have supported both sides in this debate. Winstedt (1903), Klingner (1930), Pelosi (1940) and Cunningham (1968) argue for the authorial variant, whereas Lazzati (1941-42), Thraede (1968) and Gnilka (2000) against it. For an overview, see Bastiaensen (1993: 101-8). Most of the cases can be more convincingly explained as interpolations, although the possibility of authorial variants for some of them should not be eliminated. Some of the poems must have been circulated before the omnibus edition heralded in the *Praefatio*. Therefore, it is not impossible that Prudentius decided to make some changes to works previously published independently when they were copied for the collected edition.

<sup>42</sup> For a list of manuscripts used in these editions, see Bergman (1926: lv) and Cunningham (1966: il).

<sup>43</sup> This scheme is taken from Fux (2013: 18). For a more detailed account of the different arrangement of the *Peristephanon* poems across the manuscript tradition, see Fux's table (2003: 88).

- Family  $\alpha\alpha$ : *Pe.* 10, 1-9, 11-14;
- Family  $\alpha\beta$ : *Pe.* 10, 1-3, 5, 4, 14, 6-7, 9, 8, 11-13;
- Family  $\beta\alpha$ : *Pe.* 1, 5, 4, 6-9, 11-14, 2-3, 10;
- Family  $\beta\beta$ : *Pe.* 1, 5, 2, 11, 13, 12, 4, 14, 3, 6-7, 9, 8, 10.

There is no evidence that Prudentius is behind any of the different arrangements presented in the manuscripts.<sup>44</sup> The *Hymn to Romanus*, as the above scheme shows, is placed either at the beginning or the end of the rest of the *Peristephanon* poems but never among them.<sup>45</sup> It is uncertain whether any of these arrangements reflects its original place. Ludwig (1977: 335-39) argues that its place is at the end of the collection as a climax summarising and expanding on the motifs of the *Peristephanon*. Smolak (2013: 48) holds that it should be placed ‘as a kind of overture or gigantic preface at the beginning of the *Liber Peristephanon*’. Fux (2003: 54-55) and (2013: 242) maintains that in the families  $\alpha\alpha$  and  $\alpha\beta$ , *Pe.* 10 finds its place in the poet’s oeuvre as a ‘poème de transition’ between the *Peristephanon* and *Contra Symmachum*, a role analogous to that of the *Hymnus de Trinitate* which marks the transition from the *Cathemerinon* to *Apotheosis*. Not only is there no certainty about whether the *Hymn to Romanus* should be at beginning or at the end of the collection, as the manuscript tradition indicates, but furthermore we cannot be certain about whether it had a fixed place in the collection.

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<sup>44</sup> Cunningham (1966: xxvi): ‘De ordinibus carminum in libro *Peristephanon* multa nescimus. Ordo communis, etiam si *Romanum* abstraxeris, nihil omnino auctoritatis habet’.

<sup>45</sup> The two manuscripts (*c*= Oxford, Bodl. Libr., auct. F 3.6; *b*= London, Brit. Libr., Harley 4992) listed by Fux (2003: 88) in which *Pe.* 10 appears detached from the rest of the *Peristephanon* are much later (dating to the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries respectively). I discuss the issue of whether the place of *Pe.* 10 in the manuscript tradition indicates that it was a separate work in section 6.

## Conspectus of editorial variants

Line	Bergman	Cunningham	Tsartsidis
87	<i>denecandis</i>	<i>de necandis</i>	<i>de necandis</i>
143	<i>praetextae togae</i>	<i>praetexta et toga</i>	<i>praetextae togae</i>
223	<i>sedes</i>	<i>sedet</i>	<i>sedes</i>
462	<i>perditos</i>	<i>perditum</i>	<i>perditus</i>
483	<i>saevitia</i>	<i>saevia</i>	<i>saevitas</i>

This table does not include minor differences in orthography, punctuation and capitalisation.

#### 4. The title of Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*

Before I discuss the title of *Peristephanon* 10, I give an overview of the titles of some of Prudentius' works. This will enable us to understand better the problems regarding their authenticity that also relate to the title of *Pe.* 10. The titles of Prudentius' poems cannot be traced back to him with certainty. In the *Praefatio*, the poet does not provide any titles to the works he describes.<sup>46</sup> Gennadius, writing at the end of the fifth century, gives us, after Prudentius himself, the earliest description of Prudentius' works, referring to some of them by their titles (*De viris illustribus* 13). After referring to *Dittochaeon* (as *Dirocheum*) and *Exameron*, he gives the following description for the rest of Prudentius' works:

Conposuit et libellos, quos Graeca appellatione praetitulavit Ἀπὸ THEOSIS  
 πSICHOMACHIA AMARTIGENIA, id est, De divinitate, De  
 compugnatione animi, De origine peccatorum. Fecit et in laudem martyrum  
 sub aliquorum nominibus invitatorium ad martyrium librum et hymnorum  
 alterum, speciali tamen conditione adversum Symmachum idolatriam  
 defendentem.

It is possible that, by giving Greek titles to his three didactic poems, Prudentius positions himself within a Latin literary tradition following Vergil, Ovid (*Metamorphoses*) and contemporary poets including Ausonius (*Ephemeris*). That in combination with Gennadius' testimony makes a good case for their authenticity.<sup>47</sup> Gennadius does not give the titles of *Peristephanon* and *Cathemerinon*. He describes them as *in laudem martyrum sub aliquorum nominibus invitatorium ad martyrium librum et hymnorum alterum*. The title *Peristephanon* does not appear in the incomplete Puteanus, as it does not in Cantabrigiensis Corp. Chr. 223 (9<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>48</sup> Therefore, it is not certain whether the title of the collection can be attributed to

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<sup>46</sup> For the poems alluded to in the *Praefatio*, see section 1ii.

<sup>47</sup> Henriksson (1956: 82-89), Brožek (1983: 196-97) and Dykes (2011: 249-50).

<sup>48</sup> Bergman (1908: 35). Brožek (1983: 196) notes that it also does not appear in Dunelmensis B. 4. 9. (1983: 196).

Prudentius or whether it is an invention of the editors/ copyists by analogy to the Greek titles of *Apotheosis*, *Psychomachia* and *Hamartigenia*.

Aside from the issue of the title to the collection as a whole, the attribution of the *inscriptions*, i.e. the titles to the individual poems of the *Peristephanon*, to the poet is equally problematic. Gennadius' words *sub nominibus aliquorum* suggests that (at least by the end of the fifth century) the poems of the collection had individual titles. Some of the *Peristephanon* poems bear the *inscriptio passio* (*Pe.* 2, 5, 9, 11-14) and some others *hymnus* (*Pe.* 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7), often followed by the characterisation *sanctus* and/ or *beatissimus* and a reference to the status of the saint (*martyr, martyr episcopus, apostolus*).<sup>49</sup> Cunningham (1963) and Fux (2003: 66-71) hold that the *inscriptions* are by Prudentius.<sup>50</sup> However, Palmer (1989: 75-86) makes a good case for treating the *inscriptions* with scepticism as to their authenticity. Some of the poems do not bear the same title in all the manuscripts and comparison between some of the *inscriptions* and the content of the poems shows that there is no sufficient reason to consider some of them less a *passio* or *hymnus* than others.<sup>51</sup>

The placings of the *Peristephanon* poems and consequently the title *Peristephanon* 10 in modern editions are due to Sichard, who placed the *Hymn to Romanus* as the tenth in his 1527 edition. The first manuscript to transmit *Pe.* 10 is B (see section 3). B has the *inscriptio Sancti Romani Martyris Contra Gentiles Dicta* (printed in Bergman's edition). Other titles attested in the manuscripts include *Romanus, Romanus contra gentiles, passio (sancti) Romani (martyris), and de sancto Romano martyre*.<sup>52</sup> In some manuscripts more than one title appears. It cannot be argued with certainty if the title *Sancti Romani martyris* or *Romanus contra gentiles* belongs to the poet. However, even if it does not and the *contra gentiles* is an invention of the early editors, through this title the apologetic aspect of the poem is

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<sup>49</sup> For a list of *inscriptions* to the *Peristephanon* poems in the manuscripts, see Fux (2003: 133-38). Exceptions to that norm are *Pe.* 8 (*De loco in quo martyres passi sunt, nunc baptisterium est Calagurri*) and *Pe.* 11 (*ad Valerianum episcopum de passione Hippolyti beatissimi martyris*). See Palmer (1989: 75-76) and Fux (2003: 76-77).

<sup>50</sup> Or, according to Cunningham (1963), someone close to him.

<sup>51</sup> A characteristic example is *Pe.* 2, which in some of the manuscripts – including Puteanus, the oldest – bears both titles (*hymnus in honorem passionis Laurentii beatissimi martyris*).

<sup>52</sup> Bergman (1926: 370), Cunningham (1966: 330) and Fux (2003: 53-54). I discuss the question of whether the titles of *Pe.* 10 transmitted in the manuscripts are an indication of separate publication in section 6.

emphasised already. In addition, the *contra gentiles* (sub)title creates a parallel and underlines the affinity with *Contra Symmachum*, another poem with prominent polemic character.<sup>53</sup> Cunningham retains the title *Romanus*. Fux (2003: 53) thinks it possible that the following of *Romanus* by *contra gentiles* was modelled on the traditional titles of Platonic dialogues markedly picked by Ambrose in treatises including *De Iacob et vita beata*. Fux (2003: 52), who sees *Pe. 10* as a Christian quasi-tragedy, also points out that the title *Romanus* would allude to the titles of tragedies and he mentions Seneca as an example. Taking into account the apologetic element of the poem, the title *Romanus* could also point to similar works such as Minucius Felix's *Octavius*. In that work, following the Platonic model of philosophical dialogue, the Christian Octavius attacks pagan religion, often using arguments similar to those of *Romanus* in *Pe. 10*.<sup>54</sup>

Fux (2003: 53 n. 55) suggests that the less common title *Romanus* made the copyists adapt the original title, changing it to *de sancto Romano* or *passio Romani* in an attempt to harmonise the title of *Pe. 10* with the rest of the *Peristephanon* poems. Titles such as *de sancto Romano* need not necessarily be considered as titles in the strict sense but as descriptive guidelines forewarning the reader about what follows. Titles including *passio (sancti) Romani* might indeed have been used to synchronise the title of *Pe. 10* with the rest of the poems, as Fux suggests. However, the word *passio* is used by Prudentius to describe the martyrdom of Romanus (*sic peracta est passio*: 1109). Therefore, it is possible that the title was given by Prudentius or that, given the content of the text and the poet's characterisation, the copyists thought of *passio (sancti) Romani (martyris)* as a fitting title.

In conclusion, there are arguments and counter-arguments surrounding all the titles of *Pe. 10*. It is possible that regardless of the title Prudentius gave to the poem, later copyists favoured titles they thought better reflected the content of the poem.

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<sup>53</sup> Fux (2003: 53-54). In some of the manuscripts, including B, the oldest manuscript that transmits part of CS, the title given to this work is *Contra orationem Symmachi*. See Bergman (1926: 215) and Cunningham (1966: 182).

<sup>54</sup> See commentary nn. 141-145, 152, 161-165, 185, 193-195, 206, 251-265, 266-295 and 299-300.

## 5. Sources for Romanus<sup>55</sup>

The story of Romanus has come down to us through various texts. Here, I will run through all the texts that transmit that story before I consider the question of which are the likely sources for Prudentius to have used for the composition of *Pe.* 10. The first source which records Romanus' *acta* is Eusebius of Caesarea's *De martyribus Palaestinae*. Two recensions of this work in Greek were produced by Eusebius; a long one written in 311 soon after the end of the Great Persecution and a revised briefer version of the long recension which became part of the first edition of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* (313/314).<sup>56</sup> Apart from a few fragments of the longer recension, only the brief recension survives in its entirety. We also have a Syriac translation of most of Eusebius' longer recension. The story of Romanus is recorded in the brief Greek recension and the Syriac translation. Both these sources describe Romanus as a deacon and exorcist from Caesarea who was martyred in Antioch in 303, during the Great Persecution. More specifically, the Greek brief recension recounts that Romanus, outraged after watching Christians sacrificing to the idols, reproves them ardently (*Mart. Pal.* [S] 2). He is arrested and the judge decides to put him to death by fire. Romanus is brought before the emperor Diocletian and a new punishment is decided upon: the amputation of his tongue. After many torments the martyr is strangled in prison.<sup>57</sup>

In the Greek recension there is no mention of what later grew to be the 'hallmark' of Romanus' martyrdom, namely the miracle that enabled him to speak after the removal of his tongue. Yet the miracle with the tongue is recorded in the Syriac translation of Eusebius' work (*Mart. Pal.* [L] 2), which in other respects records a story similar to that of the Greek recension. This discrepancy between the two versions led to the assumption that the miracle was not part of Eusebius' original

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<sup>55</sup> The aim of this section is to trace down Prudentius' source(s) for Romanus. For this reason I have included all the sources prior to Prudentius or these that could have (a) common source(s) with him.

<sup>56</sup> For the dates, I follow Burgess (1997: 502-3).

<sup>57</sup> At the time of Romanus' death (17 November 303), Diocletian was in Rome celebrating his *vicennalia* (Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 17.1-2). This discrepancy can be explained if we take into account that Romanus was executed long after his trial. He was arrested and interrogated when Diocletian was in Antioch, so probably summer or autumn 302, i.e., before the start of the Great Persecution on 23 February 303. When the martyr was strangled (November 303), a year or even more had passed since his arrest.

text but was added by the Syriac translator.<sup>58</sup> The miracle with the tongue is also documented in another source for Romanus' martyrdom, Eusebius of Emesa's *De Resurrectione* (PG 24.1097-100).<sup>59</sup> Eusebius of Emesa died in c. 358. Although the Greek text does not survive, we do have a Latin translation. Two further elements that we come across in Eusebius of Emesa's text are absent from either of the two versions of Eusebius of Caesarea. The first is yet another miracle; the fire that was lit in order to consume the martyr was extinguished by a sudden burst of rain. The second element is the involvement of a doctor. After the miracle with the rain, the judge orders a doctor to remove Romanus' tongue. Yet the martyr, as mentioned earlier, is still able to speak after the operation. The judge questions the doctor, doubting that he performed his job properly, as is shown from the fact that the martyr is still able to speak. In order to confirm the miracle, the doctor performs the same operation on someone else who dies immediately. Here, it is also worth noting a shift from the narrative of Eusebius' Syriac translation, in which the decision on the cutting out of Romanus' tongue is made by the emperor. In Eusebius of Emesa, after the miracle of the rain, the emperor is willing to dismiss Romanus and the order for the amputation of his tongue is attributed to the judge. In the rest of the sources explored in this section, the emperors are referred to or implied in the context of the Great Persecution, offering a background for the persecution of Romanus, or alluded to in passing during the interrogation or, in some of the sources discussed further on (i.e. the prose passions) are mentioned at the end of the story as the recipients of the records of the interrogation sent by the judge. Hence, after Eusebius of Caesarea, the emperors play a peripheral role. Romanus' interrogation concerns the martyr and his judge.

The next texts to be considered are two sermons transmitted under the name of John Chrysostom. The first of these sermons is by common consensus authentic (*Laudatio I sancti martyris Romani* PG 50.605-12), whereas the second is almost certainly not (PG 50.611-18).<sup>60</sup> The essence of the story, as recorded by Eusebius of

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<sup>58</sup> Carotenuto (2003) and Barnes (2010: 240 n. 19).

<sup>59</sup> This text was also attributed to Eusebius of Caesarea, but Wilmar's (1920a and b) and later Buytaert's (1948 and 1949) argumentation in favour of Eusebius of Emesa's paternity has been generally accepted. On this point, see also Winn (2011: 5-10).

<sup>60</sup> Montfaucon (PG 50.603-6) points out that the style of the second sermon on Romanus is different from that of John Chrysostom's sermons. Expanding on that, Bartolozzi's (1937) argument is also



Emesa, is reproduced in the authentic sermon of John Chrysostom, with the exception of the miracle with the rain.<sup>61</sup> There are clear indications that the sermon was delivered at Antioch, so we have a chronological framework between around 386, the time when John became priest at the same city, and 397, the year when he was made archbishop of Constantinople.<sup>62</sup> The inauthentic sermon transmitted under the name of John Chrysostom reproduces a similar story (with the exception of the incident with the doctor). This sermon adds yet another incident, not documented in the sources discussed so far, involving a secondary martyr: a child who, after the martyr's suggestion, is questioned and sentenced to death because he professes his faith to Christ.<sup>63</sup> The episode with the child martyr is part of the story of Romanus, as it is recorded in the prose passions.

Various versions of Greek and Latin prose passions, dating from soon after the martyrdom of Romanus, transmit the story of Romanus. The passions record the two miracles, attested in some of the earlier sources (the fire that was quenched by a burst of rain and Romanus' ability to speak after the removal of his tongue), the

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based on stylistic features. Delehayé (1932: 276-77) points out a difference in the facts presented in the two sermons. In the authentic sermon the cutting out of the tongue is the only torment that the martyr is subjected to. In the second sermon Romanus is subjected to numerous torments (*πολλὰ μὲν προσήγοντο τιμωριῶν ποικιλία*: *PG* 50.613). In addition, the author of the second sermon also refers to another martyr, a child, something that John Chrysostom does not include in his text. Simonetti (1955: 226-28) explores this addition further and also points out that the reason for Romanus' arrest is different in the two sermons. In John Chrysostom's sermon the martyr is arrested because he tried to dissuade the citizens of Antioch from sacrificing to the idols. Romanus was arrested for the same reason in Eusebius of Caesarea and Eusebius of Emesa. In the second sermon the martyr is arrested for preventing Asclepiades from entering the church, as occurs in another source: the Greek passion edited by Delehayé. I discuss the prose passions that transmit the story of Romanus further on in this section. The incident with the child martyr is also found only in the second sermon and the passions. Thus it can be deduced that the author of the second sermon based his text not only on John Chrysostom but also on a passion or a mutual source with it, which Chrysostom did not know of. In addition, Simonetti (1955: 229-30) observes that the second sermon differs from Chrysostom's sermons in terms of structure. The introduction and epilogue of this sermon do not have the characteristics that Chrysostom uses when he writes these parts of his sermons. All the above combined to indicate that the second sermon was not written by John Chrysostom. The only indication in favour of the Chrysostomian authorship is the phrase: Ἐβουλόμην ἄχρι τέλους ἐγχορεῦσαι τῇ τοῦ μάρτυρος ὑποθέσει ... καὶ ἀναγκαῖα τοῦ πατρὸς τὰ διδάγματα πρὸς τὸν τῶν ῥηθέντων ἀπαρτισμόν, *PG* 50.617. With these words Chrysostom abridges his sermon in order for bishop Flavian (τοῦ πατρὸς) to come and deliver his own speech. These kinds of formulae are found in other Chrysostomian sermons but it is more likely that the sermon was written by another priest who was preaching at the time in Antioch.

<sup>61</sup> This sermon is translated in Mayer (2006: 228-37).

<sup>62</sup> For indications that the sermon was delivered at Antioch, see Mayer (2006: 227). For John Chrysostom's life, see Kelly (1995).

<sup>63</sup> There are some superficial similarities between *Pe.* 10 and the two sermons, to which I return at the end of this section.

episode with the child martyr, and the incident with the doctor who cut out the martyr's tongue and is later questioned about whether he performed the operation properly or tried to trick the judge. Furthermore, unlike in the sources discussed so far, in the passions the judge is named (Ἀσκληπιάδης – Asclepiades). Another element of the story of Romanus that is particularly emphasised in the prose passions is the martyr's noble descent. Apart from the brief recension of Eusebius, where the martyr is characterised as γεννάδας ('noble'), the martyr's nobility is not mentioned in the rest of the sources discussed so far. However, it becomes an important part of the story in the prose passions, in which the judge learns about the martyr's descent after he has already tortured him. When the judge asks Romanus if that is true, the martyr acknowledges Christ as his father, thus rejecting the secular nobility that stems from his family. Finally, something that should be noted is that the text preserved by the prose passions is not a narration with just a few phrases in direct speech, as the sources discussed so far, but contains a whole dialogue between Romanus and his judge.

In the Greek passions that have come down to us we can detect two versions. One of the two (*BHG* 1600y) is reproduced in Delehaye (1932: 249-60) and the other (*BHG* 1600z) was edited by Halkin in *Hagiographica Inedita Decem* (1989: 33-54). The Greek *passio* printed in Delehaye has come down to us through four MSS which essentially reproduce the same text.<sup>64</sup> After Delehaye's exemplary analysis of Romanus' sources, Erhard (1934: 195-96) brought to attention another Greek passion not included in Delehaye's list of the martyr's sources.<sup>65</sup> This passion was transmitted in a single MS from the library of Patmos and has not been taken into consideration in any discussion about Romanus' story so far. Although the two passions essentially reproduce the same story, the style is different. The passion from Patmos has more sophisticated vocabulary and much more complex syntax. Unlike the passion edited by Delehaye, the passion from Patmos provides us with a chronological indication: Antioch is called Θεούπολις. This characterisation was attributed to Antioch after a disastrous earthquake on 29 November 528.<sup>66</sup> Thus, we have a *terminus post quem* for the composition or revision of the Patmos passion.

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<sup>64</sup> Delehaye (1932: 242).

<sup>65</sup> *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 34.1 (1934): 195-96.

<sup>66</sup> See Lampe s.v.

Finally, indicating that there must be a significant chronological distance between the time when the Greek passion edited by Delehaye was written and the time when the Patmos passion was written or revised is the fact that the author of the Patmian passion is not sure what the word *πατρόβουλος* means, a term used to refer to the martyr's nobility.<sup>67</sup> *Πατρόβουλος* is a rare word which appears to mean the son of a *βουλευτής* (senator) who from an early age is destined to undertake the same role. Apart from hagiographical texts, it is found in a letter of Julian (*Ep.* 54) and in inscriptions, mainly from Asian Minor and Aegean islands.<sup>68</sup> The testimonies date from around the second to the fourth century. The mention of the word *πατρόβουλος* in the Greek passion printed in Delehaye suggests a fourth-century timeframe, when the word was still known, possibly soon after Romanus' martyrdom. The unfamiliarity of the author of the Patmian passion with that term in combination with the reference to Antioch as *Θεούπολις* probably suggests a significant chronological gap between the two Greek passions.

The two Greek passions form the Eastern tradition of Romanus' story. The same version of the story, with a few additions (see below) is also re-produced in the Latin *passiones*. The Latin passions are divided into at least four groups. According to Delehaye's classification (1932: 279-80), there are three groups: i) the first (*BHL* 7298-9) is represented in Mombricitius (1910: 446-50); ii) the second (*Novum Supplementum BHL* 7299b) in Delehaye (1932: 261-70); and iii) a third which is still unedited (*BHL* 7301-4).<sup>69</sup> My examination of the manuscripts has shown that at least

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<sup>67</sup> The hagiographer of the Patmos passion explains that *πατρόβουλος* can mean that Romanus is the son of a *βουλευτής* or rather that the martyr belongs to the rank of *πατήρ βουλῆς*. Further, he tells us that that is what he infers from the etymology of the word and the martyr's eloquence as it is presented in his argumentation: Τοῦτο (sc. *πατρόβουλος*) δὲ παρίστησιν, ἢ πατὴρ τὰ πρῶτα φέροντος τῆς βουλῆς ἐκεγενέσθαι τὸν ἅγιον, ἢ τοῦτον μᾶλλον αὐτὸν πατέρα βουλῆς χρηματίσαι. Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο δίδωσι νοεῖν ἐξελληνιζόμενον τὸ ρῆτον ἢ τοῦτο, ὡς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἔνεστι τῶν τοῦ μάρτυρος σοφιστικῶν νοημάτων καὶ ἀντιθέτων καταλαβεῖν ἐναργῶς. Ὁ τε γὰρ νοῦς ὁ τε λόγος τῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ δεδημηγορημένων, ὡς ἐχέφρων, ὡς συνετός, ὡς πλήρης γνώσεως καὶ σοφίας, τοῦτο καθαρῶς ἀποδείκνυσι καὶ οὐκ ἄλλο. Ὅθεν καὶ τῶν ἐπισήμων ἓνα καὶ τὰ πρῶτα φερόντων εἶναι τὸν μάρτυρα δείκνυται, καντεῦθεν καὶ πατέρα βουλῆς, ὡς προῖων ὁ λόγος παραστήσει τρανότερον, ἀπ' αὐτῆς τοῦ γένους ἀναφορᾶς τῆς ἐκ τῶν τοῦ ἀσεβοῦς ὑπάρχου λόγων ὑποσημειωθείσης τοῦτο προσλαμβανόμενος: Halkin II. 170-191. Cf also II. 425-35. Alternatively, we can assume that *πατρόβουλος* could mean two things – the son of a senator and someone who belongs to the rank of *πατήρ βουλῆς* – and the hagiographer favours the second option. However, if that was the case, I do not think that the hagiographer would need to mention etymology as one of his arguments.

<sup>68</sup> Robert (1966: 86-89, esp. n. 6) and Dmitriev (2005: 170).

<sup>69</sup> The manuscript tradition of the Latin passions has been recently studied by Giani (2015). Based on verbal similarities between the older version of the *passio Theodosiae* and the passion of Romanus printed in Mombricitius, as well as the manuscript transmission, she concludes that the two passions

two of the manuscripts of the third group transmit a different version (Paris 13761, fols. 57v-60v; Paris 3820, fols. 178v-180r). Although a systematic collation of all the manuscripts remains to be done, it is safe for the time being to say that there are at least four versions of the story of Romanus transmitted in the manuscripts.<sup>70</sup> The Latin passions include a few additions that distinguish these texts from the Eastern tradition: i) they give the name of the child martyr which, according to the text edited by Delehaye, is Theodolus, whereas, according to the two unedited versions, it is Barulas or Baralas. In Mombritius' text we do not learn the child's name. ii) At the end of these passions the story of the martyr Hesychius is added.<sup>71</sup> These additions are the corollary of the grouping together of the three saints Romanus, Barulas and Hesychius in the martyrologies. According to Eusebius, Romanus was martyred on the same day as Zachaeus and Alphaeus, i.e. 17 November. These three saints appear together under Caesarea in the Hieronymian martyrology. The next day Romanus appears with Barulas and Hesychius under Antioch. In the Syriac and the Hieronymian martyrology, Hesychius and Barulas are also celebrated on 14 August and 29 May respectively under Antioch.<sup>72</sup> On a saint's feast day, reference could be made to other saints of the same church. The story now becomes clear. A hagiographer who had read the martyrology considered Hesychius and Barulas (who were normally honoured on different days) as companions to Romanus' martyrdom, so the story of Hesychius was added to that of Romanus. Since not many details were known about Barulas, he was identified with the secondary martyr of the story of Romanus, the child who when asked by Romanus confesses that Christ is the real God. The name Theodolus, according to Delehaye (1934: 282), originated from the mother's address *filiole Theodole*. 'L'assonance des deux mots permet de croire que le premier a suggéré le second, et que la leçon est le fait d'une distraction de copiste'. However, I think that an alternative explanation is more probable. I suggest that the

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were the product of the same school (if not of the same author) and were circulated in southern Gaul c. 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> AD. Giani (2015: 9-11) also argues that the version of Mombritius ante-dates that edited by Delehaye.

<sup>70</sup> Overall, the manuscripts date from the ninth to the early seventeenth century. The combination of Delehaye (1932: 279-80) and the online catalogue of *BHL Manuscripta* can give the fullest, to my knowledge, list of the manuscripts that transmit the various versions of the Latin passion of Romanus.

<sup>71</sup> In Vat. Lat. 5771, a *passionarium* from Bobbio dated to the ninth century, which appears to represent an older version of the text printed in Mombritius (*BHL* 7298), the story of Hesychius is not attached to the passion of Romanus. For more on this manuscript, see Giani (2015).

<sup>72</sup> Delehaye (1932: 280-82).

child martyr was called Θεοῦ δοῦλος in a lost Greek passion. The absence of a reference to the child's name and the characterisation of the martyr as Θεοῦ δοῦλος, especially if the MS was written in *scriptio continua*, made the Latin translator assume that it was the name of the martyr. Delehaye (1932: 280) and Sabbatini (1972: 202) consider as another addition to the Latin tradition or deviation from the Greek one the fact that Romanus is called *monachus* in many of the Latin passions. However, this should not be seen as an addition or deviation, but rather a translation into Latin of what in Delehaye's Greek text is referred to as Τίς τῶν μοναζόντων (1).<sup>73</sup>

The sources that transmit the story of Romanus can be summarised as follows:<sup>74</sup>

- Eusebius of Caesarea *De martyribus Palaestinae* [S] 2. (Greek recension) 313/314<sup>75</sup>  
*De martyribus Palaestinae* [L] 2.3 (Syriac translation) after 311
- Eusebius of Emesa *De Resurrectione* (PG 24.1097-100) before ca. 358
- John Chrysostom *Laudatio I Sancti martyris Romani* (PG 50.605-12) 386-397
- Pseudo-Chrysostom *De Sancto martyre Romano* (PG 50.611-18) probably late 4<sup>th</sup> – early 5<sup>th</sup> c.
- Greek *passiones*:  
 i) Μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου μάρτυρος Ῥωμανοῦ (printed in Delehaye) probably mid 4<sup>th</sup> c.  
 ii) Μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου μεγαλομάρτυρος Ῥωμανοῦ (printed in Halkin) after 528
- Latin *passiones*:  
 i) *Passio SS. Romani et Sociorum* (printed in Delehaye) after mid 4<sup>th</sup> c.

<sup>73</sup> Giani (2015: n. 35).

<sup>74</sup> Apart from the Greek and Latin passions, a Syriac and an Armenian (*BHO* 1028) passion have also come down to us. The former belongs to the tradition presented by the Greek passions, whereas the latter resembles the Latin tradition. See Nau (1915-17: 13-15) and Delehaye (1932: 280) respectively. Some of the sources regarding Romanus are reproduced in Delehaye (1932), i.e. the two versions of Eusebius of Caesarea, the text of Eusebius of Emesa, one of the two Greek passions, and one of the Latin *passiones* (see above). A summary of some of these texts can be found in Sabbatini (1972: 198-202).

<sup>75</sup> Many of the dates are tentative. While I shall argue below that Prudentius used a Latin passion, those that survive may be later recensions postdating Prudentius.

- ii) *Passio Sancti Romani Martyris et Monachi* (printed in Mombritius) after mid 4<sup>th</sup> c.
- iii) unedited (*BHL* 7301-4) after mid 4<sup>th</sup> c.
- iv) unedited (certainly attested in Paris 13761, fols. 57v-60v and Paris 3820, fols. 178v-180r) after mid 4<sup>th</sup> c.

Having now traced how the story of Romanus was developed from Eusebius' more historically reliable account to the highly conventional Greek and Latin passions, we can now turn to the question of which of these texts could have served as Prudentius' source(s).<sup>76</sup> In *Pe.* 10, Prudentius follows the key elements of Romanus' story – the miracles with the mouth and the fire, the doctor who removes the martyr's tongue, and the episode with child martyr – which all together are found only in the Greek and Latin passions. Furthermore, other elements that *Pe.* 10 shares with the prose passions are the judge's questioning about Romanus' noble descent, the name of the judge and the name of the doctor (Ἀρίστων - *Aristo*). In terms of structure, both Prudentius' poem and the passions follow the same storyline and stick to the same narrative pattern: a long debate between Romanus and Asclepiades bracketed by a preface and an epilogue and interrupted by descriptions of torments. It is obvious either that Prudentius had taken into account the passions or that they shared (a) common source(s). The additions to the Latin passions (the name of the secondary martyr and Hesychius' martyrdom) are not found in Prudentius' text, which for that reason appears to stick to the Eastern tradition about Romanus. Scholars who examined the sources on Romanus came to the conclusion that Prudentius follows the Greek *passio* (reproduced in Delehaye's article) step by step, without eliminating the possibility that Prudentius had also taken into account a Latin passion or passions.<sup>77</sup> In the examination that follows, I shall use verbal parallels between Prudentius' version and the Latin passions on Romanus as well as the way that the latter texts refer to Romanus' nobility, to argue that Prudentius either additionally or even primarily used a Latin passion as his source.

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<sup>76</sup> For common martyrological topoi used in Romanus' Greek passion, see Delehaye (1932: 274).

<sup>77</sup> Delehaye (1932: 275-6), Simonetti (1955: 233), Sabbatini (1972: 206) and Henke (1986).

Verbal similarities between *Pe.* 10 and the Latin passions are sometimes restricted to a single word.<sup>78</sup> However, that is unsurprising for a poet like Prudentius who following closely or loosely a martyr's *acta* retells his/her story, transforming a simple prosaic narration into a Classicised poetic achievement.<sup>79</sup> Intertexts with the two edited Latin passions do exist, and it should not be considered a coincidence that Prudentius chooses words found in the passions when describing the same events. A further indication that Prudentius consulted a Latin *passio* or a text related to the 'Latin' tradition of Romanus' legend is the way that the Christian poet refers to the martyr's nobility, which differs from the Eastern tradition and corresponds to that described in the Latin passions.<sup>80</sup> In both *Peristephanon* and the Latin passions Romanus, as mentioned earlier, is described as noble or coming from a noble background. The adjective *nobilis* and its cognates are used in these descriptions. In contrast with this general characterisation, in the Greek passions Romanus is called πατρόβουλος (for its meaning, see above), which implies something more specific and is not mentioned in the Latin passions.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, in *Pe.* 10, after Romanus' noble blood is mentioned, the martyr is described as the 'first of the citizens' in a way strongly reminiscent of that in the Latin passions and which is not found in the Greek texts.<sup>82</sup> That kind of expression ('first of the citizens') might be a periphrastic way to translate into Latin the word πατρόβουλος; Prudentius shows that he knows this way of portraying Romanus' social status and decides to adopt it. All the above suggests that Prudentius was also or primarily working based on a Latin passion. This passion must have been a translation of the Greek surviving texts or at least of a text very close to them prior to the enrichment of the Latin tradition with the second martyr's name and the martyrdom of Hesychius.

Here it is useful to point out why it is more legitimate to assume that Prudentius appropriated the Latin passions rather than vice versa. The Latin passions

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<sup>78</sup> For a list of possible verbal correspondences between *Pe.* 10 and the Latin passions see Appendix II. For further points of similarity, see commentary nn. 91-95, 108-110, 111, 114, 123-125, 522-525, 548-550, 573, 576, 585.

<sup>79</sup> In relation to the way Prudentius treats his sources see Palmer (1989: 234-55) and Sabbatini (1972 and 1973).

<sup>80</sup> For the portrayal of Romanus' nobility in *Pe.* 10, see commentary nn. 111-140, 123-125, 124 s.v. *lex curiae*, and 126-130.

<sup>81</sup> Giani (2015: n. 29).

<sup>82</sup> See Appendix II n. 4.

appear for the most part to translate the Greek passion. Often we find a passage in the Latin passions that has similarities with Prudentius, but what is contained in the passage can largely be traced back to the Greek text (see e.g. Appendix II n. 1 and 2). As the Latin hagiographers generally translated what they saw in the Greek text, there is no valid reason to assume that in these passages they act differently and draw on Prudentius.

In summary then, Prudentius follows Romanus' story step by step, as it is reproduced in both the Greek and Latin prose passions. The main difference between Prudentius and the Latin tradition is that in the latter the story of the martyr Hesychius is added. Verbal similarities between *Pe.* 10 and the Latin passions indicate that Prudentius used a Latin passion or passions in addition to a Greek passion, or even as a primary basis for the composition of his *Hymn to Romanus*. This Latin passion dates from sometime after 303, the year of the martyr's death, or more likely from sometime after 311-314. That is when, in all probability, the two Greek recensions of Eusebius' *De Martyribus Palaestinae* were first published (see above), and on which some at least of the later sources were based. The *terminus ante quem* is the end of the fourth century, when Prudentius writes *Pe.* 10.<sup>83</sup> The Latin passion Prudentius worked from must have been a translation of one of the surviving Greek passions, or at least of a text very close to them, prior to the enrichment of the Latin tradition with the martyrdom of Hesychius.

Having established as precisely as possible Prudentius' indebtedness to the passions, it is worth looking at how he actually uses them in *Pe.* 10. Sometimes, information that in the passions is in direct speech is given in Prudentius' poem in indirect discourse.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, Prudentius appears to omit incidents that occur in the majority of the passions.<sup>85</sup> What is even more striking about Prudentius' treatment of the passions is the inclusion of disproportionately long speeches

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<sup>83</sup> For the dating of *Pe.* 10, see section 1iv.

<sup>84</sup> E.g. Romanus' admonitions to the Christians of Antioch to defy the edicts and hold on to the Christian faith (*Pe.* 10.53-60: Mom. 446.41-2, Del. L. 1), Asclepiades is informed that Romanus is acting against imperial orders (*Pe.* 10.61-5: Mom. 446.41-2, Del. L. 1), etc.

<sup>85</sup> In the passions after the miracle with the tongue Romanus writes praise of God with his own blood. That never happens in *Pe.* 10. After Asclepiades accuses the doctor of not performing the operation properly, Ariston suggests the judge try the same operation on another man or a pig. That operation is performed in the passions and confirms the doctor's innocence. On the contrary the same experiment never occurs in *Pe.* 10. Henke's (1986: 62) explanation is that the doctor's arguments in *Pe.* 10.982-90 were already very convincing, so the operation was needless.



attacking pagan religion and defending Christian doctrine. Prudentius includes a large amount of arguments drawn from a long anti-pagan invective tradition.<sup>86</sup> These kinds of arguments are found neither in the passions nor in any other source about Romanus.<sup>87</sup> Finally, what could be thought of as essential information about Romanus not included in *Pe.* 10 but mentioned in the passions (as well as other sources mentioned so far) is the place where his martyrdom takes place, i.e. Antioch.<sup>88</sup>

In Prudentius' text, this absence of a reference to Antioch is combined with the representation of a Romanised version of the martyr's story.<sup>89</sup> The apologetic clichés put into the mouth of Romanus are mainly concerned with the ridiculousness of Roman religious practices and the shameless behaviour of pagan gods. However, Prudentius goes a step further. Not only is there no mention of or hint that Romanus' martyrdom is happening in Antioch, but furthermore the poet portrays Romanus attacking religious practices associated with or taking place in Rome. In lines 161-165, for example, the martyr points out how ridiculous the festival of the Lupercalia is, where semi-naked men would run and strike women of childbearing age. We have evidence that this festival was also celebrated in other cities of Italy beyond Rome and also in Gaul – but not in Antioch (see commentary n. 161-165). More telling is Romanus' attack on the *lavatio* ('washing') of the statue of Magna Mater in the Almo (154-160, see commentary n. *ad loc.*), a rivulet of Tiber in Rome (*Almonis usque pervenitis rivulum*, 160). Furthermore, the image of a magistrate who is holding the ivory sceptre reminds us of the *triumphator* during the triumphal ceremony (146-150, see commentary n. 148), and therefore it is an image that also

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<sup>86</sup> I treat the role of apologetics in the *Hymn to Romanus* in section 8iii.

<sup>87</sup> Here, I refer specifically to arguments attacking Roman religious ceremonies and the behaviour of pagan gods, themes that occur repeatedly in the anti-pagan invective tradition, not generic arguments for Christian doctrine in which the passions abound. I discuss the anti-pagan invective sections of the poem (141-305, 1007-1090) in section 8iii.

<sup>88</sup> Antioch is not mentioned in the Greek passion edited by Delehay. However, it is unlikely that Prudentius did not know of the city where Romanus' martyrdom took place. Mention of Antioch is made in the other prose passions that have come down to us. It is also likely that Romanus appeared under Antioch in the martyrologies. In the Hieronymian martyrology, the date of which is debatable, Romanus appears both under Caesarea (17 November) and Antioch (18 November). See above. A similar case that confirms that Prudentius could have known the place of the saint's martyrdom despite not mentioning it is that of Vincent. In *Pe.* 5, there is no reference to the city, in which his martyrdom took place, but Vincent is mentioned among the martyrs of Saragossa in *Pe.* 4.77-108. I discuss this on pp. 42, 46.

<sup>89</sup> For the Romanisation of Romanus in *Pe.* 10, see also Fux (2013: 246-47) and Smolak (2013).

points to the eternal city. Overall, the reader is certainly given the impression that Romanus' martyrdom takes place in Rome.<sup>90</sup>

Furthermore, associations with Rome are evident even in the name of the martyr.<sup>91</sup> Etymological puns on the saints' names were common practice in Late Antiquity. The name of the saint reveals their essential characteristics or presages their end. Christian writers knew and elaborated on these puns. Augustine derives St Vincent's name from the verb *vincere*, and elaborates on the significance of Agnes' name.<sup>92</sup> Prudentius also uses speaking names for several of the saints he includes in the *Peristephanon*.<sup>93</sup> Peter is the rock, πέτρα, of faith (*Pe.* 12), Eulalia (εὐ + λαλέω) was proven an eloquent defender of faith (*Pe.* 3), Agnes retained her purity even when she was forced to work in a brothel (*Pe.* 14), Hippolytus (ἵππος + λύειν) has the same name as Theseus' son, and is similarly dragged to death by wild horses (*Pe.* 11), and Vincent remains victorious even after his death (*Pe.* 5).<sup>94</sup> In an analogous way, in *Pe.* 10 Romanus' name very obviously echoes Rome, and Prudentius leaves no doubt about this connection by filling the hymn with images that allude to the eternal city. The combination of the martyr's name and this excess of *Romanitas* (even if it is described in a negative way) cannot be coincidental. Romanus, apart from the saint's name, is the adjective indicating Roman nationality. Prudentius downplays or even deliberately avoids any mention of Antioch so that he can present a *Romanus*, an ideal Roman, fighting against Rome's pagan religion and defending Christianity. A Caesarean saint, who was martyred in Antioch, is thus transformed into the defender of the Roman Christian identity.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>90</sup> For the impression that Asclepiades is *praefectus urbi* as a consequence of Prudentius' Romanisation of the martyr's story, see commentary n. 41-42.

<sup>91</sup> O'Hogan (2014: 274 n. 18): 'Romanus of Antioch, whose name in any case claims him for the westerners'.

<sup>92</sup> Augustine *Serm.* 274: *magnum spectaculum spectavimus oculis fidei, martyrem sanctum Vincentium ubique vincentem. vicit in verbis, vicit in poenis; vicit in confessione, vicit in tribulatione; vicit exustus ignibus, vicit submersus fluctibus: postremo vicit tortus, vicit mortuus; Serm.* 273.6: *Agnes latine agnam significat; graece, castam.* Cf. also Damasus' and Paulinus of Nola's puns on Felix's name: *Corpore, mente, animo pariterque et nomine Felix*, Damasus Ferrua 59.1; *Inclite confessor, meritis et nomine Felix*, Paulinus of Nola *Carm.* 12.1; *Carm.* 13.1-2.

<sup>93</sup> For Prudentius' puns on the martyrs' names, see Petruccione (1985: 111) and Malamud (1989: 81, 116, 152).

<sup>94</sup> In a way similar to that of Augustine (see n. 93), Prudentius puns on Vincent's name: *in morte victor aspersa/ tum deinde post mortem pari/ victor triumpho proteris/ solo latronem corpore, Pe.* 5.541-45.

<sup>95</sup> On this, see also pp. 61-65. On Prudentius' Christian and Roman patriotism, see Kah (1990), Pietsch (2001), Mastrangelo (2008: *passim*), Pollmann (2011) and Kuhlmann (2012).

So far we have tried to come as close as possible to Prudentius' sources, the prose passions, and try to see how he 'manipulates' them. Although there is evidence that makes a good case for the relationship between *Pe.* 10 and the passions, the question of whether Prudentius drew directly from the prose passions that have come down to us or from a common source cannot be answered confidently. What has not been done yet is an attempt to explore whether Prudentius drew on the same tradition as his contemporary, John Chrysostom or as John Chrysostom's imitator (*PG* 50.611-18), beyond the texts discussed so far. A striking connection between *Pe.* 10 and the panegyric of John Chrysostom is their musical instrument imagery. In both texts Romanus' tongue is paralleled with the quill of a zither (*sitque his agendis lingua plectrum mobile*, *Pe.* 10.935 ~ καὶ γὰρ ἦν κιθάρα τὸ στόμα ἦν **πλήκτρον ἢ γλωττα**, *PG* 50.611). Another similar metaphor that both these texts share is the mouth being compared to the pipes of the flute (*si mandet faucium sic fistulas/spirare flatu concinentes consono*, *Pe.* 10.936-37 ~ αὐλοῦ τὰς **γλωττίδας** ἂν ἀφέλης, ἄχρηστον λοιπὸν τὸ ὄργανον, *PG* 50.611). The Pseudo-Chrysostomian sermon also contains the metaphor of the quill (*PG* 50.613-14). However, striking though these similarities might seem, they are not sufficient to prove a link between Prudentius and the two sermons: the comparison of the tongue to the quill of the lyre was a very common simile among Christian writers.<sup>96</sup> However, even if *Pe.* 10 and the two sermons were not mediated through the same textual tradition, it is interesting to see how different Christian writers from West and East envisaged the description of the martyr's tongue in a similar way.

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<sup>96</sup> See commentary n. 6.

## 6. The place of the *Hymn to Romanus* in Prudentius' poetry

Before I discuss the vexed issue of whether *Pe.* 10 is part of the *Peristephanon* or a separate work, I give a brief overview of Prudentius' poems on the martyrs. This will provide the necessary background to assess to what extent the *Hymn to Romanus* conforms with or deviates from the rest of the collection. With the exception of *Pe.* 8, a poem about a baptistery in Calahorra whose inclusion in the *Peristephanon* has also been considered problematic,<sup>97</sup> the rest of the poems are concerned with the martyrdom of various saints. Prudentius' poems on the martyrs display a high level of diversity in terms of both form and content.<sup>98</sup> As regards form, we can observe that the length and the metre in which these poems are composed vary from one another.<sup>99</sup> Not only is a variety of different metres used but also the structure of the verses is different as some of the poems are composed in stanzas, some in distichs and some *κατὰ στίχον*. The length of the poems ranges from the epigrammatic *Pe.* 8 for a baptistery in Calahorra (18 lines) to the longer narrative poems dedicated to Laurence (*Pe.* 2= 584) and Vincent (*Pe.* 5= 586). The rest of the poems in order of length are dedicated to Peter and Paul (*Pe.* 12= 66), Quirinus (*Pe.* 7= 91), Cassian (*Pe.* 9= 106), Cyprian (*Pe.* 13= 106), Emeterius and Chelidonium (*Pe.* 1= 120), Agnes (*Pe.* 14= 133), Fructuosus, Augurius and Eulogius (*Pe.* 6= 162), the eighteen martyrs of Saragossa (*Pe.* 200), Eulalia (*Pe.* 3= 215), and Hippolytus (*Pe.* 11= 246).

Turning to the issue of the content, first we can discern that many places are represented in the poems, with Rome and Spain featuring prominently: Rome (*Pe.* 2, *Pe.* 12 and *Pe.* 14), Imola (*Pe.* 9), Calahorra (*Pe.* 1, *Pe.* 8), Mérida (*Pe.* 3), Tarragona (*Pe.* 6), Saragossa (*Pe.* 4), Carthage (*Pe.* 13) and Siscia (*Pe.* 7). In *Pe.* 5, there is no reference to a place but Vincent is mentioned among the martyrs of Saragossa in *Pe.* 4.77-108.<sup>100</sup> In general, Prudentius lays particular emphasis on the city where the saint's martyrdom took place and/ or where their tomb is situated.

<sup>97</sup> Palmer (1989: 87-88), Fux (2003: 77) and (2013: 229-30).

<sup>98</sup> On the heterogeneity of the *Peristephanon* poems, see Palmer (1989: 70-86).

<sup>99</sup> For a list of the poems of the *Peristephanon* and their metres, see Appendix I.

<sup>100</sup> Vincent, a native of Saragossa, was martyred at Valentia. Prudentius seems to know this detail (*nonne, Vincenti, peregri necandus: Pe.* 4.89).

The martyrs who appear in the poems differ in terms of gender, ecclesiastical status and manner of death.<sup>101</sup> Another feature that is indicative of their heterogeneity is the narrative technique. For the most part, the *Peristephanon* poems are bracketed with a prologue containing a reference to the place of the martyrdom (see above) and an epilogue where the poet with the aid of the martyr expresses his hope for protection and salvation.<sup>102</sup> The main part of these poems narrate the martyr's sufferings and death. The core of *Pe. 4*, with the exception of Vincent and Encratis, whose martyrdom receives a more detailed description (89-144), contains an enumeration of martyrs. For the martyrs Emeterius and Chelidonius (*Pe. 1*), for whom, as Prudentius informs us, sources are lost, the poet, apart from a reference to two miracles, confines himself to a generic discussion of the means of torture and the importance of martyrdom. Some of the poems display a more complicated narrative technique. *Pe. 11* is in the form of a letter to bishop Valerian. Nevertheless, a large part of this poem is an *ekphrasis*, a description of a painting that records the martyrdom of Hippolytus. The ekphrastic aspect is also prominent in *Pe. 9*, where a sacristan describes a painting of Cassian's martyrdom to the pilgrim/ poet. In *Pe. 12*, as in the two previous cases, the story of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul is given by means of someone narrating the events to someone else. This time it is a native Roman who tells the pilgrim/ poet the story of the annual festival of the two apostles celebrated in Rome.

All the features discussed above indicate the diversity of the *Peristephanon* poems in the presentation of their subject in both form and content. Having provided an overview of the heterogeneity of these poems, we can now turn to the discussion of whether *Peristephanon 10* fits into that framework. Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* in modern editions is printed as the tenth hymn of the *Peristephanon* collection. However, this is not its original position. In 1527, Sichard was the first to place this hymn as the tenth in his edition of Prudentius and subsequent editors have kept the same order since.

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<sup>101</sup> Apart from *Pe. 3* and *14*, dedicated to Eulalia and Agnes respectively, Encratis, another female martyr, appears in *Pe. 4*.109-144. For the variety in terms of ecclesiastical status among the martyrs of the *Peristephanon* (deacon, bishop, teacher, apostle, virgin), see Roberts (1993: 109) and Fux (2003: 82). For the different ways of dying referenced in the *Peristephanon* (e.g. sword, fire, drowning), see commentary n. 134.

<sup>102</sup> See p. 21.

Broadly speaking there are five ways in which scholars have thought *Pe. 10* stands out: its length, its title, its place in the manuscript transmission, the eastern origin of the martyr combined with the absence of a reference to the city where the martyrdom takes place and the representation of a Romanised version of the saint's story, and the inclusion of long anti-pagan invective sections.<sup>103</sup> One or a combination of some of the features of *Pe. 10* have often been considered as suggestive that *Pe. 10* was a separate publication, occupying a book in itself. However, suggestive though these features might be, they do not suffice to disprove the inclusion of *Pe. 10* in the collection. In what follows, I will go through all these features and argue against the view that they suggest the exclusion of the *Hymn to Romanus* from the *Peristephanon* collection.

*Pe. 10* is by far the longest poem in the collection. At 1,140 verses it is around twice as long as the second longest, *Pe. 2*, the hymn of St Lawrence (584 verses; see above for the length of the *Peristephanon* poems). However, this is not a decisive criterion as there is no uniformity in length among the rest of the poems of the collection. Even if we exclude *Pe. 8*, another poem whose inclusion in the collection, as mentioned earlier, is considered problematic, the difference in length between *Pe. 12* (66 verses) and *Pe. 2* (584 verses), two poems whose inclusion has not been seen as troublesome, is over 500 verses, the same difference as between *Pe. 2* and *Pe. 10*.

Many of the titles of *Pe. 10* transmitted in the manuscripts (*Romanus, passio Romani, Sancti Romani contra gentiles dicta*) differ from the *Peristephanon* norm.<sup>104</sup> However, it is uncertain whether either any of the titles of *Pe. 10* or the *inscriptiones* to the rest of the *Peristephanon* poems can be attributed to the author. In addition to that, the *inscriptiones* themselves as handed down to us also display significant variation.

A third feature that appears to differentiate *Pe. 10* from the rest of Prudentius' poems on the martyrs, and which I discuss in an earlier section (3), is that in the manuscripts *Pe. 10* is placed either at the beginning or at the end of the *Peristephanon* poems but never among them. Nonetheless, the two different places

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<sup>103</sup> Bastiaensen (1993: 112) and Roberts (1993: 9).

<sup>104</sup> I discuss the title to *Pe. 10* and the rest of the *Peristephanon* poems in section 4.

*Pe.* 10 occupies in the manuscripts prove nothing more than the lack of an organising principle in the manuscript tradition of the *Peristephanon* poems. Or, to reverse this argument, because of the lack of an organising principle, placing the *Hymn to Romanus* at the beginning or the end of the *Peristephanon* does not suffice to prove its distinctive nature.<sup>105</sup> Proof of a separate publication or transmission, as the two places *Pe.* 10 occupies in the manuscripts have been taken to represent, would suggest that there is evidence that *Pe.* 10 was published on its own or that it was published as part of Prudentius' works but detached from the rest of the *Peristephanon* poems.<sup>106</sup>

It is legitimate to assume that *Pe.* 10, an early work of Prudentius, was originally composed and published as a separate work.<sup>107</sup> However, this is not indicative of its distinctive status. The same should also be true for other poems of Prudentius which must have circulated separately before 404. When Prudentius came up with the idea of creating an omnibus edition, as we are allowed to infer from his *Praefatio*, there was no doubt that the *Hymn to Romanus* would fit perfectly into the scope of devoting songs to the martyrs (*carmen martyribus devoveat*, 42).<sup>108</sup>

As far as the martyr's origin is concerned, it has been pointed out that Romanus is the only eastern saint of the collection. However, that is not something a reader could have inferred from Prudentius' text. There is no reference to Antioch in the poem and that could also be taken as another point of dissimilarity. *Pe.* 10 does not have the same topographical interest that the other poems share (see above). It is overwhelmingly likely that Prudentius knew that Romanus was martyred in Antioch and many of his readers would surely have known this too. The city where his

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<sup>105</sup> In addition to the place that *Pe.* 10 occupies in the manuscripts, Fux (2003: 54) states that *Pe.* 10 'est implicitement voire explicitement distingué du *Peristephanon* dans une grande partie des manuscrits, certains (*c, l*; familles  $\alpha\alpha$   $\beta\alpha$ ) parlant de *libri novem* et considérant ce poème livre à part entière – dans le ms. *c*, *perist.* 10 est même séparé du *Peristephanon* par la *Psychomachie* qui s'insère entre les deux "livres". Il est certes difficile de discerner dans quelle mesure ces indications de la tradition peuvent remonter à une classification de l'auteur et ne procèdent pas d'une logique éditoriale indépendante, liée à la longueur du texte, *mais rien ne garantit par contre l'appartenance du poème au Peristephanon*' (my emphasis). Cf. Palmer (1989: 88) quoted in n. 109.

<sup>106</sup> See n. 46, for the two later manuscripts that transmit *Pe.* 10 detached from the rest of the poems.

<sup>107</sup> For the temporal framework that I propose, see section *liv*.

<sup>108</sup> Among the scholars who argue for the inclusion of *Pe.* 10 in the collection, see Ludwig (1977: 335-39), Fux (2003: 53-55) and Smolak (2013). Arguing that the *Peristephanon* poems were composed at different times revolving around and varying on the martyrdom theme, Palmer (1989: 88) states that 'There is no need to be so troubled by the inclusion of *Pe.* 10 or *Pe.* 8 in the final collection, or by their exclusion or omission, since all these variations are the result of the judgement of editors and copyists after Prudentius' own time'.

martyrdom took place appears in some of the prose passions and it is very likely that Romanus also appeared under Antioch in the martyrologies.<sup>109</sup> The absence of a reference to Antioch can be explained in various ways. On a minor point, one can find other cases where Prudentius does not identify the place of martyrdom: for example, Saragossa in *Pe.* 5 (see above). In so doing, the poet lays emphasis on the interrogation and the martyr's sufferings. In a similar way, Prudentius does not mention Antioch in *Pe.* 10, emphasising Romanus' martyrdom, the unifying principle of the collection according to the poet (*Praef.* 42, quoted above). But more significantly, the absence of a reference to Antioch is also related to the Romanisation of the martyr's story. As I discuss in a previous section (pp. 39-40), both the name of the martyr and his references to places and religious practices give the impression that his martyrdom takes place in Rome. Romanus is portrayed as a Roman hero. One of Prudentius' main aims in the poem is to attack Roman religion both in a broader sense – i.e. the pagan religion practised in the Roman Empire – and in a strict sense – i.e. pagan religion related to and worshipped in the city of Rome –. Thus, Prudentius downplays the martyr's origin in order to be allowed to expose through him the absurdity of Rome's religion. The portrayal of Romanus as an Eastern saint who was martyred in Antioch but directed his attacks on to the city of Rome would have seemed incongruous.

Finally, another element that features prominently in the poem and differentiates it from the rest of the poems on the martyrs is its polemical character.<sup>110</sup> Prudentius puts into Romanus' mouth long passages of anti-pagan invective (141-305, 1007-1090). In these sections, the martyr uses repetitive apologetic themes against pagan religion that mainly have to do with the absurdity of Roman religious practices and beliefs as well as the licentious behaviour of pagan gods. These kinds of arguments are also found in other poems of the *Peristephanon* but the length that these sections occupy in *Pe.* 10 is a practice unparalleled in the collection.<sup>111</sup> The anti-pagan invective element, however, does not overshadow

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<sup>109</sup> The Greek passion edited by Delehaye (1932: 149-60) does not mention Antioch.

<sup>110</sup> Palmer (1989: 248).

<sup>111</sup> This aspect of the poem is discussed in section 8iii. On the apologetic themes found in the *Peristephanon* poems, see e.g. *Pe.* 2.445-452, 465-66 (cf. commentary n. 183) and *Pe.* 5.34 (cf. commentary n. 152).



Romanus' martyrdom.<sup>112</sup> It rather explains why martyrdom should be undertaken. Romanus is asked by the judge to abide by the imperial orders and sacrifice to the idols. By expanding on how corrupting and untrue pagan religion is in contrast with Christianity, the true faith, the martyr makes his denial to sacrifice to the idols, something that inevitably leads to his martyrdom, the only option for him.

Despite all the elements that differentiate *Pe.* 10 from the rest of the collection, what we should consider seriously is that the poem was created at a time when the poet probably had not yet conceived the idea of a collection. The only unifying principle that Prudentius announces in the *Praefatio* is that the poems are dedicated to the martyrs. If line 41 of the *Praefatio* is taken as an allusion to *Pe.* 10 (*labem, Roma, tuis inferat idolis*), as Bergman suggests (1926: xii-xiii), then that in combination with the poem's manuscript transmission advocates that it was a separate book.<sup>113</sup> However, this is unlikely as it would suggest that the poet completely ignored the fact that the poem was about a martyr and focused only on its polemic character which, prominent though it might be, is only one aspect of the poem. In addition, the way Gennadius refers to the poems of the *Peristephanon* indicates that he used criteria similar to those of Prudentius. The Christian poet says that he will compose songs for the martyrs and the apostles (*Praef.* 42, quoted above). Gennadius tells us that Prudentius *fecit ... martyrium librum unum (De viris illustribus* 13, quoted on p. 26). The unifying principle used by Gennadius, the earliest reader to describe Prudentius' oeuvre, is martyrdom, the same as Prudentius himself indicates.

In conclusion, I think that, in regard to the issue of how *Pe.* 10 fits into the poetry of Prudentius, and to *Peristephanon* in particular, the simpler solution is the best. It is likely that *Pe.* 10 was one of Prudentius' early works and, after its composition, it was distributed separately. The poet announces in his *Praefatio* to a collected edition that he will write songs for the martyrs and the apostles (*Praef.* 42), alluding to a collection of poems under the uniting theme of martyrdom. Prudentius inserted into this collection poems that he had already written and there is no reason

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<sup>112</sup> Ludwig (1977: 335) relates the expansion of the apologetic topoi in *Pe.* 10 with its place, which he argues is at the end of the collection as a climax.

<sup>113</sup> For the programmatic *Praefatio* and the poems it appears to allude to, see section 1ii.

to doubt that the *Hymn to Romanus* was one of them given that it matched the poet's scope perfectly.

## 7. Allusion

In order to describe allusion in Prudentius and the way I explore it, I employ Genette's terminology of hypertextuality. Genette conceives the hypertext and the hypotext as different layers of the text: taken together, the hypertext and the hypotext from which the hypertext derives and is related to, make up a palimpsest.<sup>114</sup> In identifying allusions, criteria often include lexical (especially with regard to the occurrence of rare words or *hapax legomena*) and metrical similarities as well as correspondences in terms of context, genre and style. In recent years, the works of Hinds (1998), Pucci (1998) and Edmunds (2001) – to mention some of the most influential works dealing with allusivity in general rather than with allusions in individual authors or works – have equipped scholarship on allusion in Classical poetry with new and constructive approaches. These studies stress particularly the role of the reader as a producer of meaning in the interpretation of the allusion. More recently, Pelttari (2014: 115-60) treated the modes of allusion of late antique poets to Classical poets such as Vergil and Horace, with emphasis on the referentiality of these allusions, that is, whether the context of the hypertext engages in a determined way with the context of the hypotext. That of course, except for when there are striking contextual correspondences, to a large degree depends on the reader and the moment of the interpretation. Although I do not adopt one specific theoretical model, in my treatment of allusions I do take into account the form as well as the conceptual and contextual analogies of the hypertext and the hypotext in identifying and exploring the modes in which Prudentius interacts with other texts.

Prudentius varies the hypotext in many ways:<sup>115</sup> i) linguistically; Prudentius plays with different synonymic possibilities (e.g. *crucor* instead of Juvenal's *sanguis*; see Juvenal 11.68: *qui plus lactis ... quam sanguinis* ~ *Pe.* 10.700: *plus unde lactis quam crucoris*) or makes grammatical changes modifying the number of names and verbs or the tense and/or the mood of a verb (e.g. the verb in Juvenal's phrase *nascuntur in hortis* referring to *numina* in Prudentius' allusion to the same text

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<sup>114</sup> Genette (1982: 5-7).

<sup>115</sup> Here I focus on the way Prudentius alludes to Classical poets. For the way Prudentius varies the biblical hypotext, see section 8i.

becomes *nata in hortis* referring to *maiestas*); ii) metrically; most of the poems Prudentius alludes to in the text – with Vergil and Juvenal featuring particularly prominently – were written in hexameter. Here it should be added that metre inevitably is yet another factor that must have sometimes prompted the poet to make linguistic changes as some of the words would have been hard to fit into his iambs; iii) contextually; Prudentius ‘places’ the hypertext in a context similar or analogous to that of the hypotext or in a (completely) different one. In the latter case, he defamiliarises the hypotext from its original context, thus inviting the reader’s active participation in revealing the meaning of the allusion;<sup>116</sup> and iv) ‘ideologically’; as far as the form, content and context of the allusion are concerned, Prudentius often mixes secular elements (often inherent in the hypotext *qua* composed by Classical authors in a different milieu, before the advent or the official establishment of Christianity) with Christian elements (vocabulary, themes). This outline of Prudentius’ allusive possibilities evinces that the ways in which Prudentius varies the hypotext are often interdependent.

Before I conclude this brief outline, I should clarify that I do not seek the ‘original’ or the ‘model reader’. The allusions discussed throughout this thesis are inevitably scanned and consequently construed through the lenses of a specific reader – me – but hopefully they represent at least to some extent the views of other readers and possibly those of the author. Whether allusions are intentional or unconscious is often impossible to determine and, regardless, even if we could determine this, unconscious allusions are not necessarily less worthy of exploration so long as they acquire a meaning in a reader’s eyes.

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<sup>116</sup> Pelttari (2014: *passim*).

## Christian literature

### 8i. Bible and biblical exegesis

During the period in which Prudentius wrote his poetry, two Latin traditions of the Bible were available: one that had existed for a long time already (Vetus Latina) and a second that was currently in the process of appearing (Vulgate).<sup>117</sup> More specifically, Jerome published his revised version of the gospels in 384, a project he undertook after the request of Damasus, and translated the Old Testament from Hebrew between 390 and 405.<sup>118</sup> Jerome's (re)translation and revision of the Bible, i.e. the Vulgate, eventually came to replace the Vetus Latina, an umbrella term referring to the Latin translations of the books of the Bible that were circulated until then, and became the definitive version. Scholarship on Prudentius' biblical sources has shown that he uses versions of the Vetus Latina.<sup>119</sup>

All of Prudentius' oeuvre is replete with allusions to the Bible, and the *Hymn to Romanus* is no exception. All references to the Bible in this poem are treated in more detail in the respective lemmata.<sup>120</sup> Here, I will be concerned with the way Prudentius interacts with the Bible and, especially, how he varies the biblical hypotext, and subsequently with how he engages with biblical exegesis, that is, strategies about how to interpret the Bible.

Although there are points in the *Hymn to Romanus* in which Prudentius echoes imagery and ideas found in various places in the Bible and which are often interdependent,<sup>121</sup> Prudentius also alludes to specific incidents from the Bible that are detailed in more than one biblical book (e.g. lines 18-20 alluding to Christ's advice to his disciples about their future missionary task, recounted in all four gospels) or to specific passages (e.g. lines 37-40: alluding to Matthew 8.28-31). In the two latter cases, Prudentius varies the biblical hypotext metrically and lexically (as is the case with Prudentius' allusions to Classical poetry: see section 7). In the case of the Bible

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<sup>117</sup> On the chronology of Prudentius' works, see sections Iiii and Iiv.

<sup>118</sup> Kelly (1975).

<sup>119</sup> Charlet (1983) and Dykes (2011: 105 *et passim*). Quotations of the Bible are given from the Vulgate (see p. 2), unless there is a striking intertextual link establishing a relationship with a Vetus Latina version.

<sup>120</sup> See commentary nn. 14, 18-20, 37-40, 312, 326-335, 380, 536-540, 590, 608-610, 648-650.

<sup>121</sup> This aspect is emphasised in Dykes (2011: 102-73).

this is inevitable, as Prudentius writes in metre and he varies a text written in prose. Thus, the Christian poet has to fit the biblical passages into his metre and adjust them to his Classicising poetic style. At the same time, in his re-telling of biblical stories, Prudentius omits and adds material. Finally, metre and style (especially as regards words evoking mythological associations: see commentary n. 326-335) are Classical elements. Hence, when alluding to the Bible, Prudentius mixes biblical elements inherent in the biblical scenes or passages he varies and Classical elements.<sup>122</sup>

Apart from the intertextual mechanisms, it should be highlighted that sometimes when Prudentius alludes to the Bible, he retains the direct speech at points in which we also have direct speech in the Bible (18-20, 37-40). In lines 18-20, for example, Christ's advice to his disciples is rendered in direct speech, as is the case in the Bible. In so doing, Prudentius not only alludes to but also maintains the dramatisation of the biblical text.<sup>123</sup>

So far, we have seen how Prudentius engages with the Bible. However, the sacredness and obscurity revolving around this text also impels him to interpret it or to provide appropriate methods of interpretation. In doing thus, Prudentius is building up on the tradition of biblical exegesis. In Late Antiquity and especially around the period in which Prudentius lived, we witness an upsurge of interest in the interpretation of the Bible.<sup>124</sup> Biblical exegesis took various forms or was subsumed by various textual forms ranging from scholarly commentaries and apologetic texts to treatises and liturgical sermons, and recruited a plethora of literal and allegorical methods of interpretation.<sup>125</sup> Thus, the message intended to be communicated through exegesis by and large depended on the exegete, the literary form that exegesis acquired, the exegetical method or combination of methods, the circumstances (e.g. liturgy, private reading), and the audience or readership.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> For Prudentius' mixture of Classical and Christian elements when alluding to Classical poetry, see section 7.

<sup>123</sup> For direct speech and dramatisation in the Bible, see Small (2014: 69-71).

<sup>124</sup> For a thorough overview of the history of patristic exegesis, see Kannengiesser (2006).

<sup>125</sup> On the various forms of exegetical works and/ or the different literary forms that accommodated biblical exegesis, see Young (1997: 217-47), and Pollmann (2009: 259). On the methodology of biblical exegesis with emphasis on the overlapping of traditionally established methods, see Young (1997: 186-213). Pollmann (2009), taking Genesis as a case in point, provides an overview of the variety of methods and interpretations offered not only by different late antique exegetes but also by the same exegete, Augustine.

<sup>126</sup> Young (1997: 217-47), Pollmann (2009: 259-60, 267-68).

Poetry is yet another medium for biblical exegesis to communicate its message and there are various ways with which exegesis interacts with or is integrated into poetry.<sup>127</sup> In *Pe.* 10, Prudentius incorporates (and versifies) exegetical arguments. More specifically, he uses typology in order to argue against Asclepiades' claim that Rome is more ancient than Christianity (621-635). In the typological interpretation, certain things, people or events in the Old Testament are conjured up as symbols or types (τύποι) that correspond to things, people or events in the New Testament.<sup>128</sup>

Romanus' counter-argument to Asclepiades' statement is that the cross is as ancient as the creation of the world and since then it has been prefigured through various ways and by various people (*Reges, prophetae, iudicesque et principes*, 626).<sup>129</sup> Prudentius is not being specific. He does not refer, for example, to the Tree of Life or Noah's ark, things or events which in other Christian exegetes were taken to prefigure the cross.<sup>130</sup> Prudentius refers to the exegetical strategy one can follow in order to reach this realisation. In other words, he encourages his reader to interpret the Bible and identify these typological correspondences. He prompts his reader to delve more deeply into the text of the Old Testament and detect the pervasive presence of the cross. In so doing, Prudentius (through Romanus) not only incorporates specific arguments found in biblical exegesis into his poetry but also instructs his reader to use typology *per se* as one of the appropriate methods to interpret the Bible.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> See Herzog (2002: 115-233), Roberts (2004), Pollmann (2004) and the volume edited by Otten and Pollmann (2007).

<sup>128</sup> On Prudentius' typology, see Padovese (1980: 75-90), Mastrangelo (2008: *passim*) and O'Daly (2012: 24-26).

<sup>129</sup> For details about specific passages of the Old Testament being interpreted along these lines by specific exegetes, see commentary nn. 621-635 and 625.

<sup>130</sup> On the reason why Prudentius here points to the Old Testament and not to more recent Roman history and literature, see commentary n. 626.

<sup>131</sup> In the section on epic, I explore Prudentius' typological interpretation of the cross from a different point of view, more specifically as a response to a Vergilian re-formulation of Roman identity (pp. 61-63). Here, I deal with the way Prudentius engages with exegetical strategies rather than with the epic genre and its ideological ramifications.

## 8ii. Martyrological literature

By the time of Prudentius' era, a corpus of earlier martyrological texts had survived and had been circulated among Christian readers.<sup>132</sup> Early martyr texts vary in form and include everything from letters and purportedly official court proceedings of the martyr's trial to autobiographical accounts. It has now been generally acknowledged that the traditional distinction between *acta* and *passiones*, which depends on whether they focus on the interrogation of the martyr by the examining magistrate or the sufferings of the former, is too restrictive for so diverse a corpus of texts.<sup>133</sup> Prudentius was clearly inspired by such accounts. In *Pe.* 6, he appears to follow the *Passion of Fructuosus*.<sup>134</sup> For *Pe.* 13, it is possible, although not entirely obvious from the text, that he used the *Acta Proconsularia* of Cyprian.<sup>135</sup> In fact, the way the proconsul Galerius Maximus addresses the martyr in the *Acta* (*nequissimi criminis auctor et signifer*, 4.20) resembles that of Asclepiades in *Pe.* 10:

*tu causa mortis, tu malorum signifer.*  
*Ni fallor, aequum est ut, quod auctor inprobis*  
*tolerare multos compulisti, ...*

*Pe.* 10.90-92

The simple language of the martyr texts, which observe or are written in a way to resemble the structure and formulae of trial protocols, is worlds apart from Prudentius' Classicising poetry.<sup>136</sup> This alone would prevent us from attempting to identify any striking verbal allusions to martyr texts that have come down to us accumulating various layers of interpolation. Those texts are replete with conventional motifs, making it difficult to distinguish not only between historical and fictional elements but sometimes even one martyr from the other. Prudentius draws

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<sup>132</sup> Recent studies on early martyr texts include Bowersock (1995), Grig (2004), Barnes (2010) and Moss (2012).

<sup>133</sup> Grig (2004: 23-25).

<sup>134</sup> For comparative analyses, see Palmer (1989: 205-226), and Bilby (2012).

<sup>135</sup> Palmer (1989: 235-36). Petruccione (1990) argues that Prudentius did not use the *Acta proconsularia* to write *Pe.* 13 but that does not entail that he did not know it.

<sup>136</sup> Coles (1966), Bisbee (1988), Barnes (2010: 54-66).



from this repertoire of martyrological topoi in order to write his own poems on the martyrs.<sup>137</sup> The language of torture and, consequently, the tortures themselves that we find in *Pe.* 10 are typical of martyr accounts. The body of the martyr is stretched on the *eculeus* ('little horse', n. 109 s.v. *eculeo*), which is possibly paired with the *catasta* ('elevated platform', n. 466 s.v. *catasta*), while his flesh is torn by the 'claws/hooks' (*ungulae*: 73, 557, *unci*: 110, *fidiculae*: 550). Finally, other conventions that we come across in Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* include: i) the martyr's eagerness to suffer (n. 71-75); ii) the idea of the *militia Christi* (applied to the emperor, n. 428 s.v. *ut militent*); iii) the examining magistrate presented as a servant of the Devil (applied to the emperor, n. 36); and iv) the language of insanity to describe the judge (n. 111).

Many of these hagiographical topoi are of course taken from the sources regarding Romanus.<sup>138</sup> However, some of the motifs are not found in the prose passions (i and ii, see above), the sources or what appears to be closer to the sources that Prudentius had used. It is possible that these elements were contained in some lost accounts that transmitted the story of Romanus. However, it is more likely that Prudentius used common martyrological themes in addition to the sources regarding Romanus. This combination of martyrological topoi from within and outside the tradition of Romanus not only does not sound discordant in a poem dedicated to this specific martyr but instead underpins the purpose of the text. As in other martyr narratives, the purpose that these topoi serve, whether they come from the tradition of Romanus or martyrological literature in general, is to edify Prudentius' readers or listeners and, to the extent that their situation permits – given that Christianity is by Prudentius' time well established, and not under attack any more – to induce them to imitate the martyr's example, which is in turn is an *imitatio Christi*.

In conclusion, Prudentius' acquaintance with earlier martyrological literature surely had an impact on the composition of his *Hymn to Romanus*. Vocabulary, imagery and scenes typical to that type of literature instantiated attitudes that supported the edifying and paradigmatic character of the text.

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<sup>137</sup> The martyrological topoi in the *Peristephanon* are discussed in Petruccione (1985) and Prolingheuer (2008: 125-236).

<sup>138</sup> For the sources for Romanus, see section 5.

### 8iii. Apologetics

In *Pe.* 10 Prudentius follows the story of Romanus step by step, as it is known from the prose passions (including some key elements that are only found in this tradition: see pp. 36-38), and fills it, as we saw in the previous section, with common martyrological topoi. Furthermore, the Christian poet takes advantage of Romanus' speeches during his interrogation in order to insert into his poem apologetic arguments. The genre of Christian apologetics emerged in the Latin West in the second century AD, with authors including Tertullian and Minucius Felix.<sup>139</sup> This tradition continued with Cyprian, Lactantius, Arnobius and Firmicus Maternus.<sup>140</sup> From Prudentius' era, Ambrosiaster offers an example of prose works, in which apologetics figures prominently. We also possess three apologetic poems from the same period: the *Carmen contra paganos*, the *Carmen ad quendam Senatorem* falsely attributed to Cyprian, and the *Carmen ad Antonium* or *Carmen ultimum* falsely attributed to Paulinus of Nola.<sup>141</sup> Christian apologists attack pagan religion using arguments that grew to be highly conventional and which often revolve around its absurdity. Some of the main topoi repeated constantly in these works have to do both with the ceremonial part of pagan religion, and the background stories of the deities worshipped, involving themes like the incestuous and extra-marital relationships of the gods. To explain how pagan gods came to be, Christian apologists often resort to a euhemeristic interpretation, so called after Euhemerus of Messene.<sup>142</sup> According to this interpretation, the gods were originally mortals who were eventually deified.

Prudentius, drawing on this anti-pagan invective tradition, attacks paganism in *CS* and his *Hymn to Romanus*. The core of *CS* 1, more specifically lines 42-407, is an attack on pagan religion, where the poet revisits apologetic clichés. It seems likely that this part is an anti-pagan invective that Prudentius had written earlier and was later sandwiched between two parts of a panegyric on Theodosius (1-41, 408-621) to

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<sup>139</sup> Towards a definition of apologetics, see Price (1999: 105-7).

<sup>140</sup> For a history of Christian apologetics, see Dulles (1971).

<sup>141</sup> For a recent study on these poems, see Cameron (2011: 273-352).

<sup>142</sup> On the surviving work of Euhemerus and his influence, see Winiarczyk (2013). Regarding euhemeristic interpretation in Prudentius, see commentary n. 384.

be followed by an epilogue, in which Prudentius addresses Symmachus (622-57).<sup>143</sup> The prominent polemical element of *CS* underscores the affinity with Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*. The two texts often touch on the same subjects or use the same arguments.<sup>144</sup>

In *Pe.* 10, anti-pagan invective is a pronounced feature, absent – to a great degree at least – from the other sources for Romanus.<sup>145</sup> Asclepiades' attack on Christian doctrine is an opportunity that the poet uses in order to incorporate stock anti-pagan arguments. In *Pe.* 10, the anti-pagan invective material is mainly confined to two specific parts of the poem: lines 141-305 and 1007-90. Prudentius attacks certain cults including Cybele's (154-60, 196-200, 1006-50, 1061-85) and those of Egyptian deities (251-65). He ridicules mythological stories of gods, such as the love affairs of Jupiter and his disguises to conquer his male or female paramours (188-92, 201-7), Saturn's flight to Latium to find refuge from his son (206-10), (the pantomimic enactment of) Venus' lament for Adonis (228-29), the rape of Proserpina by Pluto (236-38), and Apollo's and Hercules' servitude (193-95, 239-40). All these are *loci classici* in Christian apologetics. As the majority of the apologists repeat the same stock arguments, it is almost impossible to pinpoint which apologists Prudentius could have used.

Although there is no conclusive evidence, it is likely that Prudentius knew Tertullian's *Adversus Marcionem* and *Adversus Praxean*, texts that he might have used for the composition of the *Hamartigenia* and *Apotheosis* respectively.<sup>146</sup> In *Pe.* 10, there might be a hint that he also knew Tertullian's *Apologeticum*. Reference to the prayer for the emperor, tied up with the idea of a peaceful world and expressed by the phrase *quietus orbis* in lines 417-20, is also found in Tertullian's *Apologeticum* 30.<sup>147</sup> If that is the case and Prudentius did know *Apologeticum*, then the spiritual offerings, mentioned in the same paragraph, that should be given as

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<sup>143</sup> See section Iiii.

<sup>144</sup> For a list of themes in common between *CS* and *Pe.* 10, see Appendix III.

<sup>145</sup> On this, see pp. 46-47.

<sup>146</sup> Lavarenne (1933: 564-65) and Smolak (1968: v-vi).

<sup>147</sup> Apart from Tertullian and Prudentius, *orbis quietus* occurs only in Jerome *Commentarii in prophetas minores CCL 76A In Zachariam* 1.1 in a different context.

sacrifice (*hostia*) to God instead of incense and Oriental perfumes might be one of the sources of inspiration for analogous ideas treated in *Pe.* 10.356-65.<sup>148</sup>

Another possible influence on Prudentius is Lactantius. Apart from superficial verbal nuances listed by earlier editors,<sup>149</sup> Gosserez (2001: 49-57) suggests that the description of the spiritual view in *De Opificio* influenced the Christian poet (n. 431-440). It is also possible that the Lucretian expression *interpres animi* (*DRN* 6.1149) found in 771 is channelled through Lactantius in addition to other possibilities (*De Opificio* 10.13, *Inst.* 6.18.6).

Apart from the apologetic works written in prose, as mentioned earlier, a number of anonymous anti-pagan invective poems from the second half of the fourth century have also come down to us (*CCP*, *CAS* and *CAA*). All these hexametric poems more or less repeat the same stock themes that we find in *Pe.* 10. The combination of features including a Classicising elevated style (or at least a style that aspires to be presented as such), abrupt transitions from one stock theme to the next and the element of satire featuring prominently serve to intensify the bond between them and Prudentius' hymn to Romanus. In fact, the two parts of *Pe.* 10, where the anti-pagan invective material is accumulated (141-305, 1007-90), if taken out of context, can form one or two poems or at least a core very similar to that of the three anonymous poems.<sup>150</sup> Overall, then, Prudentius injects Romanus' speeches with stock themes from the anti-pagan invective tradition. And, in so doing, he aligns himself with an apparent literary trend of his time in which poetry became a key method of transmitting Christian apologetics.

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<sup>148</sup> See commentary n. 356-365.

<sup>149</sup> Bergman (1926: 467-68) and Lavarenne (1933: 565-66).

<sup>150</sup> For the relationship of Prudentius with the three anonymous poems, see Poinssotte (1982).

## Classical literature

In the following three sub-sections, I deal with the Classical literary genres that Prudentius engages with in the *Hymn to Romanus*, and more specifically with epic, tragedy and satire. Although the list could have been considerably longer, I explore only those genres that feature most prominently in the poem. The mixture of different genres is a feature that characterises the poetry of Late Antiquity, something familiar from earlier periods and especially from Hellenistic and Augustan poetry.<sup>151</sup> In this light, *Pe.* 10 is a product of and, at the same time, testifies to the hybrid character of the poetry of the period of Late Antiquity with its rich intertextual and literary experiments that are closely related to previous literary traditions.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Fontaine (1977), Charlet (1988: 77-78, 81-82), (2008: 162) and Pollmann (2012). For the problem of defining genres in Late Antiquity, see Fontaine (1988), Herzog (2002: 203-33), Formisano (2007: 282-83), and Fuhrer (2013). For the mixture of genres in Prudentius, see Fontaine (1975).

<sup>152</sup> For an appreciation of the different textual and literary forms that coalesce in this poem, see section 12.

## 9i. Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* and Epic

Hexametric epic in Late Antiquity takes divergent directions. After Silius Italicus' *Punica* was followed by two centuries of silence, epic production re-emerges in the fourth century.<sup>153</sup> Claudian perpetuates the mythological epic tradition with his unfinished *De Raptu Proserpinae*. Later on in the late fifth century, also inspired by mythology are the *epyllia* of Dracontius (*Hylas* and *De Raptu Helenae*). Another epic development from Claudian onwards is the epic panegyric.<sup>154</sup> Furthermore, in the post-Constantinian age, having inherited its Classical past, epic embraces Christian ideology. This results in what can be called 'Christian epic', which appears in three main forms. At the beginning of the fourth century, Juvencus with his *Evangeliorum libri quattuor* versifies episodes found in the four gospels inaugurating the tradition of biblical epic. This tradition flourished between the early fifth and the mid-sixth century with Sedulius' *Carmen Paschale*, Arator's *De actibus Apostolorum*, Cyprianus Gallus' *Heptateuchos*, Claudius Marius Victorius' *Alethia* and Avitus' *De spiritalis historiae gestis*. Here, we should also mention Proba's *Cento Vergilianus de laudibus Christi*, a patchwork made of Vergil's verses retelling episodes from the Bible. A second form of the Christian epic production of Late Antiquity is the hagiographic epic. In the 470s Paulinus of Périgueux composed a poem on the life of Saint Martin of Tours based on Sulpicius Severus' prose *Life of Martin* and *Dialogues*, and was followed a century later by Venantius Fortunatus who wrote a poem about the same saint, also based on Sulpicius Severus.

In addition to the biblical and hagiographic epics, which are for the most part developments of a later era than the one I focus on in this commentary, we also have the allegorical epic represented by Prudentius' *Psychomachia*. In this hexametric work, Vices and Virtues are portrayed as female warriors who fight over or within the human soul. Hexameter is also used in Prudentius' two didactic poems, *Apotheosis* and *Hamartigenia*. In *Contra Symmachum*, the epic metre is used as a form for a work that for the most part appears to be a mixture of apologetics and

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<sup>153</sup> This section contains a very brief outline of the main trends found in the epic production of Late Antiquity. For more detailed discussions, see Pollmann (2001) and Trout (2005).

<sup>154</sup> For an overview of epic panegyric from the late fourth to the mid-fifth centuries, see Schindler (2009) and Gillett (2012).

panegyric. However, the metre, the poet's engagement with Vergil, and the representation of the *kleos* of the emperors, to whom Prudentius attributes the Christianisation of the empire, underscore this work's epic dimensions.<sup>155</sup> Finally, the poems of the *Peristephanon*, unlike the works of Prudentius mentioned in this section, are not written in hexameter but in various metres.<sup>156</sup> However, allusions to Vergil and the heroic status of the martyrs confirm a strong affinity with epic.<sup>157</sup>

Turning to Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*, I will first examine Prudentius' epic hypotexts and then further explore *Pe.* 10 and the epic genre. The epicist and author in general with whom Prudentius engages most often is Vergil.<sup>158</sup> Prudentius interacts with the Vergilian hypotext in various ways, as is revealed from the exploration of the allusions to Vergil in the part of the text I focus on. The portrayal of Romanus rushing into martyrdom (*inrumpit altum limen et praeconibus/ stupore mutis ipse tortorem trahit*, 74) alludes to that of Dido rushing into the house before throwing herself on to the pyre (*interiora domus inrumpit limina et altos*, *Aen.* 4.645). In both situations, the heroes rush into death. However, the death, which Dido is destined to meet in the *Aeneid*, is not the death that Romanus will find in Prudentius' poem. Although later in the poem Asclepiades orders that a pyre be prepared for the martyr (814-815, 824-825), Romanus, as he himself predicts, will not meet this destiny (853-855). Thus, Prudentius thwarts the expectations of the readers familiar with the Vergilian hypotext or rather creates challenges for them, anticipating or testing their alertness to the twists of the story of Romanus.

Another allusion is found in lines 412-414, in which Asclepiades' reference to the foundation of Rome echoes Anchises' prophecy of the foundation of Rome in *Aen.* 6.777-83:

<i>divum favore cum puer Mavortius</i>	<i>quin et avo comitem sese Mavortius addet</i>
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<sup>155</sup> For Vergilian elements in *CS*, see Döpp (1988).

<sup>156</sup> For a list of the various metres used in the *Peristephanon*, see Appendix I.

<sup>157</sup> As Mastrangelo (2008: 57) puts it: 'Even though, technically, *Peristephanon* is not epic, it is infused with the definitive aspect of epic poetry, heroes, the literary purpose of which is the reader's individual and national self-identity'. Analogies with Vergilian epic, and the representation of the heroic status of the martyrs of the *Peristephanon* have occupied a lot of recent scholarship. See Castelli (1996) for *Pe.* 3, Witke (2004) for *Pe.* 11, and O'Hogan (2014) for *Pe.* 9.

<sup>158</sup> Two doctoral dissertations from the first half of the twentieth century are dedicated to detecting and collecting Vergilian allusions and *loci similes* in Prudentius: Mahoney (1934) and Schwen (1937). A useful list of allusions to Vergil is given in Lühken (2002: 300-19).

<p><i>fundaret arcem septicollem Romulus? quod Roma pollet auspicato condita,</i></p> <p><i>Pe.</i> 10.412-14</p>	<p><i>Romulus, Assaraci quem sanguinis Ilia mater educet. Viden, ut geminae stant vertice cristae et pater ipse suo superum iam signat honore? en huius, nate, auspiciis illa incluta Roma imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo, septemque una sibi muro circumdabit arces.</i></p> <p><i>Aen.</i> 6.777-83</p>
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The passage from *Pe.* 10, which alludes to *Aen.* 6.777-83, is part of Asclepiades' argument that Rome and her gods are far more ancient than the Christian doctrine. To this argument the martyr gives a twofold reply almost two hundred lines later in the text (611-635). Firstly, the martyr rejects the alleged antiquity of Rome and her gods (611-20) by pointing out that there were many empires before Rome that now no longer exist. Secondly, he maintains the temporal priority of Christian religion over all others by offering a typological interpretation of the cross, which was created before Rome and which dates back to the creation of the world (621-35).<sup>159</sup> Prudentius attacks Vergilian Rome, a Rome, in his eyes, founded upon and replete with associations of paganism. This points to broader affinity between the *Aeneid* and *Pe.* 10. The construction of notions of Roman identity is one of the chief concerns of Vergil's epic.<sup>160</sup> Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* displays the same penchant.<sup>161</sup> In *Pe.* 10, as I discuss in a previous section (pp. 39-40), Prudentius offers a Romanised version of the martyr's story. The absence of reference to Antioch in combination with the martyr's name and the attack on ceremonies that take place or are associated with the city of Rome – note that attacks on such ceremonies are absent from other sources for Romanus – indicate Prudentius' Roman focus in this poem. Furthermore, Romanus' speeches and the example he sets with his martyrdom advocate Christianity. As Vergil's epic creates notions of Roman identity, Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* also constructs and promotes a Roman self. However, the most essential part of the Roman self for Prudentius, as manifested

<sup>159</sup> For Prudentius' typology, see pp. 52-53 and commentary n. 621-635.

<sup>160</sup> On Roman identity and the *Aeneid*, see Toll (1997) and Syed (2005).

<sup>161</sup> For bibliographical references on Prudentius' Christian and Roman patriotism, see n. 96.



from the martyr's speeches and his behaviour, is Christianity. To turn back to the Vergilian hypotext, Prudentius portrays Asclepiades, with his reference to Vergil's description of the foundation of Rome (*Pe.* 10.412-14 ~ *Aen.* 6.777-83), as reasserting a characteristic passage in Vergil's formulation of Roman-ness. To this defining feature of old Rome, Romanus opposes (through a typological interpretation of the cross in lines 621-635), the foundation of Christianity, which is the essence of the Roman Christian identity.

In addition to Vergil, in *Pe.* 10 Prudentius engages with other Classical epicists. Lucan and Prudentius share a similar predilection for imagery of violence. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the Christian poet varies the grotesque scenes of the *Bellum Civile* in order to describe his martyrs' sufferings.<sup>162</sup> In *Pe.* 10.64, the voluntary death of the Christians of Antioch might echo the sacrifice of Volteius, captain of a Caesarian raft (*Bellum Civile* 4.541).<sup>163</sup> More suggestive of Prudentius' penchant for descriptions of violence is the portrayal of Romanus' tortures, where his flesh is removed exposing his white bones (*et iam relectis pectus albet ossibus*, 455). This image evokes a passage from Lucan, where the wound of the soldier Sabellus caused by a snake is described in a similar way (9.768: *ossa retexit*).<sup>164</sup> Less significant than that of Lucan appears to be Prudentius' interaction with Statius.<sup>165</sup> Apart from the image of the 'rain of blood' in *Pe.* 10.1032 (also used in *Pe.* 12.10), which might look back to the description of the dead Achemorus in *Thebaid* 5.598, Hoffmann (2001) suggests mainly thematic similarities with lines 61-75, where the Christians of Antioch and Romanus are presented as eager to die, and two passages from *Thebaid* 12, in which Antigone and Argia are described in an analogous way.<sup>166</sup>

Aside from the intertextual indebtedness to Classical epicists, Prudentius has also adopted various generic devices and themes that reveal a solid relationship with epic. The epic orientation is felt right from the beginning of the poem. Prudentius starts off with an invocation to Romanus to enable him to tell the martyr's story. Further on, the poet reveals that ultimately Christ will be the authority to speak

<sup>162</sup> For Lucan and Prudentius, see Sixt (1892) and Palmer (1989: 184-88).

<sup>163</sup> For more on this, see commentary n. *ad loc.*

<sup>164</sup> In Prudentius' text the allusion to Lucan is combined with the image of the 'whitened bones' that often appears in Classical literature. See commentary n. 455 s.v. *albet ossibus*. For further less striking similarities between *Pe.* 10 and Lucan, see n. 10, and *Pe.* 10.880 ~ *Bellum Civile* 2.177-78.

<sup>165</sup> Palmer (1989: 193-97).

<sup>166</sup> For more details on the parallelism between the two situations, see commentary n. *ad loc.*

through Prudentius (1-30). This invocation urges us to look back at the Homeric invocations to the Muses or Apollo for poetic inspiration inherited through Vergil and his successors. In the Christian poets of Prudentius' milieu, these exordial topoi are replaced by invocations to God or the saints.<sup>167</sup> The adjustment of a Classical topos to the poet's Christian ideology, and here more specifically to the situation of a poem on Romanus, does not mark a change or deviation from Classical epic poems but rather shows how epic operates in a Christianised context.

Another striking epic device that we come across in Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* is the catalogue of God's creations in lines 326-35.<sup>168</sup> Catalogues are a common narrative device in ancient epic since Homer, and came to Prudentius by way of the Hellenistic and Roman epic poets. Their length can vary between a couple of verses and hundreds of lines. The length of Prudentius' catalogue in *Pe.* 10 (10 verses) is almost the same as the catalogue of the Nereids in *Il.* 18.39-49. Epic catalogues usually record a list of ships, armies or names. In *Pe.* 10, Prudentius provides a catalogue of God's creations. This shift is natural, since the Christian poet does not mean to praise the human power but instead the glory of God. Enumeration is not the only characteristic of the catalogue that points to the epic genre. What is even more suggestive is the grandeur of the situation, the fact that the author undertakes the task of describing the creation of the universe: indeed, there can be no task more ambitious and all-encompassing, and in other words, more epic – regardless of the length – than trying to give an outline of the creation of the world.

Finally, in addition to these characteristic epic devices, including the invocation and the catalogue, what strengthens this poem's epic associations is the heroic status of the martyr. Romanus is the only martyr in Prudentius' oeuvre labelled as *heros* (*Romanus, acris heros excellentiae: 52, 457*).<sup>169</sup> Furthermore, the martyr is presented as the leader of the people of the city in which his martyrdom takes place (*plebis rebellis esse Romanum ducem: 62*). Prudentius' hexameter *Psychomachia* is more commonly thought to be his contribution to the development of the epic genre. Yet unlike Vergil, who singles Aeneas out as his main protagonist, the *Psychomachia* accommodates a plethora of characters. Prudentius' oeuvre,

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<sup>167</sup> See pp. 95-96.

<sup>168</sup> For epic catalogues in Prudentius and their relationship to Vergil's text, see Lühken (2002: 82-88).

<sup>169</sup> See commentary n. 52.

however, does not lack a hero who takes up the leading role and Romanus can be considered a Christian counterpart of Aeneas. Like Aeneas, Romanus is a leader who tries to establish a new world order for the people under his aegis. In both cases, the end of each man is predefined from the beginning of their mission, giving them honour and immortality, and guaranteeing their veneration after death. In Aeneas, as Philip Hardie (1993: 4) argues, we have the first example of the ‘synecdochic hero’: ‘the individual who stands for the totality of his people present and future, part for whole’. In an analogous way, in *Pe.* 10, Romanus, as a representative of the Christian flock (of Antioch), fights his spiritual battle and offers himself as a sacrifice for all the Christians of the city (68, 91-95).<sup>170</sup> Finally, Romanus, portrayed as a Roman hero, embodies concerns inherent in Vergil’s epic. As discussed earlier in this section, Prudentius in *Pe.* 10, like Vergil in the *Aeneid*, constructs and promotes notions of Roman identity. The quintessential part of Prudentius’ ideal Roman is being Christian. The task of defending the Christian doctrine and attack pagan Rome, in other words, the task to advocate a Roman Christian identity, is given to Romanus, a martyr whose name indicates Roman nationality.<sup>171</sup> Prudentius turns Romanus from Caesarea, martyred in Antioch, into a Roman epic hero.

Having explored the strong affinity between *Pe.* 10 and the epic genre, we can now turn back to the development of Christian epic poetry in Late Antiquity and attempt to find the place of the *Hymn to Romanus* in this literature. *Pe.* 10 appears to be a work of transition in the evolution of the epic genre in Late Antiquity. From the mythological and historical epic poems through to the versification of the gospels by Juvencus and Proba we arrive at Prudentius’ time. *Pe.* 10 gives us a foretaste of new tensions in late antique epic that will appear later with the hagiographical epic (see above). At the beginning of his hagiographic epic poem the *Vita Sancti Martini*, Fortunatus places himself in a tradition of Christian epicists, among whom is Prudentius:

*martyribusque piis sacra haec donaria mittens,  
prudens prudenter Prudentius immolat actus.*

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<sup>170</sup> Cf. similar arguments for Eulalia in Castelli (1996).

<sup>171</sup> On the martyr’s name evoking Rome, see p. 40.

*Vita Sancti Martini* 1.18-19

The reference to Prudentius here is in relation to his poems about the martyrs and not, as one might expect judging purely by metre, to his *Psychomachia*. One of Prudentius' poems on the martyrs, engaging in various ways with the epic tradition, as we have seen, is *Pe.* 10. Allusions to earlier epicists and the use of conventional epic topoi underline the poem's associations with that genre. Its protagonist, Romanus, is portrayed as a supernatural figure, a man larger than life, a hero of epic dimensions, to whom the audience can look up.

## 9ii. Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* and Tragedy

It has been repeatedly pointed out that *Pe.* 10 bears some resemblance to a tragedy.<sup>172</sup> In this section, after exploring the intertextual links between *Pe.* 10 and Seneca's tragedies, I will examine structural, thematic and conventional aspects of the poem that demonstrate its closeness to a tragedy.

Verbal parallels between Prudentius and Seneca have been collected by Weyman (1891) and Sixt (1892).<sup>173</sup> In *Pe.* 10, as in the rest of the collection, there are no striking verbal similarities between the two poets. Sixt (1892: 504) has noted that there is a parallel between Seneca's *Phoenissae* (*utinam quidem rescindere haec quirem vias,/ manibusque adactis omne qua voces **meant***, 226-227) and *Pe.* 10 (*vox ... extingui nequit/ nec si recisis palpitet **meatibus***, 9-10). In both texts, the pathway imagery is used to describe the throat with emphasis on the impossibility of these pathways being cut off. However, it would be far-fetched to see an allusion here as not only are there no striking verbal similarities but also there is no further analogy in terms of context. It is also unlikely that Prudentius' intended to defamiliarise the hypotext from its original context thus inviting an active participation on behalf of the reader, as the passage from *Pe.* 10 does not have anything recognisably Senecan. More suggestive appears to be Prudentius' description of the judge's unrestrained anger (*nec vim domare **mentis effrenae** potest*: 966) which evokes the Nurse's plea to Phaedra to suppress her uncontrollable passion (*Moderare, alumna, **mentis effrenae** impetus*: 255). Apart from the expression *mentis effrenae*, Prudentius' *domare* appears to correspond to Seneca's *moderare*. Furthermore, the line following 966 in *Pe.* 10 gives us another hint: *nec quo furoris tela vertat invenit. Furor* characterises Asclepiades throughout *Pe.* 10 (171, 175, 392, 547, 679, 811, 867, 967, 1003),<sup>174</sup> but hereafter the allusion to Seneca serves as a keyword pointing to Phaedra, a notoriously *furiosa* heroine (*Phaedra* 179-80, 184).<sup>175</sup> This leads us to a greater thematic affinity between the two texts. The contrast between *furor* and *ratio*,

<sup>172</sup> Ludwig (1977: 336-37), Henke (1985) and Fux (2005).

<sup>173</sup> For Seneca and the *Peristephanon* poems, see Palmer (1989: 188-93).

<sup>174</sup> On the insanity of the persecutor in the *Peristephanon*, see Opelt (1967: 250-51) and Petruccione (1985: 125-30).

<sup>175</sup> On *furor* in Seneca's *Phaedra* see e.g. Mayer (2002: 42-44).

is a recurrent theme in Seneca's tragedy and also permeates Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* (cf. commentary n. 175).<sup>176</sup>

Having briefly examined Prudentius' allusions to Seneca's tragedies in his *Hymn to Romanus*, we shall turn to a broader exploration of the affinity between Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* and the tragic genre. Firstly, it would be useful to survey the Christian attitude toward drama in Prudentius' time, which along with the evidence provided by the text itself, will enable us to conceive how a poem on a martyr's passion could be read as a tragedy.

Not only the tragic genre but every facet of theatrical performance along with every kind of public spectacle was vehemently attacked by Christian authors.<sup>177</sup> Ambrose states characteristically: *vanitas circus est, quia nihil prodest; vana est equorum velocitas, quia mendax ad salutem est; vanitas theatrum est, vanitas ludus omnis*; (*Fuga Saec.* 1.4). This Christian campaign against 'pagan' spectacles starts more systematically with works including Tertullian's *De spectaculis* and goes on until Prudentius' time with the polemics of authors such as John Chrysostom and Augustine. Christian attacks on theatrical performances often revolve around the corrupting nature of these spectacles and the immorality of the actors and actresses, elements also inherent in non-Christian criticism against theatre. Furthermore, Christian writers despised public spectacles because of their association with pagan religion (see e.g. Novatian *De Spectaculis* 4: *Idolatria ... ludorum omnium mater est*).

Prudentius shares the same antipathy towards public performances. In *CS* 1.379-407, he opposes the gladiatorial spectacles, which he portrays as human sacrifices to Jupiter Infernalis, Jupiter Latiaris and to the Di Manes, whereas in *CS* 2.1090-129 he urges Honorius to abolish these kind of spectacles. The poet professes that in the horse races it is the people who watch the spectacle who are to blame, not the horses *per se* (*Ham.* 361-64). The same mob is responsible for the existence of other sorts of spectacles such as the acrobats and the *bestiarii* (*Ham.* 366-74). In *Ham.* 308-11, the poet dismisses the eunuchs who dance in the theatre. In *CS* 2.643-48, Symmachus, a master in the art of lying, is compared to an actor in a tragedy

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<sup>176</sup> Ludwig (1977: 336).

<sup>177</sup> On Christian writers' attitudes towards theatre, see Jürgens (1972), Weismann (1972), Leyerle (2001: 13-74) and Webb (2008: 197-216, *et passim*).

(*tragicus cantor*) who covers his face with a wooden mask and utters some great wickedness. This renouncement of public spectacles – theatrical performances in particular – occurs also in *Pe.* 10. Romanus sneers at the spectacles of pantomime that present the re-enactment of Jupiter’s disguises in order to seduce his paramours, or a prostitute who plays Venus mourning for Adonis (221-30). But even if tragedy, as part of the same group of spectacles, is not approved of by Christian writers, the *Hymn to Romanus* contains features that evoke this genre.

*Pe.* 10, composed in 1,140 verses, is the ideal length for a tragic work. Its metre, the iambic trimeter, is commonly used in Greek and Roman tragedies. Apart from the form, there are further features that point to tragedy. The poet calls Romanus’ martyrdom a tragedy (*tragoedia*, v. 1113) when he talks about the scrolls containing the martyr’s *passio* that will be sent to the emperor. In *Pe.* 10.462-65, we are informed about the advent of an audience that has come to watch Romanus’ martyrdom. Later on (706-10), the same spectators sympathise with the child martyr, something which makes them resemble a tragic chorus. Finally, Romanus’ rescue from the fire can be regarded as a tragic feature, with the Christian God resembling the common tragic trope of the *deus ex machina*.

Exploring the tragic elements of this hymn, Fux (2005) argues that *Pe.* 10 could be thought of as a tragedy in five acts along with a prologue and an epilogue (1-70 and 1111-140 respectively).<sup>178</sup> These acts adhere to a rule of Classical tragedy according to which only up to three speaking characters can coexist in any given scene. Moreover, the decapitation of the child happens far away from the *agora* and consequently away from the eyes of the spectators. Here, according to Fux, Prudentius is aligned with the dictates of *Ars Poetica* (185): *ne pueros coram populo Medea trucidet*.

Fux (2005: 93-94) concludes that *Pe.* 10 could not be performed as a tragedy. The almost absolute monopoly of Romanus as a speaker in the work (his speeches occupy 80% of the total number of lines spoken in direct discourse), the absence of proper dialogue (sometimes we have long harangues against paganism and no response) and the fact that responses and tragic conventions (such as the sympathy of the chorus in lines 706-10 and the narration of the messenger at 866-67) are

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<sup>178</sup> The five acts are vv. 71-390, 391-545, 549-660, 661-845, and 846-1110 respectively.

expressed in indirect speech make it impossible for the text to be presented as a real play. Finally, Fux (2005: 94) underlines the fact that it is impossible to solve problems relating to the scenography of the work.<sup>179</sup>

Yet even though a real play presented before the eyes of an audience is not what the Christians of Late Antiquity would expect for the *Hymn to Romanus, Pe. 10* could still give them the pleasure of a Christian equivalent of tragedy. In Late Antiquity, martyr texts in a way replaced theatrical performances.<sup>180</sup> Christian writers' attacks on the theatre suggest that members of the Christian congregation would still go to and enjoy these kinds of spectacles. Therefore, given that Christians were fond of these performances, 'the Church was not slow to develop its own spectacular alternatives'.<sup>181</sup> These alternatives were the stories of the martyrs. Such narrations evoke emotions similar to those caused by tragedy but at the same time strengthen the faith of the Christian flock. Reading or listening to a *passio* aims at visualising what the martyr undertook during their persecution and torture. Referring to the story of the Maccabean brothers, Augustine reveals this optical relationship in a sermon he preached in Bulla Regia in 399:

Modo spectavimus magnum certamen septem fratrum et matris illorum. Quale certamen, fratres mei, si noverunt mentes nostrae spectare! Comparete huic sancto **spectaculo** voluptates et delicias theatrorum! Ibi oculi inquinantur, hic corda mundantur; hic laudabilis est spectator, si fuerit imitator, ibi autem et spectator turpis est, et imitator infamis. **Denique amo martyres, specto martyres: quando leguntur passiones martyrum, specto.**

Augustine *Serm.* 301A.7

Augustine invites his congregation to compare the pleasure of theatrical performances (*voluptates et delicias theatrorum*) to the holy spectacle (*sancto spectaculo*). *Sanctum spectaculum* refers to the narration of the sufferings of the

<sup>179</sup> A summary of Fux's arguments about the resemblance of *Pe. 10* to a tragedy can also be found in his commentaries (2003: 52-53) and (2013: 238-40).

<sup>180</sup> For a reading of martyr texts as an alternative 'spiritual' theatre, see Grig (2002: 34-53) and Cox Miller (2009: 85-90).

<sup>181</sup> Grig (2002: 34).



Maccabean brothers that a faithful Christian visualises. This mental realisation of the Maccabean brothers' torture is described as a spectacle (*spectaculum*) and is opposed to secular theatre. In other words, it constitutes a theatrical alternative which, unlike secular theatre, Christians are encouraged to watch. The reader or listener gets emotionally involved and manages to spectate the narrated *martyrium*. The ultimate goal for the Christian is not to receive the words of the narration passively but to imitate the martyr's example (*fuert imitator*). However, in order for one to be able to spectate the martyrdoms that are being read (out), one requires a different mode of viewing than that employed for theatrical performances. In the case of the holy spectacle that the martyrs' passions constitute, one spectates with the eyes of the heart **or** faith, whereas in secular theatre one relies on a mode of viewing that is basically carnal. Thus, Augustine starts off a *Sermon* on Vincent (274.1, preached in c. 410) by stating that: *Magnum spectaculum spectavimus oculis fidei, martyrem sanctum Vincentium ubique vincentem*.<sup>182</sup> Augustine repeatedly refers to the martyrdoms as *spectacula*.<sup>183</sup> Romanus' interrogation is referred to as *spectaculum* twice (*Pe.* 10.86 and 463). In *Pe.* 701, the word *spectaculum* characterises the sufferings of the secondary martyr, whose martyrdom is compared to that of the Maccabean brothers by his mother (716-90). In line 86, it is the judge who describes Romanus' future punishment by death as *spectaculum*, whereas in *Pe.* 10.463 it is the martyr himself who attributes this characterisation to his torture. Two lines above, he addresses his audience with the words: *Audite cuncti* ('hear you all'). Thus, by envisaging Romanus' martyrdom, the readers or listeners of this poem become part of the audience, which less than a century earlier had actually experienced it (in Antioch). This address (*Audite cuncti*) is followed by an exhortation to salvation and is consequently directed not only to the audience within the text but also and most importantly to the people who read or listen to it and have become more intimately involved by experiencing this speech *tamquam in conspectu*.

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<sup>182</sup> For further examples where Augustine holds that the martyrs' passions are viewed through the eyes of the heart/ faith, see *Serm.* 280.2: *illi viderunt oculis carnis, quod cordis immanitati refunderent: nos aspiciamus oculis cordis, quod illis ereptum est, ne viderent* (contrasting the actual spectators of the sufferings of Perpetua and Felicitas to his congregation), and 301.1: *magnum spectaculum positum est ante oculos fidei nostrae* (on the Maccabean brothers).

<sup>183</sup> See e.g. *Serm.* 277A.1, 301.1 and *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus* 7.6.

Thus *Pe.* 10 cannot be considered a tragedy *stricto sensu* but instead as a *Lesedrama*.<sup>184</sup> As a martyrdom narrative, it is the Christian alternative to a theatrical performance. By calling Romanus' persecution a *spectaculum*, Prudentius urges his readers to picture the narrated *acta*. Through reading this poem the readers sympathised and became emotionally involved with the sufferings of Romanus and those of the child martyr. In a way, *Pe.* 10 gets as close as possible to a Christian equivalent to classical tragedy.<sup>185</sup> The psychological journey that the readers of the *Hymn to Romanus* have gone through, to the extent that the different circumstances permit, bears a resemblance to the one the audience of tragedy underwent, as signalled by Aristotle in his definition of the genre. At the end of *Pe.* 10, the events of the martyrdom written down in scrolls to be sent to the emperor are called a *tragoedia*. Up to that point, the readers or listeners have followed the representation of a serious and complete action (μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας και τελείας) through pity and fear (δι' ἐλέου και φόβου), which, ultimately, led them to experience the κάθαρσις of such emotions.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Ludwig (1977: 336). The concept of the *Lesedrama* is not something novel. Since the publication of Zwierlein's book (1966) arguing that Seneca's tragedies were composed for recitation and not for performance, there has been a debate as to whether these tragedies were destined to be read privately, recited or performed. For an overview of the debate, see Liapis, Panagiotakis & Harrison (2013: 29-31).

<sup>185</sup> On the differences in Christian and classical worldview and their implications regarding the genre of tragedy, see Pollmann (1997, reprinted in English in 2017).

<sup>186</sup> Aristotle *Poetics* 1447a. For a comprehensive discussion of Aristotelean *mimesis*, see Halliwell (2002: 151-233).

### 9iii. Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* and Satire

Form, and more specifically metre, can be an important generic indicator. As discussed in the previous section, the iambic trimeter, in which *Pe.* 10 is written, can point to tragedy. Nevertheless, the sort of poetry for which this metre was invented in archaic Greece is the scoptic poetry of *iambos* with representatives including Archilochus and Hipponax.<sup>187</sup> A defining feature of this poetry is invective. In Latin poetry, the treatment of themes from archaic *iambos*, and expressed in iambic trimeters, is more prominent in Catullus's poems (52, and in choliambics, i.e. iambic trimeter with a long penultimate syllable of the final metrum: 8, 22, 31, 37, 39, 44, 59, 60) and Horace's *Epodes*.<sup>188</sup> Horace distinguishes between his satires and his *Epodes*, a work closer in terms of genre to archaic *iambos*, in which he also uses iambic trimeter (often in combination with other metres).<sup>189</sup> In Late Antiquity, the appropriation or continuation of the genre of *iambos* is more felt in Greek poetry with representatives such as Gregory of Nazianzus and Palladas.<sup>190</sup> In the extant Latin poetry, in addition to Catullus and Horace, the features of *iambos* in form and content, that is metre and themes, become part of comedy and satire. Lucilius, who seems to inaugurate the tradition of Roman satire being written in hexameter, included iambic trimeters in his books 28 and 29. Persius used choliambics in his prologue. As both invective and iambics are characteristics associated more or less closely with the cognate genres of *iambos* and satire, Prudentius' choice to write his *Hymn to Romanus* in iambic trimeter, a poem of which invective is a very prominent feature, appears as very suitable (see section 8iii). Having discussed how metre points to the invective of *iambos* and satire, we can now turn to the appropriation of hexameter satire in late antique literature and then more specifically on Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus*.

Roman satire does not die with Juvenal; it finds its way into the period of Late Antiquity. Although it is a fact that Latin hexameter satire as in the example of

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<sup>187</sup> For a similar discussion about metre as a generic indicator in the iambic trimeters of the *Praefatio* of the *Hamartigenia*, see Dykes (2011: 196-203).

<sup>188</sup> For a recent study on iambic poetry in the Roman Empire, see Hawkins (2014).

<sup>189</sup> See Watson (2003: 45-46).

<sup>190</sup> For a survey of late antique *iambos* and iambics, see Agosti (2001).

Persius, Horace and Juvenal has not come down to us from that period,<sup>191</sup> satirical writing permeated other genres. This kind of writing does survive and prospered especially during the second half of the fourth century, Prudentius' time.<sup>192</sup> Satirical elements were infused into the texts of Christian authors such as Jerome and Paulinus of Nola who either used Roman satirists such as Juvenal and Persius by echoing their texts (sometimes even mentioning them by name) or adopted a satirical attitude in their attacks.<sup>193</sup> Ammianus provides two satirical excursuses on the vices of the Roman upper and lower classes (14.6, 28.4).<sup>194</sup> Ausonius mentions Juvenal by name and shares a thematic affinity with the Roman satirist.<sup>195</sup> Claudian in his two books of *In Eutropium* reviles the eunuch Eutropius using Juvenal's phrases and imagery.<sup>196</sup> Prudentius' attacks also reveal a penchant for satire, often engaging with Juvenal.<sup>197</sup>

Juvenal was a satirist whose poems gained significant popularity in the late fourth century.<sup>198</sup> After two centuries of near silence, his poems were rediscovered, echoed and quoted. Verbal similarities reveal that Prudentius had read and digested Juvenal's technique and transferred it to his poems after making the necessary modifications.<sup>199</sup> The Christian poet uses satirical elements in the works in which he ardently rails against paganism; unsurprisingly, therefore, satire features prominently in the *Hamartigenia*, the *Apotheosis*, the two books of *CS*, and *Pe. 2*.<sup>200</sup> Accordingly, *Pe. 10*, a poem largely containing polemics against Roman religion, also abounds in satiric moments, with Prudentius (through Romanus) frequently alluding to Juvenal or adopting a tone comparable to that of the Roman satirist in debunking Roman religious beliefs and ceremonies.

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<sup>191</sup> There are passages suggesting that Latin hexameter satire was still being written during that period: Ausonius *Ep.* 11.1-10 and Rutulius Namatianus *De reditu suo* 1.603-6.

<sup>192</sup> For a comprehensive selection of post-Juvenalian satirical writing, see Weston (1915).

<sup>193</sup> Shanzer (2006: 188): 'In a sense the church fathers became the new satirists'. For Jerome as a satirist, see Wiesen (1964).

<sup>194</sup> Rees (1999), Kelly (2008: 166-7), and Sogno (2012: 372-77).

<sup>195</sup> Sosin (1999).

<sup>196</sup> Long (1996).

<sup>197</sup> Highet (1954: 184): 'He (sc. Prudentius) admired Juvenal chiefly for his ability to coin phrases, and adapted many of the best'.

<sup>198</sup> Highet (1954: 180-90), Cameron (1964) and Sogno (2012).

<sup>199</sup> For Prudentius and Juvenal, see Stella Marie (1962), Palmer (1989: 180-84), Martín Rodríguez (1997) and Gnilka (2001: 230-62). For lists of verbal similarities between the two poets, see Bergman (1926: 455-69) and Lavarenne (1933: 582-84). Alexandre (2009) explores the role of satire in Prudentius' *CS* as well as three anonymous anti-pagan invective poems (*CCP*, *CAS* and *CAA*).

<sup>200</sup> Stella Marie (1962: 42).

It is likely that Prudentius chose to echo Juvenal in some of his most satirical moments because he found common ground with him. Juvenal's tendency to satirise and rationalise aspects of Roman religion is probably what appealed to Prudentius the most. Here it should be pointed out that, although this criticism of Roman religion can be detected in both poets, it is part of a different strategy for these two authors. Juvenal mocks the *vitia* of Roman society, among which are some aspects of Roman religion, whereas Prudentius engages in a systematic attack against pagan religion. All the same, if we compare passages from Juvenal and Prudentius, we will see that they both doubt the existence of gods (Juv. 2.152 ~ *Pe.* 10.675, see below), satirise their multiplicity (Juv. 13.46-49 ~ *Pe.* 10.177, 675) and debunk Roman religious practices such as the *lavatio* of the Magna Mater (Juv. 2.110-16, 6. 511-16 ~ *Pe.* 10.151-60) and the Lupercalia (Juv. 2.142 ~ *Pe.* 10.161-65).<sup>201</sup>

Having discussed Prudentius' common ground with Juvenal, which possibly accounts for his frequent recourse to the Roman satirist, we can now survey Juvenalian hypotexts in *Pe.* 10. In this poem, Prudentius for the most part engages with the context of the hypotext. So, not only does he verbally echo Juvenal but he also has the same or an analogous satirical target. For example, Prudentius expresses in a way similar to that of Juvenal his amazement at people who give credence to religious beliefs that even children do not believe in:<sup>202</sup>

*Esse aliquid manes et subterranea regna,  
Cocytum et Stygio ranas in gurgite nigras,  
atque una transire vadum tot milia cumba  
nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum aere lavantur.*

Juvenal 2.149-52

*genera deorum multa nec pueri putant.*

*Pe.* 10.675

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<sup>201</sup> On the Magna Mater and the Lupercalia, see commentary n. 154-160 and 161-165.

<sup>202</sup> In this section, I explore Prudentius' appropriation of satire in *Pe.* 10, so inevitably I focus on Juvenalian intertexts. Nonetheless, for the majority of the allusions which will be discussed here, Prudentius seems to allude to Juvenal in addition to other possibilities (see commentary nn. 141-145, 148, 251-265, 266-295 and 299-300). The combination of two types of intertexts in Prudentius' attacks, Juvenal and Christian apologetics, is an issue that deserves closer attention and I plan to explore it in a separate publication.

In the first passage, Juvenal mocks the existence of the underworld as described in the mythological tradition with Cocytus, Styx and hordes of the dead crossing the water in Charon's boat.<sup>203</sup> The passage from Prudentius is part of the child martyr's answer to Romanus' question on whether it is reasonable to worship the Christian God or *mille formarum deos* (668-70). Prudentius borrows Juvenal's contempt and transfers it to a target which, as the target of Juvenal, has to do with ludicrous beliefs in the context of Roman religion. The idea that there are certain beliefs that even children refuse to believe is in line with the satirical tone Prudentius uses in order to attack pagan religion. Apart from the analogous target and the dismissive character of Juvenal's passage, what might have urged Prudentius to allude to it is that in his text it is actually a statement uttered *by a child*. That gives an extra edge to Prudentius' satire, which to an extent appears to be an attempt to out-satirise Juvenal.

Another allusion, where Prudentius refers back to the context of the hypotext, appears in the way he treats animal-like Egyptian deities recalling the beginning of Juvenal's *Sat.* 15:

*Quis nescit, Volusi Bithynice, qualia demens  
Aegyptos portenta colat? **Crocodilon** adorat  
pars haec, illa pavet saturam serpentibus **ibin**.  
effigies sacri nitet aurea **cercopitheci**,*

...

*oppida tota **canem** venerantur, nemo Dianam.*

Juvenal 15.1-4, 8

*Venerem precaris, conprecare et **simiam**.  
placet sacratus aspis Aesculapii,  
**crocodillus, ibis et canis** cur displicent?*

*Pe.* 10.256-58

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<sup>203</sup> Cf. Seneca *Ep.* 24.18 *nemo tam puer est ut Cerberum timeat.*

Juvenal starts Satire 15 by inviting his addressee to join in his astonishment at Egyptian religious beliefs that equate animals with gods. In his *Hymn to Romanus*, Prudentius wonders why, since people have deified Aesculapius' snake, they do not consider the animals venerated in Egypt as gods. The Christian poet gives a selection of the animals mentioned in Juvenal (crocodile, ibis, ape and dog). They both stress the absurdity and ludicrousness inherent in the veneration of animal-like gods. Of course, attacks on Egyptian deities are not uncommon in Christian and secular authors alike (see commentary n. 251-265). However, the relationship between the two texts (*Sat.* 15 and *Pe.* 10) becomes stronger if we consider that the next satirical target is also the same. In both texts, after attacking the animal-like gods, the two poets deride plant-like deities:

*Porum et caepe nefas violare et frangere morsu;  
o sanctas gentes quibus haec nascuntur in hortis  
numina!*

Juvenal 15.9-11

*aut unde maior esse maiestas focis  
quam nata in hortis sarculatis creditur?  
si numen ollis, numen et porris inest.*

*Pe.* 10.263-65

While Juvenal mocks Egyptian beliefs equating plants or vegetables with gods, Romanus asks why people who venerate various inanimate objects do not worship what grows in their gardens.<sup>204</sup> The image of vegetables growing in someone's garden and being elevated to the status of gods fits perfectly in Prudentius' endeavour to show the ridiculousness of Egyptian religion, which seems to be not that different from Roman religion.<sup>205</sup>

Further allusions to Juvenal come from *Satire* 10. This text is concerned with the vanity of the things that people pray for (power, wealth, beauty, etc.), which

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<sup>204</sup> Another passage of Prudentius that mocks the veneration of vegetables and evokes Juvenal is *CS* 2.865-68. See commentary n. 259-260.

<sup>205</sup> For the way Prudentius varies the hypotext linguistically here, see section 7.

sometimes proves fatal. Striving for worldly success is also condemned by Prudentius, hence it comes as no surprise that the Christian poet exemplifies such attitudes through allusions to Juvenal. Allusions to *Satire* 10 include the list of magisterial paraphernalia and the description of the high official holding the ivory eagle in *Pe.* 10 (143-45 and 148 respectively). Both these passages stress the vanity of earthly symbols of power and evoke the corresponding images in Juvenal's text (*Sat.* 10.35 and 43 respectively). The latter two passages come from a section of the 10<sup>th</sup> *Satire* where Juvenal visualises what could have made Democritus laugh. Juvenal suggests that the symbols of high offices such as the *toga praetexta* and the rods would be one reason, and then wonders how Democritus would have reacted in watching a procession where the praetor carries or wears his *insignia* (among which is the sceptre with the ivory eagle).

Prudentius appropriates yet another list from the same *Satire*. In *Sat.* 10.64, Juvenal states that the statues of the praetorian prefect Sejanus will be melted down into kitchen utensils such as jugs and frying pans. Prudentius claims that the statues of gods are also made of kitchen utensils, and gives us a list similar to Juvenal's (*Pe.* 10.299-300). The satirical goal is analogous although the melting process is the reverse in each case; in Juvenal, Sejanus' statue is melted down into kitchen utensils whereas in Prudentius kitchen utensils are turned into images of gods. Both cases reveal the emptiness that characterises the idolisation of individuals. From this example, it becomes obvious that Prudentius saw an affinity between the earthly power of the high officials who acquire an almost divine supremacy, as in the text of Juvenal, and the divinity of the pagan gods, as is the case in Prudentius' text. We will now turn to Democritus again and discuss another example illuminating the same analogy:

*perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat,*

*Democritus, ...*

Juvenal 10.33-34

*... nonne pulmonem movet*

*derisus istas intuens ineptias,*



*quas vinolentae somniis fingunt anus?*

*Pe.* 10.248-50

In Juvenal's text, Democritus is portrayed as laughing heartily although he did not know of the Roman *insignia*, implying how much he would have laughed if he had seen them. Prudentius borrows 'Democritus' laughter', when Romanus asks Asclepiades how it is possible that the judge does not laugh at the idea of divinities such as Fauni, Priapi and nymphs who live at the bottom of lakes like frogs.<sup>206</sup> The allusion to Juvenal, as in the parallel discussed earlier (*Sat.* 10.64 ~ *Pe.* 10.299-300), suggests the analogy between the worldly power of the Roman officials and the divine power of the pagan gods. However, there is also another parallel from Juvenal with which Romanus' words engage:

... *nescis*

*quem tua simplicitas risum vulgo moveat, cum  
exigis a quoquam ne peieret et putet altis  
esse aliquod numen templis araeque rubenti?*

Juvenal 13.34-37

In *Satire* 13, Juvenal pretends to console Calvinus who lost a fiduciary deposit entrusted to a friend of his. The satirist wonders that Calvinus does not know that the stupidity (*simplicitas*) of expecting someone to keep their oath and believing that divinity exists in high temples and blood soaked altars makes people laugh. The context is akin to that of the hypertext (*Pe.* 10.248-50). In both cases, we have a rhetorical question and the idea of laughter evoked by believing in the existence of pagan divinities. The 'laughter of Democritus' (Juv. 10.33-34) has more striking verbal reminiscences, whereas the passage from Calvinus' *consolatio* is closer to *Pe.* 10 in terms of context. Therefore, it seems legitimate to conclude that Prudentius drew on both Juvenalian passages. In so doing, the Christian poet presents us with an interesting *contaminatio* from Juvenal's passages attacking the divine power of

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<sup>206</sup> On the relation between the *rigidi censura cachinni* (*Sat.* 10.31) and *Pe.* 10.226 and 248-49, see Gnilka (2001: 250-52) in conjunction with commentary nn. 226 and 246-50.

pagan gods, and implying an analogy with the vanity attached to the worldly power of the high officials.

So far I have discussed allusions in which Prudentius engages with the context of the hypotext, revealing a similarity or analogy between the two situations. The only example where Prudentius appears to neutralise the context of the hypotext, that is, where he transfers a borrowing from Juvenal to a completely different context in *Pe.* 10, is to be found in the six stanzas following his attack on Egyptian religion. In lines 266-95, Romanus is concerned with art as a means of creating and propagating pagan religion. This part of his speech begins and ends by presenting famous sculptors as creators of gods. In between, he describes statues of gods and how their pose, countenance or accessories can affect the people who worship them. The martyr sarcastically asserts that by making statues Myron and Polyclitus are the creators of the gods (269-70). Furthermore, he is surprised that Mentor and Phidias, also creators of gods, do not have a temple of their own in which to be worshipped (*Pe.* 10.291-95). In Juvenal (8.102-4), the reference to the same artists is used to illustrate a rapacious governor's wealth, as he is shown to have many works made by those sculptors.

This allusion might not seem very conclusive, especially if we consider that similar lists appear in other authors' works.<sup>207</sup> However, Prudentius' familiarity with Juvenal and the fact that it occurs at a place in whose vicinity there are many Juvenalian echoes (see above) serves to intensify the impression that the Christian poet alludes to Juvenal. If so, Prudentius' borrowing is taken from the satiric context of Juvenal's exhortation to Ponticus, the aristocrat whom Juvenal advises against the pretension shared by people of his rank, and is placed in Romanus' polemics against paganism. If we accept the combined reference to the four sculptors as an allusion to Juvenal, then Prudentius, by echoing the Roman satirist at the beginning and the end of his argumentation, encloses his satirical anti-pagan attack in a Juvenalian frame.

It has become obvious so far that Prudentius utilises Juvenal's phraseology for his own satiric attacks. However, there is one example where the Christian poet borrows Juvenalian imagery. This is when Prudentius uses Juvenal's description of a

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<sup>207</sup> See commentary n. 269.

kid (*haedulus*) to portray a horrific scene from the torture of the child-martyr in *Pe.* 10:

*necdum ausus virgas humilis mordere salicti,  
qui plus lactis habet quam sanguinis, ...*

Juvenal 11.67-68

*tenerumque duris ictibus tergum secent  
plus unde lactis quam cruoris defluat.*

*Pe.* 10.609-700

Juvenal's kid is so young and unacquainted with pasture that it has more milk than blood in its body. In *Pe.* 10, when the child – who is also of tender age like the kid in *Satire* 11 – is beaten, more milk than blood flows from its back. Prudentius has a predilection for the gory and gruesome. So, it probably comes as no surprise that from a scene, wherein Juvenal describes the food that will be served to Persicus, a person he invited for dinner, Prudentius isolated a blood-spattered detail and turned it into a scene of horror in the context of a martyr's torture.

In conclusion, in his *Hymn to Romanus* as well as his whole oeuvre, Prudentius appropriated Juvenal's satire in many ways. The Christian poet found in Juvenal ideas that retrospectively corresponded to his own, as well as a sharp scornful tone that he could borrow for his own polemics.

## 10. Language<sup>208</sup>

Prudentius operates in a literary style utilising an elevated register and a variety of rhetorical devices. His style is comparable to that of the Classical poets including Vergil and Horace. However, this Classicising style is further enriched with Late Latin (often Christian) vocabulary and neologisms and is sometimes also organised in Late Latin constructions. In this section I examine both synchronic and diachronic elements of Prudentius' language. As regards the former, I look at evidence testifying to the fact that Prudentius' language has features that appear to have gained in prominence during the time when he was active as a poet. Finally, I examine the rhetorical devices employed in the *Hymn to Romanus*, which are also found in Prudentius' Classical predecessors and which continue to be an essential part of poetic composition after Prudentius.

### i) Late Latin

Regardless of the fact that Prudentius was influenced by Classical poetic style, features emerge in his poems that reflect later developments in the language, features that mainly appear from the second century onwards. Some of these features are in fact archaic elements, avoided during the Classical period, that now re-appear.<sup>209</sup> In *Pe.* 10, Late Latin features on a syntactical level include:

- syntax of verbs: *confidere* + *in* + ablative (104), *deputo* + dative (530). See commentary nn. *ad locc*;
- *inpar* + *ad* + accusative (instead of the dative);
- the gerundive used as a future passive participle: *mancipandam* (44), *consecrandos* (83), *dandum* (105), *parandos* (576). Instances of this use are found as early as Tertullian. See Pinkster (2015: 551-52). For further examples in Prudentius, see Lavarenne (1933: 262-64); and

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<sup>208</sup> For studies of the language of Prudentius see Lease (1895) and Lavarenne (1933).

<sup>209</sup> On Late Latin Löfstedt (1959) is still invaluable. For further reading see Adams (2011), with bibliography.

- the frequent use of *genitivus identitatis vel inhaerentiae* (synonymous genitive), where a genitive is governed by a synonymous or roughly synonymous word: *mira laudum* (4), *altaris aram* (49), *pacis quietem* (357), *ieiuniorum parcitatem* (359). The *genitivus inhaerentiae* already exists in Classical Latin (e.g. *litoris oram*, Vergil *Geo.* 2.44) but becomes more frequent in later authors. See Hofmann & Szantyr (1972: 63-64).

As regards the vocabulary, we come across words that have changed their meaning from Classical Latin:

*laniena* (498) in Classical texts refers to the butchery stall but since the second century it denotes ‘butchery/ the act of mangling’; *cognitor* (571) for ‘judge’, whereas in Classical Latin it means ‘advocate’/ ‘defender’;

and words surviving exclusively or disproportionately in Late Latin:<sup>210</sup>

*evangelista* (16), *incitator* (67), *ventilator* (78), *prosapia* (112), *\*noxialis* (114), *competenter* (118), *detumescitis* (145), *lavacrum* (158), *amasio* (182), *florulentus* (192), *subcuba* (192), *sculptilis* (266), *fusilis* (284), *conflatilis* (295), *natatilis* (332), *iussio* (337), *omniformis* (339), *flabilis* (347), *destructilis* (348), *carnulentus* (372), *suculentus* (433), *iuge* (472), *cauter* (490), *putredo* (500), *solubilis* (507), *fomes* (517), *verbositas* (551), *charaxare* (557), *incapax* (588), *conspicabilis* (633).

Here, I should point out that some of the words mentioned above are related to the Christian register (e.g. *evangelista*), so inevitably they could not have been found in archaic or republican Latin. Christianity, and consequently its vocabulary, was well established by the second half of the fourth/ beginning of the fifth century,

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<sup>210</sup> I mark with an asterisk words found for the first time in Prudentius. Note that the word *destructilis* occurs only twice in the extant literature (Lactantius *De Ira Dei* 24.14 and here), and therefore it may not necessarily reflect late antique vocabulary.

the time in which Prudentius was active as a poet. For this reason, I will not treat ‘Christian Latin’ separately as I believe it is part of Latin of Prudentius’ era.

## ii) Rhetorical devices

Prudentius’ *Hymn to Romanus* is enriched with a variety of rhetorical devices which depending on the context can serve various purposes. Some of these devices often occur in combination. Prudentius shows a particular liking for etymological games. These devices include:

- **Repetition.**<sup>211</sup> I use the term here as an umbrella word referring to four cognate devices: i) anaphora (repetition of the same word), ii) polyptoton (repetition of a word in two or more different cases), iii) *figura etymologica* (the appearance of two cognate words in the same sentence), and iv) homoioarcton (identical beginnings of words) and homoioteleuton (identical endings of words). i) Anaphora (double e.g. 90, 206-10, 254, 265, 302-3, 312, 321, 446-47, 524, 528-29, 542, 642; triple e.g. 172, 198-200, 272-75, 491-93) is used for stress and pace. When it comes to the description of Prudentius’ Christology, anaphora (as well as polyptoton, see below) is a stylistic reflection or reinforcement of what the poet says. For example, in line 321 (*vis una Patris, vis et una Filii*) the repetition of the first part of each clause (*vis una*) with only the following word changed indicates that God the Father and Christ are different expressions of the same entity. ii) Polyptoton: as in the case of anaphora, polyptoton is used when the poet expands on Christological issues: *regem perennem rex perennis protulit*, 596. Different cases represent different hypostases of the same Godhead. For examples of polyptoton in *Pe.* 10, see 106, 302-304, 321-24, 436, 439, 511-15, 596, 627-30, 641-42. iii) *Figura etymologica*: Prudentius is particularly fond of this device. In *Pe.* 10, he does not often resort to cognate verb-accusative constructions (*sanum sapis*, 247; cf. *feras et ipse quod ferendum suaseras*, 95) as he prefers to exhibit *variatio*. Nevertheless, he employs two cognate words in close proximity to each other in the sentence to illustrate the similarity (*Venerem precaris, conprecare et simiam*, 256) or antithesis (*quibus tumetis, moxque detumescitis*, 145) between two situations. iv) Homoioarcton

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<sup>211</sup> For a meticulous study of repetition in Latin poetry see Wills (1996).

and homoioteleuton can create a balance, splitting the verse into equal parts and giving equal importance to each of them (e.g. *quod terminandum, quod relinquendum est tibi*, 524 in combination with anaphora). They often underline the similarity between words that start or finish with the same sound (e.g. homoiarcton: *hoc perdo solum quod peribit omnibus*, 522; homoioteleuton: *si numen ollis, numen et porris inest*, 265 in combination with anaphora). Sometimes homoiarcton stresses an idea that permeates the verse. For instance, in 582 (*mens obstinata est, corpus omne obcalluit*) the repetition of *ob* underscores the martyr's determination to resist.

- *Variatio*: Prudentius employs a variety of synonymous words to avoid monotony, as well as *metri causa*. A characteristic example is the various words he uses to describe the people (of Antioch): *plebs* (68), *vulgi* (78), *turba* (80); *frequentia* (82). For further examples see 276-90 and 316-25. For *variatio* on a syntactical level see 136-37, where Prudentius uses, successively, two different types of negative imperative (136: *cave* + present subjunctive, 137: *ne* + perfect subjunctive).

- Asyndeton of successive words: often used for negative descriptions offering a climactic effect as, for example, that of Galerius (33) or the human flesh which is subject to decay (508). For positive descriptions see 626-27, where we have two successive asyndeta describing the people and the means which prefigured the Christian doctrine, respectively. When employed to portray the worldly aspects of the present life, such as symbols of high offices (143-44, here the asyndeton is interrupted by the conjunction *et* at the end of line 144) or luxury (512), apart from the climactic effect, the asyndeton serves as a means to place all the elements on the same level before the final crescendo. For a comic effect, imitating both the style and the phraseology of Juvenal, see 299. Finally, the asyndeton in lines 326-34 (occasionally interrupted by conjunctions) succinctly summarises the first chapter of Genesis.

- Polysyndeton: this device can give rhythm and emphasis (e.g. 548-50). In lines 311-15, polysyndeton reflects God's complexity and after the asyndeton has a startling effect (311-13: asyndeton, 314: *nec*, 315: *extraque et ... ac*).

- Hyperbaton: can emphasise both members which are separated. When it comes to threatening or intending to describe tortures it also increases suspense. A good example of this type is that in lines 573-76. After the martyr has professed that

the greater the number of the wounds the more the mouths to praise God, the judge starts making an oath to the sun in the middle of the stanza (573: *iuro*) and after two relative clauses describing the sun, we only get to hear at the beginning of the next stanza that his vow is to prepare a fire for Romanus (576: *ignes parandos*).



## 11. Metre

*Peristephanon* 10 is composed in stanzas consisting of five lines of iambic trimeters. Prudentius uses the same metre in *Cath.* 7 (stanzas of four lines each), for one of the verses of the distichs in *Pe.* 9 (the other verse is in dactylic hexameter) and the *Praefationes* of *Psychomachia* and the *Hamartigenia* (κατὰ στίχον). The scheme is: x-u-, x-u-, x-u-, and it can be divided into six feet (x- | u- | x- | u- | x- | u-), six pairs of thesis-arsis.

### Anapaests and other resolutions

Anapaests (uu-) occur mostly in the first foot (88 times).<sup>212</sup> There are no anapaests in the second, third and fourth feet. In the fifth foot, anapaests appear 39 times.<sup>213</sup>

The dactyl occurs 6 times in the first,<sup>214</sup> 8 times in the third,<sup>215</sup> and once in fifth foot.<sup>216</sup>

Tribrach is found only once in the first foot,<sup>217</sup> 10 times in the second,<sup>218</sup> 4 times in the third,<sup>219</sup> and 11 times in the fourth.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Ll. 54, 64, 81, 92, 106, 107, 113, 114, 125, 148, 152, 155, 157, 166, 175, 203, 208, 228, 256, 258, 260, 304, 379, 384, 393, 428, 430, 438, 444, 449, 462, 471, 489, 491, 532, 591, 593, 598, 638, 650, 652, 676, 694, 699, 704, 710, 717, 731, 732, 742, 748, 765, 787, 806, 814, 816, 822, 823, 831, 839, 840, 861, 875, 881, 910, 927, 941, 944, 951, 985, 987, 988, 999, 1007, 1016, 1020, 1038, 1053, 1063, 1072, 1085, 1089, 1104, 1110, 1113, 1125, 1132, 1133 = 88. Lease and Meyer find 89. Fux 94.

<sup>213</sup> Ll. 94, 125, 398, 438, 442, 496, 558, 634, 639, 643, 650, 656, 658, 660, 672, 675, 691, 693, 703, 717, 750, 751, 754, 765, 776, 804, 815, 816, 823, 844, 880, 899, 948, 976, 979, 989, 1052, 1066, 1098 = 39. Meyer finds 39 and Lease 38. Fux says that he has found 41 but he actually mentions 40. He does not include lines 262, 693 and 751. I interpret lines 667 (dactyl), 837 (tribrach) and 978 (tribrach x 2) which Fux takes as anapaests in the fifth foot.

<sup>214</sup> Ll. 31, 651, 788, 791, 841, 1004. Meyer and Lease also find 6. Lease mentions the exact 6 that I do. Fux (2013: 265) takes line 31 as a tribrach in the first foot and references *Pe.* 7.6 ('le v. commence par quatre syllables brèves'). However, as in *Pe.* 7.6 (*Hīc sūb Gālērīō*), it is more likely that the first syllable of Galerius here is also long.

<sup>215</sup> Ll. 259, 644, 669, 896, 948, 952, 963, 981. Meyer and Lease also find 8. Lease lists the exact same that I do. Fux misses line 669.

<sup>216</sup> L. 667.

<sup>217</sup> L. 675. Meyer finds 2.

<sup>218</sup> Ll. 301, 333, 703, 753, 758, 771, 784, 876, 968, 1101. The same results in Lease and Meyer. Fux's list comprises only half of these lines.

<sup>219</sup> Ll. 587, 764, 856, 978. The same results in Lease, Meyer and Fux.

<sup>220</sup> Ll. 109, 193, 237, 346, 416, 481, 550, 592, 641, 713, 837, 978. Fux misses 837. Lease adds line 767 but I take *i* between two vowels as a consonant. Meyer also finds 12.

### Hiatus

Prudentius avoids elision in lines 833, 925 and 1078.<sup>221</sup>

### Caesurae

The caesura which is chiefly preferred is the penthemimeral (x-u-, x||-u-, x-u-), often combined with the hepthemimeral (x-u-, x||-u||-, x-u-). Other patterns that we come across in the poem, where we do not have the penthemimeral caesura, include i) the hepthemimeral in combination with the caesura after the third element (67, 191, 308, 459, 562, 815, 906 and 1006); ii) the caesura after the third element in combination with the caesura after the sixth element (12, 17, 809 and 842); iii) a caesura after the ninth element (108, 771, 921; in 108 and 921, the caesura occurs after the nominative Asclepiades); and iv) a hepthemimeral caesura (146, 688; for more on line 688, see below).

### Shortening and lengthening syllables in Greek words and proper names

Shortening vowels of Greek words and proper names is a metrical feature that we come across in Late Latin poets.<sup>222</sup> Prudentius shortens the penult in Greek names including *Paraclītus* (430) and *Polyclītus* (269). The accent of the Greek nominative, which in these words is on the antepenultimate syllable (Παράκλητος, Πολύκλειτος), moves to the penultimate in the genitive and dative (τοῦ Πολυκλείτου, τῷ Πολυκλείτῳ). The shortening or rendering the penultimate syllable with a short vowel in Latin proves that, unlike Greek, the accent is retained on the antepenultimate syllable in the genitive and the dative observing the rule that the third-to-last syllable is accented when the second-to-last is short. The retention of the accent of Greek names on the antepenult in the genitive and the dative is attested in Pseudo-Servius.<sup>223</sup> Kelly (2013[2015]) gives evidence of this practice from the prose

<sup>221</sup> I take *vālĕ āīt* in the second *metrum* of line 833 as a hiatus with the shortening of *e* before another vowel. Cf. Lavarenne (1933: 86 n. 2). A close parallel to this scansion is found in Vergil *Ecl.* 3.79: *et longum 'formose, vale valĕ,' inquit, 'Iolla'*, imitated by Ovid in *Met.* 3.501 (*verba locus, dictoque vale 'valĕ' inquit et Echo*). Krenkel (1884: 13), on the other hand, lists *vale* among the words with elongated short syllables in the arsis.

<sup>222</sup> Müller (1894: 446), apart from Prudentius, gives examples from Ausonius and Sidonius Apollinaris.

<sup>223</sup> Quoted with caveats in Kelly (2013[2015]: 78).

rhythm of Ammianus' clausulae and the poetry of Sidonius Apollinaris. The same explanation can be applied to other Greek words which scan differently in Prudentius including *idōlum* (101, 431),<sup>224</sup> *pleur̄sis* (485) and *artr̄sis* (495). Greek two-syllable words with a shortened vowel include *herōs* (52, 457) and *daemōn* (1088).<sup>225</sup>

Correspondingly, metrically short syllables in Greek are treated as long in Prudentius when such syllables bear the Greek accent. Latin speaking westerners surmised the quantity of Greek syllables according to the rules of Latin accentuation. This can account for the lengthening of a short vowel in names such as that of Asclepiades. As Gavin Kelly (2013[2015]: 78) points out, 'in Prudentius (*Perist.* 10) the wicked prefect Asclepiades consistently scans with a long penult (e.g. 42: *Asclepiades ire mandat milites*, cf. 108, 392, 548, 687), again presumably a Latin rendering of a Greek accent, showing that a westerner speaking of a Roman official could use the Greek accent – just as Ammianus did for a contemporary philosopher with the same name (22.13.3) ...'. The same explanation can be applied to the adjective *Hippocr̄atica* (498, cf. Ἱπποκράτης). Finally, Prudentius lengthens the Greek words *marḡarita* (648) and *hec̄atombe* (1051).

Given the above, it is worth pointing out that the change of quantity in the syllables of Greek words is found in Latin-speaking westerners. This is not something that we come across in the prosody of Claudian, for example, who is a Greek native speaker and maintains the Greek metrical rules.

#### Lengthening of vowels in Latin words

Krenkel (1884: 12-13) observes that the lengthening of short syllables in the interior of a word (i.e. not in the final syllable) happens for the most part in the arsis, and therefore suggests that the lengthening of a short vowel and the place it occupies in the verse are related, although there are exceptions.<sup>226</sup> Words with elongated vowels in *Pe.* 10 include:

- Names: *Ḡalerius*; *Pomp̄iliorum* (403);
- *pingerē* (628);

<sup>224</sup> This prosody is not unusual in Late Latin authors. Cf. Müller (1894: 446) and Sedulius 5.146.

<sup>225</sup> *Heros* and *daemon* scan with a long final syllable in *Pe.* 6.149 and *Pe.* 10.24 respectively. However, in both cases they are followed by a consonant so the scansion is unrevealing.

<sup>226</sup> Cf. Lavarenne (1933: 156).

- *rātus* (911, but elsewhere *rātus*: *Cath.* 9.32, *CS* 1.215, 296, etc.);<sup>227</sup>
- In some of the compound verbs with preposition, Prudentius seems to retain the quantity of the preposition:<sup>228</sup> i) *dēhonestaret* (763). The absence of this word from previous poetry (*TLL* 5.1.391.2-3) might have facilitated the lengthening of the first syllable; ii) *prāeundo* (158).

#### Shortening of vowels in Latin words

- *inbēcillus* (721, also in *Cath.* 4.2, 7.190, 11.99, 12.207, *Apoth. Praef.* 31);
- *sōcors* (810, also in *Cath.* 1.34: *sōcordis*, cf. *Apoth.* 126: *sōcordia*). This word after Plautus and Terence re-appears in poetry with Prudentius;
- *inpār* (565, and certainly short in *CS* 1.168). *TLL* 7.1.516.69-70 mentions three other Late Latin poets who use the same prosody (Avianus, Dracontius and Corippus). The prosody *inpār* is also found in Ausonius (*Griphus* 54), so it must reflect a Late Latin pronunciation;
- *dispār* (494, certainly the same prosody in *Ham.* 26 and 775). *TLL* 5.1.1390.4-5 mentions examples from Avianus.

#### Final -o

The quantity of the final *-o* can be unpredictable even in Classical Latin.<sup>229</sup> Prudentius, depending on his metrical needs, sometimes shortens the final *-o* in the first person present singular (*ignosco*: 301, *clamo*: 466, *emitto*: 467, *pendo*: 478, *perdo*: 522, *iuro*: 573, *permitto*: 925, *praesto*: 727, 1006). Other instances are found in the 3<sup>rd</sup> declension nominative singular (*conpago*: 493, *sartago*: 759), the ablative of the gerund (*quassando*: 28), the adverb *postremo* (968) and the proper name *Aristo* (896).

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<sup>227</sup> Both Bergman and Cunningham mention in their apparatus criticus *ad loc.* the attempt of Giselinus, one of the renaissance editors of Prudentius, to change the word order in order to 'heal' the metre. So Giselinus writes *ergo ratus praefectus* instead of *praefectus ergo ratus*.

<sup>228</sup> Krenkel (1884: 24), Lavarenne (1933: 86-87).

<sup>229</sup> Hartenberger (1911).

Peculiarities

Line 688: the only example of the thesis of the fourth foot (seventh element), where we have a short vowel followed by *s* + consonant (*sp-*) that is not elongated.

*tristem suae magistrā spectet impia.*

Meyer (1932: 252-53) suggests that in this case *sp-* does not have the same force to make the previous vowel long as a result of the striking hepthemimeral caesura after *magistra* (for the caesurae in *Pe.* 10, see above).

## 12. Conclusion

Both form and content demonstrate the singularity of Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* within his collection of his poems on the martyrs. *Pe.* 10 is almost twice as long as the second longest poem of the *Peristephanon* (*Pe.* 2). Unlike the rest of the poems in the collection (with the exception of *Pe.* 5), it contains no reference to the city where Romanus' martyrdom took place and is enriched with long anti-pagan invective sections, put into the mouth of the martyr (section 6 and below). This absence of a reference to Antioch is in all probability intentional. The religious practices that the martyr attacks in his harangues take place or are associated with Rome. It seems that Prudentius 'manipulates' his sources, Latin and possibly Greek prose passion(s) for Romanus of Antioch (5), portraying a Romanised version of his story. The Roman focus of the poem is facilitated by the fact that the martyr's name actually means 'Roman' (see pp. 39-40).

Furthermore, another interesting aspect of the *Hymn to Romanus*, prominent in the literature of Late Antiquity (see p. 59), is that it displays a remarkably complex network of different textual traditions and genres. In the previous sections I treated the various textual affiliations that can be traced in the text; let us consider how different textual traditions and genres come together in this multifaceted composition. Relying on a prose passion or passions regarding Romanus of Antioch (5) and almost certainly intergrating martyrological literature more generally (8ii), the poet enriches the speeches of the martyr during his interrogation with apologetic clichés. This systematic engagement with anti-pagan invective is unparalleled in the *Peristephanon*, and is found in his oeuvre otherwise only in *CS* (8iii). Throughout the poem, Prudentius refers to the Bible, the most paradigmatic Christian text, and furthermore, uses biblical exegesis, thus also offering appropriate modes of interpreting the Bible (8i).

In addition to the Christian literary tradition, Prudentius' engagement with earlier secular literature is obvious right from the outset. At the beginning of the poem, the invocation to the martyr sets out the epic frame of Prudentius' narration. This framework is assured by allusions to earlier epicists, the use of conventional epic topoi and the portrayal of the martyr as a Roman epic hero (9i). At the same

time, both the form (in terms of the length, metre, large quantity of direct speech sections, etc.) and other aspects of the poem, such as the resemblance of the audience to the martyr's sufferings to a tragic chorus and the labelling of Romanus' martyrdom as *tragoedia* (1113) confirm its affinity with the tragic genre (9ii). Furthermore, the scornful tone with which Romanus attacks pagan religion in the anti-pagan invective sections is comparable to that of Classical satirists who ridicule the *vitia* of Roman society. In addition to the satirical tone, Prudentius does not hesitate to resort to Juvenal and use his phraseology in his attacks against pagan worship (9iii).

Overall, Prudentius makes the most of various Classical genres in order to complement a martyrological and apologetic text. The analogy between situations often found in Classical literature in addition to the poet's and his audience's familiarity with it facilitates the integration of Classical genres with this text. Romanus is a hero similar to those who appear in Classical epics, his sufferings are comparable to those of tragic characters and, finally, the intensity with which he attacks paganism is analogous to that of Roman satire. In line with the wider aesthetic trend within late antique Christian poetry, the *Hymn to Romanus* is representative of the amalgamation of different genres and textual traditions. At the same time, within the context of Prudentius' poems on the martyrs it is conceivably the only text that accommodates so impressive a variety of different literary and ideological concerns.

## Commentary

### The Proem of Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* (vv. 1-30)

Prudentius starts the poem with an invocation to Romanus. Admitting his inadequacy, the poet asks for the martyr's help in order to compose a poem about his deeds (1-5). In the second stanza, the poet refers to the great miracle that took place during Romanus' martyrdom: the martyr's ability to preach God's word after his tongue had been removed (6-10). Prudentius turns again to himself and his need for divine inspiration (11-15). In the fourth stanza he alludes to a passage from the Bible where Christ told his disciples that they do not have to be prepared because when the time comes, he will enlighten them (16-20). Then Christ is revealed as the ultimate source of the poet's inspiration (21-25). The proem ends with a simile: Christ will subdue the demon which grows fiercer in his last breath like the snake which fights back against the spear that has wounded it (26-30).

### Declaration of incapacity and invocation to the martyr

The poet embarks on the narration of Romanus' *acta* by asking the martyr himself to enlighten him in order to take up this task. Prudentius is unable to recount Romanus' *passio* unless the Saint stirs up his tongue. This declaration of incapacity is a topos in hagiographical texts and especially in proems and epilogues (e.g. *Passio Isaacis et Maximini* 1 (Maier) and *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 16). In these *humilitatis formulae* Christian authors profess their humbleness and intellectual incapacity: see Curtius (1953: 83-5, 407-13), Schwietering (1954) and Krueger (2005: 94-109). On Prudentius' *sermo humilis* see Henke (1983: 53-65) and Palmer (1989: 90-91). Neither their literary skills nor their piety are adequate to express God's word. Aside from this genuine or feigned profession of incapability, the modesty topos also functions as a *captatio benevolentiae*, trying to prevent any criticism on the part of the audience. In the proem of *Pe.* 10, Prudentius uses this topos in such a way that he not only expresses his humility and literary incompetence but also links the modesty topos to the martyr's story, alluding to the most



miraculous moment of his life, the miracle in which he speaks without a tongue, and presenting his own situation as analogous to that of the Romanus. For the analogy between Prudentius and Romanus in the proem of *Pe.* 10 see pp. 96-97.

Furthermore, the declaration of incapacity topos is coupled with another motif, the invocation to an authority for poetic inspiration (cf. pp. 63-64). The invocation to the Muses or other deities for poetic inspiration is commonly found in epic proems (cf. e.g. *Il.* 1.1: μήνιν ἄειδε θεὰ ...; *Od.* 1.1: Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα...; Vergil *Aen.* 1.8: *Musa, mihi causas memora* ...). In *Cath.* 3.26-30, a poem composed in dactylic trimeter, Prudentius encourages the Camena to abandon the themes of Classical literature and dedicate all her efforts to the praise of the Christian God:

*sperne, Camena, leves hederas,  
cingere tempora quis solita es,  
sertaque mystica dactylico  
texere docta liga strophio  
laude Dei redimita comas.*

In other words, Prudentius encourages the Muse to convert to Christianity. The Muse appears to have converted in *Cath.* 9.1-3:

*Da, puer, plectrum choreis ut canam fidelibus  
dulce carmen et melodum, gesta Christi insignia.  
hunc Camena nostra solum pangat, hunc laudet lyra.*

Prudentius makes an appeal or reference to the Muse and her ability to inspire poetry. However, now her ability is put into the service of the Christian God. As the aim of Prudentius' poetry is to praise God, the poet also appeals to him directly in order to ask for guidance in the composition of his poetry. In this case, the appeal to God goes beyond the literary trope of the invocation, as in the case of the Muse, and has also the function of a prayer. Prudentius appeals to Christ at the beginning of his *Psychomachia* (1-11, cf. n. 21-22). The invocation to Christ or the Holy Spirit is

often used by Christian poets in Late Antiquity: see Witke (1971: 199-200), Klopsch (1980: 20-37) and Pollmann (2013). On the theme of appealing to an authority in Prudentius' poetry, see Prolingheuer (2008: 78-85). For example, Proba makes an invocation to God (9-12) and Juvencus to the Holy Spirit (1.25-27). These invocations have in a way replaced the appeals of Classical poets to the Muses that we come across in their poetry. Sometimes, when the subject of the poem is a specific saint, the poet might appeal to the saint directly as the most suitable person to assist the poet in their endeavours. Therefore, Paulinus of Nola, in the fragmentary *Carmen* 29 (2-9), probably composed after 407 (Trout (1999: xv)), appeals to Felix:

... *Ades, o dives causa loquendi*  
*Felix, et tacito mea corda inlabere flatu!*  
*Spiritus ore meo curret tuus, esto mei fons*  
*eloquiis; ego vero tuis ero fistula rivis,*  
*quos mihi praebueris divini a flumine verbi.*  
*Surge igitur blandoque meum spiramine pectus*  
*ingredere, o Felix pater et domine atque patrone,*  
*tu domus et medicina mihi et sapientia, Felix;*

Similarly, in the proem of *Pe.* 10, Prudentius, who, as we have seen, presents himself as not capable or worthy of narrating the martyr's sufferings, asks for divine inspiration from Romanus. Although the ultimate source of the poet's inspiration, as we see in the fifth stanza (21-25), is Christ, Prudentius starts with an invocation to Romanus, the martyr whose story is about to unfold.

### **Prudentius and the protagonists of the poem**

As stated earlier, the way that Prudentius uses the modesty topos in the proem creates a parallel between the poet and the martyr. The characterisations that the poet employs to describe his literary incompetence also allude to Romanus' situation after his tongue had been cut out: *elinguis* (2), *infans* (3), *mutus* (5, 21) and *lingua debilis*

(11): see Henke (1983: 13, 65-70 and *passim*). All these terms can characterise someone who is either mute or ineloquent. In other words, they can characterise both Romanus who has lost his tongue and Prudentius who is intellectually incapable of narrating the martyr's *passio*. In fact the same words are used later on in the poem to describe Romanus: *elinguis* (911, 993), *mutus* (1000) and *debilis* (914, 988). The poet identifies himself with the martyr in order to ensure God's help. As God gave Romanus, literally mute, the power to preach his word, he can do the same for Prudentius, who is metaphorically mute, i.e. he lacks the eloquence to narrate the saint's deeds. By presenting himself as mute and referring to the miracle of Romanus' tongue (6-10), Prudentius links the proem to the main narrative of Romanus' *passio* which culminates in the great miracle.

Yet the proem draws a parallel not only between Prudentius and Romanus, but also between the poet and the secondary martyr. The poet calls himself *infantissimus*, which seems to allude to the child who was martyred with Romanus. Throughout the proem Prudentius plays with words which can mean either muteness or lack of eloquence. The word *infantissimus* not only refers to someone who is unable to speak or lacks eloquence (see n. 3), but also to a child. Prudentius uses the word *infans* (*CS* 2.860, etc.) and its cognates (*infantia*: *Pe.* 10.659, etc.) with that sense. This view can be supported by line 14, where the poet wishes that Romanus would 'flood his breast with the milk of the spirit'. Prudentius is depicted as a baby who receives the holy word through the milk: see Levine (1991: 22-23) and cf. also Augustine *Confessions* 3.4.8. In support of the view of Prudentius' identification with the infant martyr see also n. 12. Thus, the proem foreshadows the two basic components of *Pe.* 10: the martyr's passion and the digression with the child martyr. In summary, Prudentius' portrayal as mute – pointing to Romanus – and infant – alluding to the child-martyr – hints at the two martyrs whose suffering are about to be recounted.

### **The proem of *Pe.* 10 and the *Praefatio* of *Contra Symmachum* 2**

It has been pointed out that the role of Romanus in the proem of *Pe. 10* is analogous to that of Peter in the *Praefatio* of *CS 2*: see Thraede (1965: 68-70) and Herzog (1966: 39). For the role of Peter in the preface of *CS 2* and the different layers of authority, see Pollmann (2013: 319-22). Romanus was able to speak after the removal of his tongue because God helped him. In an analogous way, Peter was able to stand on the surface of the water in the lake of Gennesaret because of Christ's support (41-43). Prudentius prays that God will help him to survive in Symmachus' sea of eloquence and not to drown (59-66). In both cases the saints serve as *exempla* for the poet. They show him that God helps his followers. Their stories enhance the possibility for Prudentius to receive help from God as well, although he is not as pious as his *exempla*. In addition, in both cases the poet follows the same strategy. First he refers to the story of the saint and then he turns to his personal venture, for which he needs God's support. In both texts *sic* marks the transition from the episode of the saint's life to Prudentius' personal case (*Pe. 10.11 ~ CS 2 Praef. 44*).

Henke (1983: 71-72), although admitting that in both cases the saint's story serves as an *exemplum* for the poet, considers the parallel drawn between Romanus and Peter to be 'falsch'. To support his view he identifies three major differences between the two texts: i) the removal of Romanus' tongue is one of the main motifs of *Pe. 10*, whereas Peter's not have the same function in *CS 2*; ii) In *Pe. 10* Prudentius addresses Romanus directly but, in the *Praefatio* of *CS 2*, after the description of Peter's episode in the lake of Gennesaret, the poet prays to Christ, not the apostle; and iii) 'Drittens sind auch die 'exempla' selbst offensichtlich ganz anders geartet, ...', though Henke does not explain that further. The third difference is quite obscure, but as for the other two there is a counter-argument. Peter's episode and the poet's attempt to equate himself with the apostle do not play any role in the main text, but we should consider it very possible that the *Praefatio* was not part of Prudentius' initial plan. As I discussed earlier (Introduction 1iii), it seems that the *Praefationes* of the two books of *CS* were later additions aiming at making the bond between the two books stronger. Prudentius independently wrote the two poems (or even three if we accept that *CS 1* is the combination of a panegyric to Theodosius and an anti-pagan invective poem) that later formed the two books of *CS*. One of his means to create a sense of unity between the two works was to add the two

*Praefationes* which narrated episodes from the lives of Paul and Peter respectively. Thus, although Henke is right that Peter's adventure does not play any obvious role in the poem proper, we should take into account that the circumstances of the composition of *Pe. 10* and *CS* were different. *CS* seems to be a poem put together from separate sections composed at different times. Apparently, the *Praefatio* to *CS 2* was added at a point when Prudentius could not or did not wish to make any changes to the text. Finally, we can turn to the second difference pointed out by Henke that, unlike the *Praefatio* of *CS 2*, in the proem of *Pe. 10* Prudentius addresses the martyr directly. However, later on in the proem, the poet makes it clear that Christ is the ultimate source of inspiration (21-25). He is the one who will speak through the poet. For Prudentius, the narration of Romanus' or any other saint's achievements is indirect praise of God.

*Romane, Christi fortis adsertor Dei,  
 elinguis oris organum fautor move,  
 largire comptum carmen infantissimo,  
 fac ut tuarum mira laudum concinam,  
 nam scis et ipse posse mutos eloqui.* 1-5

1. *Romane, Christi ... Dei*: the name of the martyr is placed very emphatically at the beginning of the poem. However, apart from being the saint's name *Romanus* is also the adjective indicating Roman nationality. For the Roman focus of the hymn as indicated both by the martyr's name and references to ceremonies taking place or associated with Rome, see pp. 39-40. Before reaching the second line, where it becomes obvious that the poet will narrate the passion of a martyr, the reader must already have the impression that the vocative (*Romane*) is addressed to him or her, as a Roman who aims at being 'a stout defender of the divine Christ'. Prudentius juxtaposes these two words (*Romane* and *Christi*), representative of the Roman nationality and the Christian religion respectively, or in other words the two basic elements that, in Prudentius' eyes, constitute the Roman self in his era. Like Vergil's intentionally ambivalent *Romane memento* (*Aen.* 6.851), Prudentius' vocative *Romane* on one level is addressed to the martyr, whereas on a second level it is directed to the reader. The association between the two texts is also pointed out by Smolak (2013: 47). For other instances in the *Pe.*, where Prudentius starts his poem by addressing the martyr, see 5.1-4: *Beate martyr .../ ..., Vincenti, ...*; and 6.1: *Felix Tarraco, Fructuose, ...* .

*fortis*: cf. the proem of *Pe.* 14: *Agnes, sepulcrum est Romulea in domo,/ fortis puellae, martyris inclytae* (1-2).

2. *elinguis*: (*e* + *lingua*) 'mute'. The word here is used in a metaphorical way. Prudentius is neither unable to speak nor without a tongue; it is his literary voice/skill that is not worthy or capable of fulfilling such a great task. For other instances of the metaphorical use of *elinguis* see *TLL* 5.391.25-42. However, later in the poem the same adjective is used literally to refer to Romanus, whose tongue has just been

amputated (*elinguem virum*: 911). The third time that the word occurs in *Pe.* 10 it is also used in a literal way and refers to pig (*elinguis ... porca*: 993).

*oris organum*: the word *organum* (Gr. ὄργανον) can refer to a part of the body and especially the tongue (*TLL* 9.968.10-84), as in our case. Prudentius retains this significance of *organum* in v. 929: *nec verba quaeras quo regantur organo*. However, it can also mean a musical instrument (*TLL* 9.970.80-972.55). Sometimes the former significance hints at the latter (see e.g. Augustine *Serm.* 241.2). Prudentius uses the word with the musical instrument sense in *Apoth.* 148, 234, 389, *Ham.* 461 and *Ti.* 92. Here hinting at this sense the phrase *oris organum* anticipates the simile in v. 6 in which the tongue of the martyr is compared to the quill of a lyre: see n. 6. This implied depiction of Prudentius' tongue as a musical instrument forms a parallel between the tongue of the poet and that of Romanus. This can be another means for Prudentius to implicitly identify himself with the martyr in the proem. Both are portrayed as mute and their muteness is exemplified by the musical instrument imagery. The music imagery, recurrent in the first three stanzas of the proem (see esp. *organum*: 2; *plectrum palati et faucium*: 6; *modis ... absonis*: 12; *impeditos ... sonos*: 15), evokes the atmosphere of celebration from the Psalms and more specifically Psalm 150.3-5 (*laudate eum in clangore bucinæ laudate eum in psalterio et cithara laudate eum in tympano et choro laudate eum in cordis et organo laudate eum in cymbalis sonantibus laudate eum in cymbalis tinnientibus*), a passage echoed in *Cath.* 9.5: *infulatus* (sc. David) *concinebat voce, corda et tympano*. Cf. also *Psych.* 658: *pulsavit* (sc. *turba Dei*) *resono modulantia tympana plectro*.

3. ... *carmen*/ 4. ... *laudum concinam*: the reference to *carmen* and *laudes* recalls Prudentius' description of the *Peristephanon* collection in *Praef.* 42: *carmen martyribus devoveat, laudet apostolos*. These two elements appear together also in *Pe.* 2.33-36: *qua voce, quantis laudibus/ celebrabo mortis ordinem, quo passionem carmine/ digne retexens concinam?*; cf. also *Pe.* 14.53: *Christumque sacro carmine concinens*.

3. *carmen*: cf. *praedulce carmen martyris*, *Pe.* 5.314. In his *Praefatio*, Prudentius promised to write a song dedicated to the martyrs (*carmen martyribus devoveat*). The use of the word here and its context links it to the *Epilogus* 9-12. As in the proem of *Pe.* 10, in the *Epilogus* the Christian author also acknowledges his intellectual incapacity and Christian humility (*sanctitatis indigi/ nec ad levamen pauperum potentes*: 9-10). Yet, regardless of his state, God favourably receives his *carmen* (*approbat tamen Deus/ pedestre carmen et benignus audit*: 11-12). Similarly, in *Pe.* 10 Prudentius soon after his declaration of incapacity will confirm Christ's help for the completion of his work (21-25).

*infantissimo*: *infans* can indicate someone who cannot speak (*TLL* 7.1.1346.76-7.1.1347.6) or someone who is not eloquent (*TLL* 7.1.1347.6-19). Relevant to this context of *sermo humilis* is the last part of a letter sent to Paula from Jerome (391/2 AD). The author apologises for his style in Latin: *me ... semper infantem ac mutum* (cf. *Pe.* 10.5 and 21) *fuisse* (*Commentarii in prophetas minores* CCL 76A In Agg. 2) and then quotes a phrase from the Psalms: *Dominus dabit verbum evangelizantibus virtute multa* (67.12). The content of this phrase is similar to that of the passage alluded to two stanzas further on by Prudentius (vv. 18-20 ~ Matthew 10.18-20). In a mood similar to Jerome Paulinus of Nola writes to Severus: *Unde ego quoque minimus omnium minimorum Domini exiguorumque tenuissimus, et infantium infantissimus* (*Ep.* 12.5). For further references see Thraede (1965: 69). The characterisation *infantissimus* also alludes to the episode with the child martyr: see p. 97. Cf. again Paulinus of Nola, who in *Ep.* 40.6 discusses his spiritual infancy. Although he admits to being old, he compares himself with a child when it comes to his familiarity with the sacred writings: *ecce enim veteres posuit dies nostros productos cursu aetatis, nec spargit canis caput, sed perfundit senectus, et nos adhuc primis reptantem conatibus aevi spiritualis infantiam parvulis sensibus agimus et vix modo in uerbo dei incipientes loqui tamquam primis vocibus anima vagiente mutam et rudem sanctis litteris linguam solvimus et, quondam in litteris humanarum fabularum loquaces, nunc in veritatis balbutimus* (see n. 12 s.v. *balbutit*) *eloquiis...* . *Infans* is quite rare in the superlative. *LLT-A* gives five instances by Prudentius' time (Cicero *Pro Cluentio* 51, *Rhetorica ad*



*Herennium* 2.11.16, Paulinus of Nola *op. cit.*, Ausonius *Gratiarum actio* 9.41 and Jerome *Ep.* 50.5).

4. *mira laudum*: instead of *miras laudes* (*genitivus identitatis* or *inhaerentiae*): see p. 83.

5. *nam scis ... eloqui*: on one level this is related to Romanus' ability to speak after his tongue had been cut out. The martyr knows very well that a mute can speak because he has experienced it himself. On a second level this line could be referring to the enlightenment provided by Jesus to the apostles (18-20) or the miracles wherein Jesus healed mutes (Mark 7.37: *mutos loqui*). In relation to the latter cf. v. 951-54: *hoc divinitas ... mutis loquellam ... reddere*; Paulinus of Nola *Carm.* 6.6: *vocemque infundere mutis*. Addressing an audience well-versed in the gospels, Prudentius, with a slight change, manages to allude to the gospel and at the same time adjust it to his own situation. The addition of a single letter differentiates the ability to speak, *loqui*, from what Prudentius (someone who is not literally mute) needs: *eloqui* = eloquence. For another case in the proem where Prudentius adjusts the holy text to his own situation, see n. 18-20.

*Plectrum palati et faucium saevus tibi  
tortor revulsit nec tamen silentium  
indixit ori quo fatebaris Deum.  
vox veritatis testis extingui nequit,  
nec si recisis palpitet meatibus.* 6-10

6. *Plectrum palati et faucium*: the tongue of the martyr described as *plectrum* is also found in v. 935: *sitque his agendis lingua plectrum mobile*. Cf. also the doctor's words about a tongue which is wounded: *titubante plectro fatus esset debilis* (988). The description of the tongue as the quill of a lyre occurs in Cicero *Nat. D.* 2.149, Apuleius *Flor.* 12 and many Christian authors. See, for example, *Sicut enim plectrum cordis, ita lingua inluditur dentibus et vocalem reddit sonum* (Jerome *Ep.*

108.24, repeated almost verbatim in Isidore of Seville *Etymol.* 11.1.51); *ea* (sc. *lingua*) *enim velut plectrum loquentis* (Ambrose *Exameron* 6.9.67); *sicut plectrum nervos, sic linguam nostrum, ut syllabas sonet, percutientes* (Augustine *Serm.* 243.4). For further references see Henderson (2002: 164 n. 48). Romanus' tongue is compared to a quill in the Chrysostomian (*PG* 50.611) and Pseudo-Chrysostomian sermons on Romanus (*PG* 50.613-14): see p. 41. The reference to *plectrum* also in combination with musical imagery evoking the Psalms is found at the beginning of *Cath.* 9.1-6. For the music imagery in the proem, see n. 2 s.v. *oris organum*.

9. *vox veritatis testis*: Romanus is described as a witness of the truth. *Testis* is the Latin translation of the word martyr which in Greek means 'witness' (μάρτυς). For other instances in Prudentius, see *Pe.* 1.21-22; 2.506; 5.11, 59; 8.9; 10.133. For the word *martyr*, see n. 121. The reference to the martyr's *vox* here is followed by a description of the poet's *vox* in the next stanza: *vox impeditos rauca laxabit sonos* (15).

10. A possible allusion to Lucan's gruesome scene of the amputation of Marius Gratidianus' limbs by Sulla's supporters. Marius' tongue is described as quivering after it is cut out: ... *exsectaque lingua/ palpitat et muto vacuum ferit aera motu*, 2.181-82. For an unconvincing parallel with Seneca's *Phoenissae* proposed by Sixt (1892: 504) (*utinam quidem rescindere has quirem vias,/ manibusque adactis omne qua voces meant*, 226-27), see p. 67. *Meatus* is the passage/ pipe through which the air flows before leaving through the mouth. Cf. also 565: *meatus unus, inpar ad laudes Dei*; and 938: *ut verba in ipsis explicent meatibus*.

*Sic noster haerens sermo lingua debili  
balbutit et modis laborat absonis,  
sed si superno rore respergas iecur  
et spiritali lacte pectus inriges,  
vox impeditos rauca laxabit sonos.*

11-15

11. *noster*: poetic plural for *meus*.

12. *balbutit*: the verb *balbut(t)ire* (= ‘to stammer, to stutter’) here might have the specific meaning of speaking like a child (e.g. Jerome *Ep.* 128.1), supporting Prudentius’ depiction as a child and alluding to the episode with the secondary martyr. Cf. Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 40.6 quoted in n. 3 s.v. *infantissimo*.

*modis ... absonis*: cf. *inpeditos ... sonos* (15), which will be loosened after Romanus’ intervention. For the music imagery in the proem, see n. 2 s.v. *oris organum*. On one level the ‘discordant measures’ are related to Prudentius’ self-deprecation (see pp. 94-95), which is exemplified through the music imagery. On a second level, *modis* can also refer to the metre. Prudentius refers to the metres of his poems while admitting their slight worth in *Pe.* 3.208-10 (*ast egoserta choro in medio/ texta feram pede dactylico,/ vilia, marcida, festa tamen.*) and *Epilogus* 7-9, 11-12 (*nos citos iambicos/ sacramus et rotatiles trochaeos/ sanctitatis indigi/.../ approbat tamen Deus/ pedestre carmen et benignus audit*).

13-14. Note the correspondences between the two lines: the two corresponding adjective and noun pairs (*superno rore ~ spiritali lacte*) are followed by the chiasmic structure (*respergas iecur ~ pectus inriges*).

13. *rore respergas*: cf. Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 44.7 (written between 396 and 407): *atque utinam illo rore respergat* (sc. *Deus*), *quo illud mysticum in area uellus infecit* (in relation to the fleece of Gideon; Judges 6.37).

*iecur*: here the word is used in the sense of ‘the seat of emotions’, a sense analogous to that of *pectus* in the next line. The same meaning is employed in *Cath.* 3.180: *sospitet ut iecur incolume*: see Becker (2006: 233). Cf. a similar prayer addressed to Agnes in *Pe.* 14.131: *... nostrum si iecur inpleas*.

14. *spiritali lacte ... inriges*: for the flooding of divine inspiration that results in eloquence, cf. *Pe.* 13.9-10: *Spiritus ille Dei, qui fluxerat auctor in prophetas/*

*fontibus eloquii te caelitus actus inrigavit.* For spiritual flooding or refreshing, expressed in a similar phrasing, in other authors, see Ambrose *Ep.* 7.36.3: *Sunt et sermones boni sicut favi mellis et gratae sententiae, quae animos audientium spirituali quodam potu irrigent et praeceptorum moralium suavitate mulceant*; Augustine *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* 4.35: *significata est ergo de Christo profluens gratia spiritualis, qua interior sitis inrigaretur*; Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 13.11: *spiritualiter inrigans* (sc. *Christus*). Prudentius here couples a similar picture with the spiritual milk of Peter's metaphor: see n. below.

*spiritali lacte*: it is the spiritual milk (*rationale lac*) from 1 Peter 2.1-2. The apostle calls his audience to abandon every kind of vice and crave spiritual nourishment like a baby craves milk. This is what will lead a Christian to salvation (*ut in eo crescatis in salutem*). In the proem Prudentius asks Romanus for spiritual milk, the nourishment which leads someone to be among God's flock. At the end of the poem he will ask Romanus for his salvation (1136-40). Augustine describes how he imbibed God's word through his mother's milk (*Confessions* 3.4.8). On the spiritual milk imagery, cf. also Ambrose *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam* 8.28, and *De Patriarchis* 11.51.

15. *vox*: see n. 9.

*inpeditos ... sonos*: see n. 12 s.v. *modis ... absonis*.

*Evangelista scripsit ipsum talia  
praecepta Messian dedisse apostolis:  
'nolite verba, cum sacramentum meum  
erit canendum, providenter quaerere,  
ego inparatis quae loquantur suggeram.'*

16-20

16. *Evangelista*: the Latin form of the Greek word εὐαγγελιστής, used frequently from Tertullian onward (*Adversus Iudaeos* 8) to refer to the four gospel authors. In

Prudentius, the word occurs also in *Cath.* 6.77 to describe John. *Evangelista* often anticipates an allusion or quotation of the Bible, and Prudentius does paraphrase a biblical passage in the next couple of lines: see n. below.

18-20. Prudentius refers to an incident where Jesus calls some of his disciples and gives them instructions about their mission to preach the gospel to the nations. His advice is not to be concerned about what to say if they are brought before the authorities or to a synagogue as the Holy Spirit will speak through them. This advice is found in all four gospels: Matthew 10.19-20 (*Cum autem tradent vos nolite cogitare quomodo aut quid loquamini dabitur enim vobis in illa hora quid loquamini non enim vos estis qui loquimini sed Spiritus Patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis*), Mark 13.11, Luke 12.11-12, John 14.26. John's text with the use of the verb *suggere* is probably closer to that of Prudentius, although it lacks the imperative construction found in the other gospels (see n. 18-19): *Paracletus autem Spiritus Sanctus quem mittet Pater in nomine meo ille vos docebit omnia et suggeret vobis omnia quaecumque dixerit vobis*. Cf. 20: *ego inparatis quae loquantur suggeram*. There are no striking verbal similarities between Prudentius' text and any of the four gospels. This deviation from the biblical phraseology might reflect the change of context. The poet's situation does not correspond to that of Christ's disciples in the biblical passages. Unlike the apostles, Prudentius is not going to face the dangers of persecution: see Henke (1983: 72-81). Although the poet's work pertains to God's word – since he is about to unfold the sufferings of one of his blessed – he asks for poetic inspiration rather than the enlightenment which was provided by Christ to the twelve. The use of the verb *canere* (19) shows that the speeches produced through God's help have been adjusted or related to Prudentius' poetic art rather than the preaching of the apostles: see Herzog (1966: 39 n. 56). The poet does not aim at a radical change of the significance of the biblical passage but rather at a slight adjustment to fit his own situation. The advice of Jesus to his disciples is often quoted or referred to in martyrological texts. For references, see Henke (1983: 72 n. 119). A reference to it also occurs in the Patmian passion on Romanus (8.313-16: Θέσθε οὖν εἰς τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, μὴ προμελετᾶν ἀπολογηθῆναι; ἐγὼ γὰρ δώσω ὑμῖν στόμα καὶ σοφίαν ...). In the latter text it is Romanus who refers to the biblical

passage while defending the Christian faith against Asclepiades. Since the reference to Jesus' advice in the Patmian passion is in quite a different context to that seen in *Pe.* 10 and its occurrence in martyrological literature is quite frequent, it cannot be considered an indication that Prudentius was influenced by the author of the Greek passion or vice versa. For biblical allusions in *Pe.* 10, see Introduction 8i.

18. *nolite*/ 19. *quaerere*: this is the only instance of this type of negative imperative in Prudentius' oeuvre (*nolite* + infinitive). Other methods of negation in that mood that we come across in Prudentius' works are *ne* + imperative (*ne tollito*: *Psych.* 613; *ne trepidate*: *Psych.* 624), *cave* + present subjunctive (*Pe.* 10.136) and *ne* + perfect subjunctive (*Pe.* 10.137): see Lease (1895: 13-14).

*Sum mutus ipse, sed potens facundiae  
mea lingua Christus luculente disseret.  
ipse explicabit quos supremo spiritu  
daemon tumultus, dum domatur, moverit,  
furore pestis peior in novissimo.* 21-25

21-23. In the previous stanzas Prudentius has admitted his inadequacy and hope for the martyr's help in order for that situation to change (1-15). He then refers to an analogous situation in which Christ had promised to enlighten his disciples once they were in the position to preach God's word (16-20). In order to avoid the risk of seeming to present himself as an apostle, Prudentius returns to the modesty topos: *Sum mutus ipse* (21). Cf. Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 9.1 *meum quoque os a Domino inter ora mutorum et infantium*. Christ will talk through the poet's mouth. As Witke (1971: 129) puts it: 'The poet will become the *lingua* while Christ will be the *rhetor*'. Cf. also Paulinus of Nola *Carmen* 23.37: *Sed mihi jure fluat de te tua gratia, Christe*.

21-22. Cf. Prudentius' invocation to Christ in *Praef.* *CS* 2.61-66 and esp. *Christe potens* (61). Cf. also the first lines of the *Psych.*: *Christe, .../ ... / dissere, rex noster*, (1-5).

23-30. Christ through Prudentius will unfold the demon's last explosive outburst while he is being subdued (23-25), a description exemplified by the snake simile in the next stanza: see n. 26-30. The demon and its comparison to the lethally wounded snake corresponds to Asclepiades and the futility that characterises his rage throughout the poem. It also hints at his inevitable defeat.

23. *explicabit*: Henderson (2002: 145) suggests that the use of the verb *explicare* (= to unfold, to expound), which also means 'to uncoil', hints at the snake simile in the next stanza (cf. *tractibus anguis inexplicitis*, *Cath.* 3.153). *Explicare* also points to the imagery of a book and more specifically a scroll from Revelation: *quandoque caelum ceu liber plicabitur*, *Pe.* 10.536; *quas (sc. nominum formas) tenet caeli liber explicandus*, *Pe.* 4.171: see n. 536-540. Jesus will unfold Romanus' sufferings. The same sufferings will be read again by God from a book written by an angel, as Prudentius describes in the epilogue of the poem (1121-35).

24. *daemon ... domatur*: cf. *Pe.* 1.97: ... *feroces hic domentur daemones*. In both cases, the descriptions underline the beast-like nature of the Devil and his demons. In the next stanza, we have the simile with the snake (n. 26-30), whereas in *Pe.* 1.98 the demons are likened to wolves (*lupino ... ritu*).

25. *furore... peior*: the expression corresponds to *dolore saevior* in the next stanza (27). *Furor*, which here characterises the demon while being subdued, is a repeated motif for the description of the judge who appears to be his minion or possessed by him. For *furor*, see n. 111. For the judge as representing the demon, see nn. 23-30 and 26-30.

*Sic vulneratus anguis ictu spiculi  
ferrum remordet et dolore saevior  
quassando pressis inmoratur dentibus,*

*hastile fixum sed manet profundius  
nec cassa sentit morsuum pericula.*

26-30

26-30. The demon, while being subdued, grows fiercer in his last fury, like the snake which bites back at the javelin which has wounded it and is fixed inside it. The wounded snake simile occurs in *Aen.* 5.273-9. Cunningham (1976: 63) draws a parallel between this passage and *Aen.* 12.4-8, in which a lion bites back against a hunter's spear which has pierced its body (*fixumque ... telum*). Henderson (2002: 145-46) proposes that the use of words such as *hastile* and *cassus*, which occur more frequently in poets such as Vergil, Ovid and Lucan, gives an epic colouring to the simile. The choice of words in this and the previous stanza echoes Cato's instructions to the soldiers about the snake venom in Lucan 9.614-15: *Noxia serpentum est admixto sanguine pestis;/ morsu virus habent, et fatum dente minantur*. The snake of the simile is identified with the serpent of Genesis and thus with the Devil (cf. *Ti.* 1-4). Its *furor*, which survives until the last moment, symbolises the fury of the judges and the executioners while they torment the martyrs. In *Pe.* 5, the judge's rage does not cease even after the death of Vincent. Prudentius compares the furious judge, who plans on exacting revenge on the martyr's corpse, to 'the raging of a serpent disarmed by the breaking of its fangs' (*saevire inermem crederes/ fractis draconem dentibus*, 381-82). In both *Pe.* 10.26-30 and the above-mentioned passage there is a snake simile and a focus on its continuous and pointless rage. In the *Pe.* 10 simile the stroke was lethal and the serpent like the demon (24-5) will be subdued. The submission of the serpent-demon occurs also in *Cath.* 3.127-30, 149-50 and *Pe.* 14.112-13. For a further discussion about the serpent, see n. 36.

26. *sic*: introduces the first of the twelve similes of the poem; for another example of a simile introduced by *sic* see v. 936. For the similes of the poem and the method with which they are introduced, see Henderson (2002).

27. *dolore saevior*: cf. *furore ... peior* (25). For *saevus* and its cognates, see n. 457 s.v. *saeviunt*.



30. *morsuum*: cf. the cognate *remordet* (27).

*Galerius orbis forte Romani statum  
 ductor regebat, ut refert antiquitas,  
 inmitis, atrox, asper, implacabilis.  
 edicta late mundum in omnem miserat:  
 Christum negaret quisque mallet vivere.*

31-35

31-35. The reference to Galerius (31-32) and the edicts (34-35) marks a transition from the personal and programmatic tone of the proem to the narration of the main subject, the passion of Romanus. The narrative of other poems of the *Pe.* is also placed within the frame of a greater persecution as a corollary of imperial orders: *Pe.* 3.26-30, *Pe.* 5.21-28, *Pe.* 6.41-42, *Pe.* 13.35-37. Cf. also *Pe.* 1.40-42. As in *Pe.* 10, the above-mentioned passages mark a transition between the proem and the main narrative.

31. *Galerius*/ 32. *ductor*: cf. *Pe.* 7.6: *sub Galerio duce*. During Romanus' martyrdom, Galerius was Caesar under Diocletian (293-305). He was known as a fierce persecutor of Christians (Eusebius *HE* 8.16, Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 9.1, 21.7-11 and *passim*). According to Lactantius (*Mort. Pers.* 11.3-4), by convincing Diocletian to persecute the Christians, Galerius was essentially the instigator of the Great Persecution, which started the same year as Romanus' martyrdom (23 February 303). On the reliability of that statement see Creed (1984: 92 n. 11.2). See also Eusebius *HE* 8.16.2. Two years later Galerius became Augustus and ruler of Asia Minor (1 May 305) continuing and intensifying the persecution in his territories until 311. That year the dying Galerius issued the edict of toleration (Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 33-35; Eusebius *HE* 8.16-17). Paradoxically, Diocletian, the emperor who officially issued the edicts against the Christians and was in Antioch at the time of Romanus' arrest, is not mentioned at all in *Pe.* 10. Prudentius does not follow Eusebius' version, according to which Diocletian was the one who executed Romanus (*Mart. Pal.* [L] 2.3): see Introduction 5. Yet some of the passions that have

come down to us mention both Diocletian and Maximian right at the beginning of the text, thus offering a chronological framework for the narrated events and placing the passion within the scope of the Great Persecution (Halkin 1: Διοκλητιανοῦ τοῦ τυράννου ... καὶ Μαξιμιανοῦ τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς; Del. L. 1: *In temporibus Diocletiani et Maximiani imperatorum*; a reference to Diocletian and Maximian occurs also at the beginning of the unedited Latin passions of Romanus; see Delehaye (1932: 279)). In these passions it is ambiguous as to whether Maximian refers to Maximianus Augustus or Maximianus Caesar, i.e. Galerius. In the present text Galerius' mention and the following sinister characterisation (33) are probably due to the cruelty he showed toward the Christians (as portrayed by the Christian authors who recorded the chronicles of the persecution, Eusebius and Lactantius; see above), and might reflect the decisive role that he played in some versions of Romanus' martyrdom. According to some of the passions Galerius was the one who gave the order for Romanus' execution after Asclepiades informed him about the martyr's continuous denial of paganism (Mom. 450.15-17; Del. G. 16; Halkin II. 776-83). In Prudentius' account (as in Delehaye's Latin *passio* 12), it is Asclepiades who gives the order (1102-5). In the Epilogue to *Pe.* 10, Galerius receives a detailed account of Romanus' sufferings after the death of the martyr (1111-15). Note also that Prudentius refers to Galerius only in the poem on the martyr Quirinus (*Pe.* 7.6: *op. cit.*). The ruling out of Diocletian in *Pe.* 7 may be due to the fact that Prudentius does not rely on the Latin *acta* of the martyr but on the entry of Quirinus in Jerome's translation of Eusebius' *Chronicon*, in which there is no mention of emperors and which is followed by an entry on the death of Galerius: see Palmer (1989: 236-37) and Fux (2013: 201 n. 2, 208).

31. *orbis ... Romanae statum/ 32. ductor regebat*: cf. *Pe.* 5.21-22: *rex ... orbis maximus qui scepra gestat Romula*. The word *ductor* (in combination with *orbis*) is used later in *Pe.* 10.420 (*ductor quietum frenet orbem legibus*), where Asclepiades urges Romanus to pray for the welfare of the *princeps*.

32. *ut refert antiquitas*: interestingly, although Romanus' martyrdom took place less than a century before the composition of *Pe.* 10, Prudentius refers to it as something

which happened in the distant past. The other two times the poet uses the word *antiquitas* are also in *Pe.* 10, and refer to the foundation of Rome (611) and the era of the prophets (632). Similarly, the martyrdom of Cassian, which took place under the reign of Julian or Diocletian (see Palmer (1989: 242-43)), is also presented as having taken place in the distant past. The sacristan addresses the poet, who is gazing at a painting showing Cassian's martyrdom, saying that this is a real story handed down to us through books and which demonstrates the true faith of olden times: *historiam pictura refert, quae tradita libris/ veram vetusti temporis monstrat fidem* (*Pe.* 9.19-20). Cf. also the expression *fama refert* in *Pe.* 13.76 in conjunction with Damasus (Ferrua 38.1 and 48.1 on Agnes and Hermes respectively) and occurrences in secular authors (e.g. Ovid *Fast.* 2.203, *Pont.* 3.2.51), possibly indicating that Prudentius relied on or presented himself as relying on oral tradition. By using expressions such as *refert antiquitas*, Prudentius prolongs the apparent temporal distance between himself and the events he describes, giving to them legendary dimensions.

33. Galerius' description culminates in an asyndeton. This figure of speech is used to describe the cruelty and profanity of the judges in the *Peristephanon*. Cf. *Pe.* 6.35: *atrox, turbidus, insolens, profanus* for Aemilianus, the judge of the martyr Fructuosus and his companions; *Pe.* 14.70: *vaesanus, atrox, turbidus armiger* for the judge of Agnes. For the asyndetic crescendo in *Pe.* 6 see Palmer (1989: 214) and esp. n. 22. The adjective *atrox* occurs in all three descriptions and also qualifies the Roman authorities who persecuted Christians in *Pe.* 1.40-41: *atrox ... ductor*. The epithet *profanus* is used for the prefect Asclepiades in v. 48. *Profanus* also characterizes the judge of Vincent in *Pe.* 5.94 and 394. Cf. also a similar asyndeton in one of the Latin passions in which Romanus addresses Asclepiades as: *serpens, venerare, desperare, crudelis* (Del. L. 5). Christian authors described Galerius in the most negative way. Lactantius argues that he was not only worse than Diocletian and Maximian, but the worst of all the evil princes (*Mort. Pers.* 9.1-2).

34. *edicta*: by the time of Romanus' death (18 November 303) the first three edicts of the Great Persecution have already been issued. The first edict ordered the destruction of the churches, ban of Christian assemblies, confiscation of the

scriptures and property owned by churches, deprivation of judicial privileges of Christians and reduction of Christian civil servants to slavery. The second edict ordered the arrest of priests and bishops, to whom the third edict offered amnesty on condition that they sacrificed to the gods. For the edicts and their consequences see de Ste. Croix (2006: 35-78) and Barnes (2010: 111-50). For other references to the edicts of the Great Persecution in the *Peristephanon*, see *Pe.* 5.13-27, and 181-84 (about the confiscation of the Scriptures).

35. Proof of not being Christian was given by sacrificing to the gods: see Eusebius *HE* 1.3-4. Sacrifice to the gods became obligatory for all inhabitants of the empire with the fourth edict which was issued after Romanus' death (most likely in January or February 304). Cf. n. 397 and ll. 916-20.

*Haec ille serpens ore dictat regio  
qui mortuorum de sepulcris exiens  
clamat: 'quid ante tempus adventu cito  
mea regna solvis? parce, Fili altissimi,  
vel possidere corda porcorum iube!'* 36-40

36. *serpens*: the representation of the judge or the executioner as possessed by demonic powers or the Devil is a topos in martyrological literature: see Petruccione (1985: 16-19, 152-60). In *Pe.* 10, Galerius is not Romanus' judge or executioner (in contrast with other versions of the passion, cf. n. 31), but he is (according to Prudentius) the real culprit behind the Great Persecution during which Romanus was martyred. As stated earlier (n. 26-30), the serpent is identified with the snake of Genesis and thus with the Devil or the Devil's servants, the demons. The simile with the snake-Devil subdued by Christ two strophes before (vv. 26-30) might imply that Galerius' actions, impelled by the same source, the Devil, are also destined to failure. The martyr's opponent is portrayed as the representative of the Devil also in *Pe.* 2, 3, 5 and 14. The serpent imagery is recurrent in Prudentius' oeuvre (e.g. *Apoth.* 406, *Ham. Praef.* 1-44, *Pe.* 10.257). For a discussion about the serpent in Prudentius see

Zambon (1980). Here, the snake-demons talk through Galerius' mouth (*ore*). Levine (1991: 24-25) connects this passage with *Hamartigenia* 581-89, where the female viper consumes her male counterpart in order to get impregnated. In both passages (*Ham.* 581-89 and *Pe.* 10.36) the connection between the snake and the mouth is, according to Levine, of particular importance providing 'a negative, perverse mirror image for the creative power of the Logos'. Regarding the latter passage, see Dykes (2011: 149-53) and Malamud (2011: 131-33). In the *Praefatio* of *CS* 1.74-79, the snake lies behind the decision of eloquent Symmachus to defend pagan worship. Thus, again the serpent is the inciter of malicious actions against the Christians hidden behind persons of Rome's public life. In *Pe.* 5.175-76, the serpent hisses out his venom through the mouth of the judge of Vincent: *cui praetor ore subdolo/anguina verba exsibilat*. For the latter passage see also Fux (2003: 261).

*ore ... regio*: the royal mouth of Galerius is in contrast with the *ore libero* (96) of Romanus: see Levine (1991: 25). Cf. also *ore ... regio/ 38. clamat* with *Apoth.* 417: *clamarat, sed ab ore hominis*, where the legion appeals to Jesus through a man's mouth. The demon talking through Galerius is in contrast with the poet's role in the proem. Prudentius is the mouthpiece of Christ (21-5), whereas Galerius is the mouthpiece of the Devil. Cf. Herzog (1966: 35).

37-40. Prudentius alludes to a famous incident from Jesus' life (Matthew 8.28-31: *et cum venisset trans fretum in regionem Gerasenorum occurrerunt ei duo habentes daemonia de monumentis exeuntes saevi nimis ita ut nemo posset transire per viam illam et ecce clamaverunt dicentes quid nobis et tibi Fili Dei venisti huc ante tempus torquere nos erat autem non longe ab illis grex porcorum multorum pascens daemones autem rogabant eum dicentes si eicis nos mitte nos in gregem porcorum*). When Christ went to the country of the Gadarenes, he met two people possessed by demons. The devils within them, realising that Jesus is the son of God, begged him not to torment them before their due time, but to send them to possess a herd of swine which was grazing close to that spot. And Christ did so. The Devil's words uttered through Galerius' mouth repeat the appeal of the *daemonia* to Jesus. The same incident or part of it is narrated in *Ti.* 141-44, *Cath.* 9.52-57 and *Apoth.* 414-20.

However, in these passages Prudentius uses a different source: see Charlet (1983: 62). When describing the same incident, Luke (8.27-33) and Mark (5.1-13) refer to a possessed man who, driven by the demons, would sometimes break his chains. They also inform us that the demon is called legion. In *Cath.* 9.52-57, without mentioning the appeal of the demons Prudentius describes the end of the story where the herd of the swine after being possessed by the legion are cast headlong into the sea. This leap into the sea occurs also in *Apoth.* 414-16. *Ti.* 141-44, *Cath.* 9.52-57 and *Apoth.* 414-20 refer to the chains of the possessed, a detail found neither in Matthew nor in *Pe.* 10. In addition, the demons' appeal that Jesus should not torture them prematurely occurs only in Matthew. All the above suggest that Prudentius consulted or preferred to choose the Matthew passage for the composition of this stanza. As to why Prudentius chooses to allude to Matthew over Luke and Mark, there is no obvious explanation that can be deduced from the content or the context of the Prudentian passage. What is more, it is legitimate to assume that, in regard to the content of the speech of the possessed by demons all gospels carried the same validity, as Augustine assures us. In *De consensu evangelistarum* (399-400), a work in which Augustine explains and harmonises the apparent differences between the gospels, he states about the episode of the Gerasene demoniac that we should not have any scruples about the fact that the speech of the possessed by demons was expressed differently in the different gospels either because all the differently expressed speeches lead us to the same essence or because we can suppose that all could have actually been spoken (*Cons. Evang.* 2.24.56: *nec quod verba demonum diverse ab evangelistis dicta sunt, habet aliquid scrupuli, cum vel ad unam redigi sententiam vel omnia dicta possint intellegi*). For biblical allusions in *Pe.* 10, see Introduction 8i.

37: *de sepulcris exiens*: cf. *Ti.* 141: *sepulcrali sub carcere*.

*Praefectus istis inminens negotiis*

*Asclepiades ire mandat milites*

*ecclesiasten usque de sacrariis*

*raptare plebem mancipandam vinculis,  
ni disciplinam Nazarenam respuat.*

41-45

41. *Praefectus*/ 42. *Asclepiades*: it is not clear whether Asclepiades is a historical or a fictional figure. In PLRE i 114 (Asclepiades 2), based on Prudentius, the judge is referred to as '(? praetorio) praefectus in the East 303'. We will first deal with his office and then try to survey any other scattered information we can relate to Romanus' judge. It has now been agreed that, at least in the period between 293 and 305, only the two Augusti (and not the Caesars) had praetorian prefects ascribed to them, one for each, as is suggested by an inscription discovered in Brixia: see Barnes (1996: 546-48). The inscription is dedicated to Constantius I as Caesar (hence 293-305) by two praetorian prefects, Julius Asclepiodotus and Aurelius Hermogenianus. The two prefects must have been ascribed to Maximian and Diocletian respectively. The *Passio Sabini* – which is to a large extent fictional and therefore does not provide reliable evidence – presents Hermogenianus as the prefect of Maximian in Rome in 304. Although, we do not know when Hermogenianus ceased to hold his praetorian prefecture, it is very likely that he held it up to 302, possibly covering the period when Romanus was tried. For an overview of Hermogenianus's career, see Corcoran (2000: 85-90). Even if Hermogenianus was not praetorian prefect in the East when Romanus' martyrdom took place, it does not seem safe based on the passions which are largely fictional and on Prudentius' account which was written almost a century after the events it details, to infer that Asclepiades was a praetorian prefect. In both versions of Eusebius, we are told of a judge who plays a role in Romanus' trial but he is not mentioned by name and is referred to as 'judge' (δικαστής). In the Greek passion printed in Delehaye (1932), he is mentioned as ἑπαρχος, and in the Latin ones as *praefectus*. In addition, although there was certainly no *praefectus urbi* called Asclepiades during the years of Romanus' trial or execution (302-303), the reader of Prudentius is inclined to reach the conclusion that he held that office due to references or implications that Romanus' martyrdom is taking place in Rome. For Prudentius' Romanised version of Romanus' story, see pp. 39-40. As regards other evidence that might relate to the same person, according to PLRE i, Asclepiades 2 is also identified with the addressee of a rescript on

inheritances in 294 (*CJ* 6.24.10). Nonetheless, the form of his name in the dative (*Asclepiadae*), as appears in the rescript, suggests – as Corcoran (2000: 141) points out – that the nominative is *Asclepiadas*. Another source for the judge of Romanus is the *Acta S. Agathonici* (4), where he is mentioned as the son of Hispasius and father of St Agathonicus (Ἀγαθόνικος ... γέννημα δὲ Ἀσκληπιάδου τοῦ ὑπάρχου. (Agathonicus speaks)... ἀλλὰ καὶ Ῥωμανός, ὁ ἔνδοξος μάρτυς, παρρησίᾳ τὸν ἐμὸν πατέρα Ἀσκληπιάδην τὸν ὑπαρχὸν ἐνέτρεψεν ...): see *AB* (1883: 103-4). Given all the above, it can be inferred that *Asclepiades* was a judge who later appeared as prefect in the passions, something that served Prudentius' Romanised background of his *Hymn to Romanus*. Alternatively, *Asclepiades* could be a fictional character taken from the *Acta S. Agathonici*, although the process could work vice versa. In any case, Prudentius did not invent *Asclepiades* but found him in the passion(s) he referred to when writing *Pe.* 10: see Introduction 5. For other names/ offices attributed to the examining magistrates in the *Peristephanon*, see Opelt (1967: 244). For the prosody of the name *Asclepiādes*, see pp. 88-89.

43. *ecclesiasten*: this is the only instance where the word *ecclesiastes* does not refer to the namesake book of the Old Testament. Here, it means 'churchman, Christian', and is used as an adjective qualifying *plebem*: see Souter s.v. *ecclesiastes*.

44. *plebem*: cf. *Pe.* 2.468: *plebemque ... Chisti*; and *Pe.* 9.30: *plebem dicatam Christianae gloriae*. For Prudentius' *variatio* and the different terms he employs to refer to the Christian flock (of Antioch), see p. 85.

*mancipandam*: for the use of the gerundive as a future passive participle, see p. 82.

*raptare*: infinitive of purpose taken with *ire* (42, verb of motion).

45. *Nazarenam*: according to early Christian authors, early Christians used to be called Nazarenes by the Jews. Cf. Tertullian *Adv. Marc.* 4: *unde et ipso nomine nos Iudaei Nazarenos appellant per eum*; Prudentius uses the same epithet in *Cath.* 7.1 for Jesus and the cognate *Nazareorum* instead of *Nazarenorum* in *CS* 1.549.



*Mox ipse templum cogitans intrumpere  
 et dissipare sancta sanctorum studens  
 armis profanus praeparabat impiis  
 altaris aram funditus pessum dare  
 foresque et ipsas in ruinam solvere.* 46-50

46-50. According to the first edict all Christian temples were to be destroyed (see n. 34). The first temple subjected to destruction was the church opposite the imperial palace at Nicomedia: see Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 12.3-5. In Eusebius' recension, Romanus is present at the destruction of the temples (Eusebius *Mart. Pal.* [S] 2.1: ὁμοῦ τῇ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν καθαιρέσει γεγόμενος ἐκεῖσε).

47. *sancta sanctorum*: also with the first element in the singular (*sanctum sanctorum*) originally referred to the innermost sanctuary of the Tabernacle, the portable dwelling place of God (e.g. Exodus 26.34) and later the equivalent place in the temple built by Solomon where the Ark of the Covenant was hosted (1 Kings 8.6). In *Psych.* 815, Fides encourages the Virtues to build a temple, as Solomon did, so that God can visit its 'holy of holies': *omnipotens cuius (sc. templi) sanctorum sancta revisat*. Synecdochically, 'holy of holies' can be applied more broadly to the innermost sanctuary of churches in general, as seemingly is done in the present text, or to the holy objects hosted there.

48. *profanus*: see n. 33.

49-50. Hysteron proteron. *Pessum dare* (or *ire* = 'to lay waste, to ruin') corresponds to *in ruinam solvere* in the next line.

49. *altaris aram*: *genitivus inhaerentiae*: see p. 83.

*Praecurrit index his repente cognitis*  
*Romanus acris heros excellentiae,*  
*venire in armis perduelles nuntiat*  
*animos paventum praestruens hortatibus,*  
*stent ut parati neve cedant turbini.* 51-55

52. *heros*: the word points to generic affiliations of the poem. Given that in late antiquity the martyrs replaced the epic heroes, Romanus' characterization as hero combined with the leading role he has among the Christians of Antioch (see esp. this and the next stanza) underscores the epic dimensions of passage: see pp. 61-65. On the other hand, Fux (2005: 89) lists this characterization as one of the tragic features in the text. Regarding the hero in Prudentius, see Cattalano (1951-52). For the prosody of the word *hērōs*, see pp. 88-89.

55. *stent ut parati*: see Appendix II n. 1 for verbal similarities with the prose passions. Cf. also a similar attitude on the part of Augurius and Eulogius: *stant parati ferre, quidquid sors tulisset ultima, Pe.* 1.54.

*turbini*: storm imagery is recurrent in the *Peristephanon*. Prudentius equates the furious insanity of the persecutors to the image of the storm. The description of the hurricane in *Pe.* 4.81-82 is a characteristic example: *Saevus antiquis quotiens procellis/ turbo vexatum tremefecit orbem*. Cf. also the simile in *Cath.* 12.125-28, in which the Innocents in Bethlehem are compared to roses and Herod to a storm: *Salvete, flores martyrum,/ quos .../ Christi insecutor sustulit/ ceu turbo nascentes rosas*. Later on in the poem, the situation is reversed and Asclepiades describes Romanus' attempt to persuade the people (of Antioch) against the authorities as a storm: see n. 78-80. Towards the end, after Romanus' tongue has been cut out, storm imagery is used to describe the martyr's eloquent attacks on paganism, which had once scared Asclepiades (*multo loquentis turbine olim territus*, 915). For the storm imagery in the *Peristephanon*, see Petruccione (1985: 141-43). The force of the persecution is described as a storm also in the Patmian passion 1: εἰδωλική τις ἀνα πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην κατὰ χριστιανῶν διεγείρετο θύελλα σατανική. For the Great

Persecution likened to a storm, cf. also Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 16.3: *tempestatem turbidae persecutionis*

*Conspirat uno foederatus spiritu  
grex christianus, agmen inperterritum  
matrum, virorum, parvulorum, virginum;  
fixa et statuta est omnibus sententia  
fidem tueri vel libenter emori.*

56-60

57. *grex christianus*: the biblical representation of Christ as the Good Shepherd and accordingly of the Christian congregation as his flock had been very influential (John 10.1-21, cf. also Psalm 23). Since the martyr's life is *imitatio Christi*, Romanus takes up the role of the good shepherd who tends his flock. Cf. also Peter 1.5.2. For the description of the Christian congregation as flock in the *Peristephanon*, see *Pe.* 5.391, 6.47, 7.31-32, 11.242, and 13.67.

58. Cf. in a different context, *Pe.* 6.149: *heros, virgo, puer, senex, anulla*.

60. *fidem tueri*: the same exhortation is given by Cyprian to the people of Carthage: *laudis amore rapi, Christum sapere et fidem tueri: Pe.* 13.75.

*libenter emori*: cf. *Pe.* 2.329-30: '*libenter oppetam, / votiva mors est martyri*' (with 65: *quo gloriosa morte fortes oppetant*). For the Christians' eagerness to die, cf. 64-65. For the topos of the martyr's eagerness to die, see n. 71-75.

*Refert repulsus miles ad subsellia  
plebis rebellis esse Romanum ducem,  
flagrare cunctos pervicaci audacia,  
iugulos resectos obstinate opponere  
quo gloriosa morte fortes oppetant.*

61-65

61-75. In these three stanzas, the Christians of Antioch offer themselves voluntarily to the executioners, and Romanus without any sign of resistance is arrested and eager to face torture and death drags his executioner after him to the court. Hoffmann (2001) draws a parallel between this episode and two passages from Statius' *Thebaid* 12. In *Theb.* 12.456-63, Antigone and Argia, Polynices' wife, are arrested after having buried Polynices' body against Creon's command. In the second passage (*Theb.* 12.677-82), Antigone and Argia, eager to die, offer their throats to Creon, when Phegeus, Theseus' messenger, arrives. Hoffmann (2001: 540) identifies four similarities between the episode in *Pe.* 10 and the two Statian passages: i) there is an eagerness for death connected to a high-emotional state (*Theb.* 12.456-57: *ambitur saeva de morte animosaque leti/ spes furit* ~ *Pe.* 10.63-65); ii) both Romanus and the two heroines from Statius not only do not resist their binding, but they also help their captors (*Theb.* 12.460: *dextras iuvat insertare catenis* ~ *Pe.* 10.69-70); iii) in both cases, the heroes of the episodes offer their throats voluntarily for the fatal blow (*Theb.* 12.680: *ensibus intentant iugulos regemque cruentum* ~ *Pe.* 10.64); iv) and they drag their captors (*Theb.* 12.463: *et ad regem qui deprendere trahuntur* – *Pe.* 10.75).

62. *ducem: dux* frequently qualifies the martyrs in the *Peristephanon* and their role is often, as that of Romanus, to encourage the Christians to stand firm and not to betray their faith: *iam Roma Christo dedita,/ Laurentio victrix duce, Pe.* 2.2-3; *dux et praeivus et magister illis, Pe.* 6.10 (Fructosus described as the leader of Augurius and Eulogius); *seque ducem recti spretis anfractibus idem/ praebuit, Pe.* 11.37-38; *se fore principium pulchrae necis et ducem cruoris, Pe.* 13.46, where Cyprian volunteers to be the first to offer himself as a sacrifice. In relation to the latter passage, cf. Asclepiades' words threatening Romanus: *primus exitium luas*, 94.

64. *opponere/ 65. oppetant*: For the homoiarcton in *Pe.* 10, see pp. 84-85.

64. *iugulos resectos*: alludes to Lucan 4.541: *iugulo poscens iam fata resecto*. In the latter passage, one of Caesar's rafts has been caught in a trap of Pompey's soldiers. Volteius, the leader of a Caesarian raft, persuades his men to kill each other instead of being taken as prisoners by their enemies. So, Volteius, using himself as an example, is the first to offer his throat and the same sacrifice was made by the rest of the crew until they all died. Dying voluntarily avoiding captivity suggests an honourable death. In Prudentius' verse, it is the Christians who offer their throats willingly to the enemy, the pagan authorities, and thus gain a glorious death (v. 65). In addition, in an analogous way to Volteius' heroic deed, Romanus' sacrifice also serves as an example for the Christians of Antioch who are present at his martyrdom. Finally, Volteius' characterization a line above the passage under examination (*primus dux*) also corresponds to that of Romanus in Prudentius' stanza (*Romanum ducem*, v. 62).

65. *gloriosa morte*: cf. *Pe.* 10.135 *mors ... incluta*. Although the word *gloria* is very common in Prudentius and esp. in the *Peristephanon* (see Deferrari & Campell 1932: 286-7), this is the only occurrence of the cognate adjective *gloriosus*. The expression *gloriosa mors*, which in Cicero is used to describe a 'glorious death' on the battlefield (*Div.* 1.51.33, *Fin.* 2.3.97), is in Christian texts applied to the sacrifice of the martyrs (Cyprian *De bono patientiae* 10, Hilary *Tractatus super Psalmos* 65.22). Cf. also Ammianus 22.11.10. In *Pe.* 13.46, we have the analogous expression *pulchrae necis*.

*oppetant*: cf. *Pe.* 2.329-30: '*libenter oppetam*,/ *votiva mors est martyri*', where Laurence's judge refers to the Christians' enthusiasm for martyrdom (with 60: *libenter emori*). For the topos of the martyr's eagerness to die, see n. 71-75.

*Praeceptis iubetur inde Romanus rapti  
solusque ut incitator et fax omnium  
pro contumaci plebe causam dicere.*

*it non resistens seque vinciri petit  
flexas et ultro torquet in tergum manus.*

66-70

67. *incitator*: a rare post-classical word. *LLT-A* gives six examples by Prudentius' time. Cyprian undertook a similar task, to encourage the people of Carthage to fight against the commands of Valerian and Gallienus: *contra animos populi doctor Cyprianus incitabat* (*Pe.* 13.38). Cf. also 776: *His Maccabeos incitans stimulis parens*.

*fax omnium*: cf. 591, where Romanus using the light/ darkness imagery, symbolising Christianity and paganism respectively, visualises himself as holding a torch: *Tamen in tenebris proferam claram facem*. For *fax* used metonymically to describe a person, see *TLL* 6.1.403.49-67.

68. *plebe*: for Prudentius' *variatio* and the different terms he employs to refer to the Christian flock (of Antioch), see p. 85.

*causam dicere*: a common legal expression meaning 'to defend oneself': see Powell (2011: 466).

70. *torquet in tergum manus*: cf. *Pe.* 6.103-4: *nexus denique, qui manus retorsus/ in tergum revocaverant revinctas*; *Pe.* 9.43: *vincitur post terga manus*.

*Amor coronae paene praevenit trucem  
lictoris artem sponte nudas offerens  
costas bisulcis exsecandas unguis.  
inrumpit altum limen et praeconibus  
stupore mutis ipse tortorem trahit.*

71-75

71-75. The martyr's eagerness for suffering and death is a topos in martyrological texts. Here, with a touch of poetic hyperbole Romanus drags his torturer after him.

The eagerness of the martyr which outstrips that of his executioners occurs also in the case of Vincent: *haec ille sese ad munera/ gradu citato proripit/ ipsosque pernix gaudio/ poenae ministros praevenit*, *Pe.* 5.209-12. For the martyr's eagerness to meet torture and death see Petruccione (1985: 44-47) and Roberts (1993: 64).

71. *Amor coronae*: crown imagery is central to the *Peristephanon*, the name of which indicates the crown of the martyr (στέφανος). On whether the title to the collection can be traced back to the poet, see Introduction 4. In the New Testament, the crown is the prize of the Christian who struggles for his faith (Corinthians 9.24-25, James 1.12, Revelation 2.10). Stephen, whose name actually means crown, is considered to be the first martyr (Acts 7, cf. *Ti.* 180: *o primae pietas miranda coronae*). In the *Peristephanon* it is the typical reward of the martyr (*Pe.* 2.556, 5.4, 10.755, 14.7).

73. *bisulcis unguis*: *ungula* ('claw' or 'hook') is an iron instrument of torture used for tearing the flesh of the martyr. See Ambrose *Hymn* 15.15. *Ungula* seems to be similar or identical to the *uncus* (see n. 109 s.v.). In the *Peristephanon*, the use of the *ungulae* usually comes third in the typological sequence of the tortures: see Roberts (1993: 61). After binding and stretching the martyr, their tormentor(s) tear their flesh with the claws. Many martyrs in the *Peristephanon* experienced this kind of suffering (*Pe.* 3.133, 4. 138, 5.120, 11.57). Here the claws are double (*bisulcae*), i.e. they are making double furrows on the martyr's skin as in the case of Vincent: *Ille unguarum duplices/ sulcos pererrat osculis*, *Pe.* 5.337-38. The image of someone who offers himself willingly to the double claws because of his passion for faith is also found in *Pe.* 1.44-45: *illa virgas et secures et bisulcas unguas/ ultro fortis expetebat Christi amore interrita*. For further references to the *ungula* in the text, see lines 484, 557 and 694.

74. Allusion to Vergil *Aen.* 4.645: *interiora domus intrumpit limina et altos*. In the latter passage, Dido rushes into the house before throwing herself on to the pyre. Prudentius expresses a common martyrological motif deploying Classical phraseology. On this allusion, see p. 61.

*Adstanti ob ora sic tyrannus incipit:  
 'infame monstrum, vilis, intestabilis  
 tu ventilator urbis et vulgi levis  
 procella mentes inquietas mobiles,  
 ne se inperita turba dedat legibus.* 76-80

76. *ob ora*: 'before one's eyes, in front of one'. Cf. Servius *In Aen. Lib.* 1.233: *significat 'ob' et 'contra', ut obstat et obloquitur*. For further examples of *ob os/ ora*, see *TLL* 9.2.14.52-60.

*tyrannus*: often attributed to judges in the *Pe.* (3.127, 5.168, 428, 10.676, 766, 1115, 14.21) or the persecutor in general (5.255, 10.520, 13.65). In *Pe.* 10.235, it describes Jupiter. In *Pe.* 5.534 and 6.111, it is used for Antiochus and Nebuchadnezzar who tried and tortured the seven Maccabees and the three young Jews respectively.

77. Cf. the asyndeton used to describe Galerius in 33 (*inmitis, atrox, asper, inplacabilis*).

78. *ventilator*: Late Latin word. With the exception of two earlier occurrences (Columella *Res Rustica* 2.10 and Quintilian *Inst.* 10.7.11), the word is documented from the fourth century onwards. Literally it means the winnower of the grain. Metaphorically it is the person who tosses it up into the air and thus translators have taken it here as the person who causes disturbance. See Thomson (1953: 235) 'disturber of the city's peace', and Lavarenne (1951: 122) 'tu jettes le trouble dans la ville'. Yet, the metaphor might have been used more literally. As the winnower separates the grain from the chaff, Romanus with his preaching distinguishes among the people (of Antioch) between those who stick to the emperor's laws and those who disobey them (v. 80).

*vulgi*: for Prudentius' *variatio* and the different terms he employs to refer to the Christian flock (of Antioch), see p. 85.



79. *procella*: for the storm imagery in *Pe.* 10, see n. 55 s.v. *turbini*.

80. *imperita turba*: cf. the pejorative *inlitterata ... frequentia* in the next stanza (82). Cf. also n. 78 s.v. *vulgi*.

*legibus*: i.e. the edicts: see n. 34.

*Populare quiddam sub colore gloriae  
inlitterata credidit frequentia  
ut se per aevum consecrandos autument,  
si bella divis ceu gigantes inferant  
victique flammis obruantur montium.* 81-85

82-83. *credidit frequentia/ ut ... autument*: anacoluthon.

84-85. Asclepiades here makes a comparison between the present situation and the Gigantomachy, the battle between the Olympian gods and the Giants. Line 85 refers to a *locus classicus*: the imprisonment of the Giant under a volcanic mountain: see Vian (1952: 7-10). Pindar in his first *Pythian* (15-28) ascribes this punishment to Typhon, Callimachus to Briareus (*Hymn* 4.143) and Enceladus (*Aetia* fr. 1.36 D'Alessio), and Vergil also to Enceladus (*Aen.* 3.578-82). The imagery of Gigantomachy has been adopted by the Silver Latin poets (e.g. Statius *Theb.* 3.594-95, Lucan 1.33-37) and Claudian, a poet contemporary of Prudentius (*Carm. Min.* 53 – *Gigantomachia*; note also that Claudian started writing a Gigantomachy in Greek, his native language, when he was young: see Charlet (1991: x)). Here, the Christians are paralleled to the Giants and thus the Roman authorities are identified with the Olympian gods. This kind of parallelism is very common in Classical literature. The imagery of the battle between the Giants and the gods has very often been used as political allegory: see Hardie (1986: 85-90). For Pindar (*Pythian* 15-28), Giants serve as a symbol of the defeated barbarians at Himera and Cumae, while for Callimachus

they are the repelled Gauls (*Hymn* 4.174). In Latin literature, gods and Giants are identified with the Roman emperor/ state and his enemies respectively. In the fourth Roman Ode (3.4.69-80), the giants stand for the forces that Augustus has managed to subdue. In Lucan (1.33-37), Nero is depicted as Jupiter after his victory over the Giants. This trend came down to Prudentius' era with the Giants representing the Germanic invaders in Claudian's *DRP* (1.43-47): see Gruzelier (1993: 96). Giant imagery also has similarly political implications in Claudian's *De Sexto Consulatu Praef.* 17-20: see Dewar (1996: 56-57). The battle between gods and Giants has been interpreted as a symbol of the conflict between civilization and barbarian savagery. In the passage under examination, we might have a hint of this symbolic use. Asclepiades emphasizes the absolute lack of education of the Christian flock (80: *inperita turba*, 82: *inlitterata frequentia*) which is a characteristic of barbarism. In any case, what Asclepiades' comparison certainly indicates is that it is impossible for the Christians to win this battle.

83. *consecrandos*: for the use of the gerundive as a future passive participle, see p. 82.

*Hoc tu parasti, perditte, spectaculum  
cladis cruentae de necandis civibus,  
quos ut profanos inpiati et saeculi  
reos necesse est te magistro interfici,  
tu causa mortis, tu malorum signifer.*

86-90

86. *spectaculum*: the word occurs three times in *Pe.* 10 (463, 701). Here, it refers to the death of Romanus' followers, in v. 463 to Romanus' martyrdom, and in v. 701 to the sufferings of the child martyr. The word *spectaculum* works in a twofold way. On one hand, it points to the public character of the martyrdom. Martyrdoms were very often taking place in amphitheatres, hippodromes or other public places where people could watch the martyr's sufferings. Perpetua, Felicitas and their companions were martyred in the amphitheatre (*Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 18ff.).

Polycarp is tortured at the stadium (*Martyrdom of Polycarp* 8ff.). Similarly, Romanus' *passio* took place in front of an audience (462-63). Romanus' martyrdom, as we are informed later on, is taking place in the forum (*in medio foro*, 398). Yet, there is another connotation of the word *spectaculum* (more evident in v. 463). In Late Antiquity, given that the secular spectacles (theatre, gladiatorial games) ought to be avoided by the Christian audience reading or listening to the *acta* of the martyrs was the spectacular alternative of such secular performances. The accounts of the martyrs allowed their readers or listeners to become spectators of the martyrs' sufferings. On *spectaculum* and the theatrical connotations of the poem, see Introduction 9ii. Thus, for Asclepiades, a pagan opponent to Christianity, the martyrs' torments is a public spectacle like the gladiatorial games. For Prudentius' Christian reader, *spectaculum* referring to the tortures and death of faithful Christians is the re-enactment of the martyr's suffering, whose life he or she should try to imitate.

87. *de necandis*: Bergman prints *denecandis*. However, the compound *denecare* is not attested anywhere else. Lavarenne, Thomson and Cunningham prefer *de necandis*. Similar constructions with *spectaculum de* + ablative are found in Late Latin texts. See Firmicus Maternus *De errore profanarum religionum* 7.3: *Illic cum amata submersus virgine miserandae matri de morte filiae funestum spectaculum praebeuit* and Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 40.10: *vobis laetum de nostro certamine spectaculum praebeamus*, where *praebere* is almost synonymous with *parare*. Finally, the variant *denegandis* does not seem suitable in this context and the similarity between *de necandis* appears to have been what misled the scribes.

90. *signifer*: in the *acta* of Cyprian, the martyr is also called *signifer* (4.20) by the proconsul Galerius Maximus in a similar accusation: *nequissimi criminis auctor et signifier* (cf. 91: *auctor inprobis*). Then the martyr is told that he should die as an example to the rest of the Christians.

*Ni fallor, aequum est ut quod auctor inprobis*

*tolerare multos compulisti ut carnifex,  
in te recurrat proque tantis caedibus,  
quae mox futurae, primus exitium luas,  
feras et ipse quod ferendum suaseras.'*

91-95

91-95. As described in the previous three stanzas, Asclepiades considers Romanus the instigator of the people's resistance to the laws and for this reason he plans to execute him as an example. Cf. similar statements in the Latin passions: *te gravioribus tormentis afficio in illorum exemplum quibus ut istud facerent imperasti*, Del. L. 2; *Igni te tradam in exemplum illorum: quibus persuasisti* (cf. 95: *suaseras*): *ut mihi resisterent*, Mom. 447.2-3. Cf. Romanus' words in 465: ... *nostrae sortis exemplum tremunt* (sc. the people who are watching his sufferings). Laurence's sufferings and death are also presented as an example for the rest of the Christians in *Pe.* 2.351-52: *hic solus exemplum dabit, / quid mox timere debeant*. Asclepiades makes use of an 'eye for eye, tooth for tooth' (Exodus 21.24, Matthew 5.38-40) type of punishment. Since the punishment for the people who were swayed by Romanus is death, the martyr will have to pay the same penalty.

92. *auctor inprobis*: similar characterisation in 794-95 (Asclepiades speaks): '*claudatur infans carcere et tanti mali / Romanus auctor torqueatur acrius*'; *Acta Proconsularia* 4.20: *nequissimi criminis auctor et signifer* (cf. 90: *malorum signifer*). In 1098, *inprobis* is used by Romanus for the judge. Cf. also *Cath.* 3.126-27: *auctor et ipse doli coluber / ... inprobis* (for the serpent who tricked Adam and Eve).

*carnifex*: a term used very often to characterise the torturers or the examining magistrates – two categories often assimilated: see n. 138 – in the *Peristephanon* (1.91, 3.14, 131, 5.148, 216, 6.17, 9.68, 10.548, 831, 861, 11.49, 13.94, 14.17), Asclepiades included (516). Cf. n. 496 referring to surgeons. Asclepiades will become not the executioner but the perpetrator of Romanus' death.

93-94. *proque ... caedibus / ... exitium luas*: *luere* = 'pay the penalty'. Cf. 204: *luat severam ... Scantiniam*; and *Apoth.* 542-43: *Iudaeus ... / supplicium pro caede luit*

(with Ovid *Met.* 3.625: *exilium dira poenam pro caede luebat*). Sometimes construed also with an ablative indicating the method of punishment: *in pia crimina morte luit*, *Cath.* 3.135; *carnificis gladio poenam luat hostis idolorum*, *Pe.* 13.94.

94. *primus*: here ‘first in order’, but further on in the text the judge will be informed that he is first in rank (*primum civium*, 113). Cf. *Pe.* 13.46, where Cyprian offers himself as the first to die: *se fore principium pulchrae necis et ducem cruoris*.

95. *feras ... ferendum*: for *figura etymologica* in *Pe.* 10, see p. 84.

*suaseras*: see *Mom.* 447.2-3 with n. 91-95 *op. cit.*

*His ille contra reddit ore libero:*

*‘amplector, o praefecte, nec me subtraho,*

*ut pro fideli plebe solus inmoler,*

*dignus subire cuncta, si me consulis,*

*quaecumque vestra iusserit crudelitas.*

96-100

95. Probably in opposition to 36: *Haec ille serpens ore dictat regio. Ore libero*, as Harries (1999: 228) points out, also stands in contrast with Asclepiades who is described as *tyrannus* (*Abstanti ab ora sic tyrannus incipit*, 76).

*His ille contra reddit*: recalls the Vergilian formula for the hero answering *talia reddit* (literally ‘giving back’). Cf. *Aeneas contra cui talia reddit*, *Aen.* 10.530; 2.323. The formula was used in Silver Latin poetry (Valerius Flaccus 8.59, Statius *Theb.* 4.625) and Biblical epics (Juvencus 1.351, 2.282, 3.29, 503, Cyprianus Gallus 1269). Cf. also Claudian *In Gildonem* 379. For similar expressions in Prudentius, see *Pe.* 2.185: *contra ille ... ait*; and *Pe.* 5.145: *his contra Levites refert*.

96. *praefecte*: see n. 41-42.

97. *pro fideli plebe*: cf. 62: *plebis rebellis*, 68: *pro contumaci plebe*. For the various words with which Prudentius refers to the people swayed by Romanus, see p. 85.

*inmoler*: cf. other cases in the *Peristephanon*, where the martyr (or the human soul) is portrayed as a sacrifice to God (1.95 – with reference to the cruelty of the pagan authorities – cf. 100: *crudelitas*, 4.65, 5.363-64, 10.749 – for Isaac –, 766 – for the tongue of one of the Maccabean brothers –, 12.27, 13.64). Cf. also n. 341-355 on spiritual offerings to God.

99. *dignus subire*: *dignus* construed with infinitive also in 205 (*dignus ire*).

*Intrare servis idolorum ac daemonum  
sanctam salutis non licet nostrae domum,  
ne polluat purus orandi locus;  
confido Sancto in Spiritu numquam tibi  
dandum ut beatum limen attingas pede,* 101-105

101-105. For verbal similarities between this stanza and the passions edited by Delehaye and Mombritius, see Appendix II n. 2 and 3.

101. *Intrare .../ 102. ... domum*: similar expression in the passion printed in Mombritius and Delehaye (see Appendix II n. 2). Another similar expression found in the passions, the Bible and other texts of the era is *intrare (in) ecclesiam* (Mom. 446.42: *ecclesiam Dei introire*, 45, Del. L. 1, Deuteronomy 23.3, Augustine *Serm.* 251.2, etc).

101. *idolorum ac daemonum*: it appears as a general belief in the texts of the apologists that idols and demons are essentially the same thing. See e.g. Justin *Apologia* 1.5, Tertullian *Apologeticum* 22-23, *De spectaculis* 13, Minucius Felix 38.1 and Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 3. Prudentius shares the same view. See e.g.

*Pe.* 2.263, 5.92: *divique et idem daemones*. This notion can be traced back to the Bible (1 Corinthians 10.20). For the prosody of *idōlum*, see pp. 88-89.

102. *sanctam salutis ... domum*: cf. 46: *templum*, 103: *purus orandi locus* (parallel constructions: adjective + noun + genitive).

103. *purus orandi locus*: see n. 102.

104. *confido*: with the preposition *in* + ablative is a Late Latin construction which appears often in the Bible; see *TLL* 4.0.208.39-54. Cf. the syntax of *credere* with *in* + ablative in an analogous context: see *TLL* 4.01146.34-58 and Mohrmann (1961: I.195-203). This construction only rarely is accompanied by an *ut* clause (Hilary *Tractatus super Psalmos* 124.4: *confidamus in domino, ut conformes corporis gloriae Dei simus*, Jerome *Commentarii in prophetas minores CCL 76A In Abacuc* 1.2: *quia confidit fictor in figmento suo, ut faciat idola muta*).

105. *dandum*: for the use of the gerundive as a future passive participle, see p. 82.

*atingas pede*: cf. *Pe.* 14.133: *pede tangere* (everything is purified by the touch of Agnes' foot).

*nisi forte noster factus in nostrum gregem*

*mereare sumi, quod Pater faxit Deus.'*

*incensus his Asclepiades iusserat*

*eviscerandum corpus eculeo eminus*

*pendere et uncis vinculisque crescere.*

106-110

106. *noster ... nostrum*: polyptoton.

*gregem*: on the representation of the Christian congregation as a flock, see n. 57.

107. *quod Pater faxit Deus*: cf. equivalent expressions in a secular (Plautus *Amphitruo* 461: *quod ille faxit Iuppiter*) and a Christian author (Augustine *Soliloquies* PL 32 col. 874 *ita Deus faxit, ut dicis*, *Ep.* 230.2). A similar fixed expression is *D(e)i faxint*, found in Plautus (*Aulularia* 149, 257, 788, etc.), Terence (*Hecyra* 134, etc.), Cicero (*In Verrem* 2.3.81, etc.), the *Historia Augusta* (Clodius Albinus 13.10, Diadumenus Antoninus 7.7) and Claudian (*Bellum Geticum* 528). *Faxit* is an archaic sigmatic subjunctive (*faxim*), future in sense, normally used in pre-Classical authors (esp. Plautus and Terence) and belonging to an elevated register: see De Melo (2007: 191-223 and *passim*). The sigmatic future *faxo* is found twice in Prudentius (*Psych.* 249 and *Pe.* 5.101).

108-110. Cf. Asclepiades' order for Romanus to be hanged on the *eculeus* ('little horse') in the Latin prose passions: *hic praefectus maximo furore repletus beatissimum Romanum in equuleum suspendi praecepit*, *Mom.* 447.6-7; *Asclepiades praefectus dixit 'In eculeo suspendatur'*, *Del. L.* 3; cf. also *Del. L.* 5 in n. 111 *op. cit.*. For the use of the *eculeus*, see n. below.

109. *eculeo*: *eculeus* or *eqquleus* (nom. = 'little horse' <*equus*). In some descriptions, the *eculeus* is described as a rack to which the victim would be tied. Their limbs would be stretched out and dislocated (Seneca *Ep.* 67.3: *eculeo longior factus*, Silius Italicus 1.175-77: *per artem/ saevitiae extendi, quantum tormenta iubebant,/ creverunt artus*). Cf. 109-10: *corpus .../ ... crescere*. However, in other descriptions, as in the present text, the person who is tortured seems to also be hung up (*Passion of Theodoret: afferri eculeum iubet, suspendi Theodoritum imperat. Quod praeceptum carnifices celeriter exsecuti, tam rota quam funibus beati martyris membra tendebant*; quoted in Vergote; see below). See 110: *pendere*; cf. 452: *pensilis* and 491: *pendeo*. The *eculeus* was used in the judicial process and, consequently, was often one of the torments a martyr would be subjected to. The stretching on the *eculeus* would usually be accompanied by other forms of torture such as scourging (*verbera*), iron claws (*ungulae, unci*, see n. below) and hot plates (*lamminae*, see n. 486 s.v. *lamminis*). For references, see Vergote, 'Folterwerkzeuge', *RAC* 8 (1972) 120-23, 133-141. In Romanus' torture, as we will come to see later on, the *eculeus* is



paired with the *catasta*, a scaffold on which the martyr is tortured and executed: see n. 467 s.v. *catasta*. The picture we could visualise is that of the martyr's hands and feet tied to each end of a wooden beam-rack (*eculeus*), which is placed on a scaffold, while his body is hanging below it. See the picture in Vergote, *op. cit.* col. 121. In 114, the *eculeus* is referred to as *noxialem stipitem*.

*uncis*: *unci* (nom.) are metal claws applied usually after the martyr has been tied and stretched: see n. above. Their use must have been the same or similar to that of the *ungulae*, see n. 73 s.v. *bisulcis unguis*. Cf. *Pe.* 5.173-74: *et stridentibus/ laniatur uncis denuo*.

*Apparitores sed furenti suggerunt  
illum vetusta nobilem prosapia  
meritisque multis esse primum civium.  
iubet amoveri noxialem stipitem,  
plebeia clarum poena ne damnet virum.*

111-115

111-140. The martyr's nobility; In this stanza, Asclepiades' officers point out to him that Romanus is a nobleman, something that appears to stem from two constituents that form the traditional concept of nobility (on that see n. 123-125): i) he comes from an old noble family (*illum vetusta nobilem prosapia*, 112), and ii) he has performed many services for the city (*meritisque multis esse primum civium*, 113), something that, as we can infer from Romanus' refutation further on, is equivalent to holding a civil office (124). Being tied and tortured on the *eculeus* does not suit Romanus's status, so the judge orders that he is removed from it. In the following lines, Asclepiades orders that the martyr receives a hail of blows of leaded lash, acknowledging that the sufferer's status does make a difference in the way they are to be punished (116-120). Then, Romanus gets to voice his opinion and refutes both aspects of traditional nobility (112-113, see above), opposing to these the Christian concept of nobility, that is, to be a servant of God (123-130). An additional honour can be attained through martyrdom (131-135) and, therefore, Romanus invites the

judge to torture him severely (136-140). For the way Romanus' nobility is described in the prose passions, see pp. 33, 37. Traditionally, during the judicial process torture could be applied to the *humiliores* (i.e. the lower class) but not to the *honestiores* (the upper class), to which Romanus appears to belong. For the dichotomy between these two social ranks, see Garnsey (1970) and Rilinger (1988). However, during the Great Persecution the exemption from torture was a privilege not applied to those *honestiores* who had converted to Christianity: see Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 13.1-2: *postridie propositum est edictum* (sc. the first edict) *quo cavebatur, ut religionis illius homines carerent omni honore ac dignitate, tormentis subiecti essent, ex quocumque ordine aut gradu venirent, adversus eos omnis actio valeret, ipsi non de iniuria, non de adulterio, non de rebus ablatis agere possent, libertatem, denique ac vocem non haberent.* See also Robinson (2007: 105-8, 120-27). For Romanus, an early victim of the Great Persecution given that he was arrested before the first edict was issued on 23 February 303 (see Introduction n. 58), torture still seems incompatible with his rank.

111-113. For verbal similarities between these lines and the Latin prose passions, see Appendix II n. 4.

111. *furenti*: *furor* is one of Asclepiades' (cf. pp. 67-68) as well as other persecutors' characteristics in the *Peristephanon* (3.66, 4.85, 5.162, 468, 11.5, 12.23, 13.89, 14.63). This 'rage, insanity' is often associated with the examining magistrates in martyrological literature: see Opelt (1967: 250-51), and Petruccione (1989: 125-30). In addition, it appears in the prose passions on Romanus. See Del. L. 5: *Asclepiades, serpentino furore repletus, sanctum Romanum in eculeo suspendi praecepit*; Mom. 447.6-7 in n. 108-110 *op. cit.* In *Pe.* 10, the eloquent martyr is characterised by *ratio* in contrast with the judge who is possessed by *furor* (175). Further on in the text, we see that the judge's outbursts of rage are associated with the black bile (391-95).

112. Cf. Ambrose *Exameron* 3.7.30: *prosapiae veteris clarus insignibus*; *Exhortatio virginitatis* 12.82: *nobilis virgo maiorum prosapia* (for the virgin martyr Sotheris);

Paulinus of Nola *Carmen* 21.212: *veteri togarum nobilem prosapia*; Ammianus 29.1.43: *vir nobili prosapia editus*.

*nobilem*: throughout this section (111-140) there is a repetition of the word *nobilis* (119, 123, 129, 138) as well as other cognates (125: *nobilitat*) or synonyms (115: *clarum*). However, in some of these instances (125, 129, 138), Romanus refers to the Christian concept of nobility which is different from the worldly one: see nn. 111-140 and 123-125. Prudentius also uses the adjective *inlustris* in the same sense (*Pe.* 2.521).

*prosapia*: ‘family, descent’. There are few occurrences of this word in Classical authors; 17 times at *LLT-A*, eight of which occur in Apuleius. After Apuleius, it is found in Tertullian and from him onwards, it is used much more frequently; around 80 instances at *LLT-A* up to mid-fourth century. In the other three places where this word occurs in Prudentius, it means ‘descendant’ (*Cath.* 11.89, *Psych. Praef.* 36, *Pe.* 10.180).

113. *primum*: not only first in order, i.e. the first to be executed (*primus exitium luas*, 94) but also first in rank among the citizens. Cf. n. 111-140 and 112 s.v. *nobilem*. Romanus is labelled *prior* and *primarius* in the Latin passion edited by Mombrinius (447.8, 448.8). For a discussion of the term πατρόβουλος which describes the social status of Romanus in the Greek passions, see pp. 33, 37.

114. Cf. the other Latin prose passions: *praefectus tolli eum de equuleo praecepit*, Mom. 447.8; *Quumque hoc audiret praefectus, statim eum de eculeo mandavit deponi*, Del. L. 3;

*noxialem stipitem*: *eculeus*, see n. 109.

*noxialem*: ‘injurious, noxious’, a word found for the first time in Prudentius. Further on in the same poem, it qualifies the prison into which Romanus is thrown (*carcer*,

1107). In *Cath.* 9.18, it describes the natural law of death: *merserat quem (sc. Christum) lex profundo noxialis Tartaro.*

*'Tundatur', inquit, 'terga crebris ictibus  
plumboque cervix verberata extuberet.  
persona quaeque competenter plectitur  
magnique refert vilis an sit nobilis;  
gradu reorum forma tormentis datur.'*

116-120

116-120. After it having been brought to his attention that Romanus belongs to the nobility, the judge orders that he is beaten with leaded lash evincing that nobility and people of lower social status should be treated differently in the judicial process: see n. 111-115.

116. *Tundatur ... crebris ictibus*: cf. *tundier* *atque eius crebro pulsariet ictu*, Lucretius 4.934, referring to the body being beaten by the air (with 121: *pulsatus*); *nam leviter quamvis quod crebro tunditur ictu*, 4.1284, on how *consuetudo*, 'familiarity' can create love, with a possible sexual connotations: see Brown (1987: 378). In Claudian *DRP* 3.427, Ceres' suffering for the loss of her daughter is described as repeated blows piercing her womb: *inmemor en uterus crebro contunditur ictu*. Closer to the context of our passage is Augustine's *Serm.* 314.2 on the protomartyr Stephen: *cum crebris hinc et illinc saxorum ictibus tunderetur, placidus et intrepidus*.

*crebris ictibus*: 'incessant/ repeated blows'. This expression, which is found for the first time in Lucretius (see n. above), occurs throughout Latin and especially epic literature (Vergil *Aen.* 12.713, Livy 2.65.4, 34.29.6, Seneca *Thyestes* 556, *Ciris* 196-7, 345, Lucan 3.628, 6.137, 6.192, Valerius Flaccus 4.306, Silius Italicus 5.502, 7.625, Statius *Theb.* 1.418, Pliny *NH* 8.169, etc., Suetonius *Caligula* 30.1, Apuleius *Met.* 6.22, etc., Claudian *In Eutropium* 450, Ammianus 29.3.5, Martianus Capella 1.88).

117. *plumboque*: *plumbum* denotes a whip with a leaden ball at the end of it. Cf. 122: *inter ictus ... plumbeos*. For examples, see *TLL* 10.1.2456.10-15. Here, the judge decides to impose this punishment on Romanus after having learnt that he belongs to the local nobility. However, the same punishment was adopted for the execution of Sericus and Asbolius, who were arrested as suspects for practising magic, a punishment that appears to suit their status as *humiliores*: *Sericum enim et Asbolium ... firmarat nullum igni vel ferro se puniri iussurum, plumbi validis ictibus interemit*, Ammianus 28.1.29, cf. Zosimus 5.2.4: see den Boeft et al. (2011: 64-65). Another word which was used as a synonym is *plumbata*: see *CTh* 9.35.2.1 (*plumatarum vero ictus*), 11.7.3, 12.1.80 (*ab ictibus plumbatarum*), 12.1.85.

*extuberet*: ‘let it swell up’, a rare word. *LLT-A* and *LLT-B* give only 11 instances by Prudentius’ time, missing four more in Solinus.

118. *competenter*: ‘suitably’, Late Latin word. It is found for the first time in the superlative in Apuleius *Apologia* 65. From that point onwards and by Prudentius’ time, it is found very frequently in the positive degree (not in the superlative).

*Pulsatus ergo martyr illa grandine  
postquam inter ictus dixit hymnum plumbeos,  
erectus infit: ‘absit, ut me nobilem  
sanguis parentum praestet aut lex curiae;  
generosa Christi secta nobilitat viros.*

121-125

121. *martyr*: (Gr. μάρτυς) originally meaning (judicial) witness, it eventually came to mean the supporter of God who (suffers and finally) dies to confess Christian faith. The latter connotation was developed and fluctuated during the second century. For a discussion, see Bowersock (1995: 1-21). Romanus is characterised this way nine times in this poem (391, 546, 561, 661, 897, 904, 1108, 1121). Prudentius uses the same label for all the martyrs of the *Peristephanon* except for the apostles Peter and

Paul. In *Pe.* 8, it is used only in the title and thus it is not certain if it goes back to Prudentius; for a discussion about the *inscriptiones* to the *Peristephanon* poems, see Introduction 4. Prudentius also refers to the original meaning of the word describing Romanus as the witness of truth, that is, God (9: *Vox veritatis testis extingui nequit*, cf. 133: *si confitendi nominis testem probum*).

*grandine*: *grando* (nom.), ‘hail’. Hail imagery is used to describe the stoning of the martyrs (Tertullian *Scorp.* 10, Augustine *Serm.* 314.1: *si beatus Stephanus sub imbre lapidum constitutus futura praemia non cogitasset, quomodo illam grandinem pertulisset?*). In the present text, the hail imagery not only reflects the incessant and strong blows the martyr received but is also relevant to the description of the persecution as a storm. On that, see n. 55 s.v. *turbini*.

122. *inter ictus ... plumbeos*: cf. 117: *plumboque* with n. *ad loc.*

*hymnum*: Romanus sings a hymn while he is tortured, while at the same time this very text in which we read about it is a hymn. Thus, we have the hymn inside the text for which there can be no doubt that praises God (and which we do not get to hear or read), and the text itself which through narrating a martyr’s tortures also praises God’s glory. Singing a hymn while being tortured demonstrates Romanus’ continuous endurance and a good Christian’s duty. The latter can be deduced from Prudentius’ programmatic *Praefatio*, where the poet purports to write a hymn for every occasion in a Christian’s life (*hymnis continuet dies/ nec nox ulla quin Dominus canat*, 37-38) referring to the *Cathemerinon*. In addition, Prudentius portrays the Christian congregation singing hymns in praise of the martyrs (*Pe.* 2.515-16, 6.151-52). In the *Hymn to Romanus*, the mother of the child martyr sings one of David’s hymns while her child is being decapitated: ... *deinde, dum ferit cerviculam/ percussor ense, docta mulier psallere/ hymnum canebat carminis Davitici*, 836-38.

123-125. There is a long debate about the qualifications that *nobilitas* entailed: see Gelzer (1969), Brunt (1982) and Salzman (2001). However, generally speaking,

since the early Empire, it has been associated with: i) prestigious political pedigree, i.e. having ancestors who had held a consulship or other curule offices; and/ or ii) holding a consulship or other curule offices. One who is not a descendant of a consul or other high official is considered a *homo novus*. Here, Romanus rejects both these aspects of traditional nobility, which often occur in combination (124: *sanguis parentum* and *lex curiae* respectively). Instead of the family pedigree and the attainment of a public office, he argues that being Christian and, consequently, serving the true God, as he will also explain in the following stanza (129-130), is what essentially ennobles someone (125). We come across similar renunciations of the established notions of *nobilitas* in secular authors. Cicero (*In Pisonem* 2) holds that it is *virtus* and not ancestry that confers true nobility on someone. In a similar vein is Juvenal's exhortation to Ponticus in *Satire* 8 to rely on his own worth and achievements and not on those of his ancestors. Seneca the Younger is of the same spirit in *Ep.* 44.5. Cf. n. 126-130, for an echo of another part of the same text in the following stanza. Turning to Christian writers, we come across the view that Christian virtues and not wealth or rank distinguishes someone (e.g. Lactantius *Inst.* 5.15, Minucius Felix 37.10: *Nobilitate generosus es? Parentes tuos laudas? Omnes tamen pari sorte nascimur, sola virtute distinguimur*, Basil *Hom. In Mam. Mart.* 2). Romanus chooses a *nobilitas* based on purely Christian criteria over family pedigree and secular offices. Hilary of Arles in 430 in his speech on the first anniversary from the death of Honoratus, his predecessor in the bishopric of Arles, makes a similar statement (*Sermo de vita Sancti Honorati* 4.1): cf. n. 126-130 *op. cit.* Nonetheless, Christian writers of the fourth century often acknowledge traditional concepts of nobility (pedigree and holding a public office), but appear to regard them as subordinate to Christian nobility, that is, being a faithful Christian. Cf. Jerome *Ep.* 108.1: *Nobilis genere sed multo nobilior sanctitate* [sc. *Paula*]; 127.1; Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 13.15. On this, see Salzman (2001) and (2002: 213-18 and *passim*). Here, Prudentius' view might seem to differ from other passages which concur with other Christian authors of this era who accept traditional notions of *nobilitas* but consider Christian nobility as the highest degree of nobility one can reach (see above). Eulalia is of noble descent but because of her own sacrifice to God she is even nobler: *Germine nobilis Eulalia/ mortis et indole nobilior* (*Pe.* 3.1-2). In *Pe.* 2, after

Laurence's death, the *crème de la crème* of the senate (*ipsa et senatus lumina*, 517), who formerly acted as priests (*luperci aut flamines*, 518), convert to Christianity and dedicate their children to God: *videmus inlustres domos/ sexu et utroque nobiles,/ offerre votis pignera/ clarissimorum liberum* (521-24). In the passage under consideration, Prudentius chooses to follow closely the prose passions (Del. G. 7, Del. L. 3, Mom. 448.9-13), where, upon being questioned about his status, Romanus confesses that Christ and faith to him is what forms his own nobility. Romanus attacks nobility of birth in the following stanza, and holds that being a faithful servant of God is what ennobles someone (129-30). Cf. 161, where the participants in the Lupercalia are characterised as *ignobiles*. Further on, the martyr in a way renounces nobility which stems from secular offices by means of portraying martyrdom as an alternative. Martyrdom comes as an addition to the nobility acquired by being a faithful Christian and confers the ultimate degree of nobility on those who can achieve it (131-40). Thus, in this poem, unlike *Pe.* 3, where Prudentius chooses a more conventional definition of *nobilitas*, blending the earthly and the spiritual, here he picks a more radical definition. In so doing, he is following the narrative sources (see above). But it is interesting nonetheless that he chooses in *Pe.* 10 to take this more radical approach, thus heightening the antithesis between the judge and the martyr, and hence intensifying the drama. For a discussion about natural nobility and body suffering, see n. 131-135. For references to the Christian nobility of martyrs in the *Peristephanon*, see 10.742, 14.124-25. For a possible allusion to the fact that Romanus belongs to the local aristocracy of Caesarea or Antioch, see 124 s.v. *lex curiae*. For a discussion about nobility in the passage under consideration, see also Henke (1983: 152-70) and Barnes (1974).

124. *sanguis parentum*: cf. 140: *genus patris matrisque*. Cf. also n. 126-130.

*lex curiae*: holding a quaestorship or even higher offices would give someone a place in the Roman senate. In lines 140-45, Romanus hints at high offices which make their possessors puff up with pride (i.e. a consulship, praetorian prefecture, and urban prefecture). In the four stanzas following these lines, Romanus mocks various facets of the public and religious life of Roman officials (taking auspices when entering a



consulship: 146-47, the pride which stems from holding the *triumphator's* ivory sceptre: 148-50, the participation of *proceres togati* in the ceremonies of Cybele and the Lupercalia: 154-65). Note Romanus' borrowing from the language of politics as a metaphor for the glory that martyrdom bestows on someone (*ut magistratus*, 132). It should also be added that the characterisation of Romanus as *nobilis* in combination with the reference to the *curia* might create the impression to a reader familiar with Romanus' Eastern origin that the martyr is one of the *domi nobiles*, a member of the local aristocracy and of the local *curia* of Caesarea or Antioch. On the *curiales* of the Late Empire, see Jones (1964: 737-57). However, the Roman focus of the poem, as discussed above, intensifies the impression that Prudentius (through Romanus) describes the martyr's status in terms of the city of Rome.

*Si prima nostris quae sit incunabulis*

*origo textu stemmatis recenseas,*

*Dei parentis esse ab ore coepimus.*

*cui quisque servit, ille vere est nobilis;*

*Patri rebellis invenitur degener.*

126-130

126-130. Romanus attacks the nobility of birth which pagans hold in high esteem (*sanguis parentum*: 124, *genus patris matrisque*: 140) on the grounds that all men have a common ancestor, God (*Dei parentis*: 128, *Patri*: 130), and only service to him bestows on someone true nobility: see n. 128. Henke (1983: 155-63), discussing the natural nobility, surveys a pleiad of texts and illustrates two of its aspects existing in late antique authors: i) though the body was made by God and, therefore, it is noble, its nobility does not suffice if it is not accompanied by the nobility of virtue, that is, being a good Christian; ii) the body, regardless of having been made out of a base material, is also bestowed with glory as it was touched by the hands of God, who breathed into it in order to give life to it. Both aspects of natural nobility co-exist in Prudentius' oeuvre, sometimes even in the same poem. In *Cath.* 10.21-24, the body is described as the prison of the noble part (*generosa pars*), that is, the soul, while further on the body is labelled as noble remains (*generosa fragmina*, 128)

made by God's hand and having formed the home of the soul (129-30). On the latter aspect, see also *Apoth.* 1033-40 with n. 123-125. Further on in the text, Romanus ascribes no value to the human body and one of his arguments is that it is something we are destined to part with and that is why nature does not ennoble it (529: *natura cur non vertit in rem gloriae?*). The idea that all men have the same ancestor essentially makes them equal. Romanus comes back to this idea in lines 522-25, where he argues that the loss of life is the same for everyone regardless of their social status: *hoc perdo solum quod peribit omnibus/ regi, clienti pauperique et diviti;/ sic vernularum, sic senatorum caro/ tabescit imo cum sepulcro condita est.* Henke (1983: 155-56) points out thematic and verbal similarities of this stanza with Seneca's *Ep. ad Lucilium* 44.1-2, where the latter argues that all men's origin can be traced back to the gods and, unlike the senate and the army, philosophy is open to everyone: (*philosophia*) *stemma non inspicit. Omnes, si ad originem primam revocantur, a dis sunt... multis quattuordecim clausa sunt, non omnes curia* (cf. 124: *lex curiae*) *admittit, castra quoque quos ad laborem et periculum recipiant fastidiose legunt: bona mens omnibus partet, omnes ad hoc sumus nobiles. Nec reicit quemquam philosophia nec eligit: omnibus lucet.* This stanza also echoes the beginning of Juvenal's *Satire* 8: *Stemmata quid faciunt? Quid prodest, Pontice, longo/ sanguine* (cf. 124: *sanguis parentum*) *censeri*, (1-2). Cf. also Hilary of Arles (430 AD) *Vita de Sancti Honorati* 4.1: *Nemo est in caelestibus gloriosior quam qui repudiato patrum stemmate elegit sola Christi paternitate censeri.*

128. The creation of man by God is described in Genesis 2.7: *formavit igitur Dominus Deus hominem de limo terrae et inspiravit in faciem eius spiraculum vitae et factus est homo in animam viventem.* Cf. *Ham.* 698: *'vade, homo, adflatu nostri praenobilis oris'* (God speaks). For other passages describing God's creation of humanity, see *Cath.* 3.100: *ore animam dedit* (sc. *Deus nobis*) *ex proprio* (for the variant verse (*flavit et indidit ore animam*), see Gniska (2000: 242-44) and Becker (2006: 145)); *Cath.* 11.49-52; *Apoth.* 690-91: *et oris/ adiecisse novo, quem primum finxerat, Adae;* 778: *finxerat hoc* (sc. *corpus*) *digitis, animam sufflaverat ore;* *Apoth.* 1033-40.

129. *nobilis*: see n. 112 s.v. *nobilem*.

*servit*: as both spirit and body are subjected to God and they both contribute to the attainment of Christian nobility, Henke (1983: 169-70) correlates *servit* here with *Cath.* 10.8: *et spiritus et caro servit (sc. Dominum)*.

*Honos deinde stemmati accedit novus  
et splendor ingens ut magistratus venit,  
si confitendi nominis testem probum  
signent inusta ferri et ignis vulnera  
et vim dolorum mors sequatur inclyta.*

131-135

131-135. In the passion printed in Mombritius, Christ is characterised as an *honor* (cf. 131: *honor*) and Asclepiades states that through the torments he will honour Romanus. *'Iam tibi dixi meus honor et gloria et ingenitas et cognatio Christus est... honorifico autem et timeo Christianos propter Christum autem quem nescis nihil vales mihi facere.'* Praefectus dixit *'Per deos licet primarius patriae sis, per tua tormenta inhonorabo genus tuum.'*, 448.9-13. On the nobility that stems from or is related to suffering, see *the Martyrs of Lyons* 2.4: τὴν εὐγένειαν διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ ἀφοβίας καὶ ἀτρομίας φανερὰν ἐποίουν (sc. οἱ μάρτυρες), Damasus Ferrua 37.5: *urere cum flammis voluisset nobile corpus (sc. Agnetis)*, *Pe.* 1.28-29, 5.569-76. As we have seen above (n. 123-125), nobility as described in traditional terms (ancestry and/ or high office) is not accepted or, when it is, devotion to the Christian faith is what bestows on someone higher and true nobility. Martyrdom is the way for the faithful Christian to prove their devotion. Here, martyrdom, which appears as an additional honour to someone who has already been ennobled through being a faithful Christian, is compared to an office: see n. 132 and 135.

132. *ut magistratus*: cf. 124: *lex regiae*. Sometimes in Prudentius, the martyrs and their achievements are described in terms of worldly nobility. Laurence is portrayed as the eternal consul of celestial Rome: *videor .../ ... virum/ quem Roma caelestis*

*sibi/ legit perennem consulem* (*Pe.* 2.557-60). Cf. also *Pe.* 4.74-76: *chorus unde surgens/ tendit in caelum niveus togatae/ nobilitatis* (the 18 martyrs of Caesaraugusta ascending to heaven). Cf. n. 135.

133. *testem*: the word martyr originally means ‘witness’: see n. 9 s.v. *vox veritatis testis* and 121 s.v. *martyr*. The witness confesses during a judicial process, and here more specifically the faithful confesses God’s name (*confitendi nominis*).

134. *ferri et ignis*: cf. 481: *ignis et fidiculae*. Both *ferrum* (‘knife, sword’, see also n. 501 s.v. *ferrum*) and *ignis* are common forms of martyrdom in the *Peristephanon* (5.61-62: *tormenta, carcer, ungulae/ stridensque flammis lammina*; 551: *per vincla, flammis, ungulas*; *Pe.* 1.49-51: *tunc et ense caesa virtus triste percussit solum/ et rogis ingesta maestis ore flammis sorbuit./ dulce tunc iustis cremari, dulce ferrum perpeti*; *Pe.* 3. 91-92: *ergo age, tortor, adure, seca./ divide membra coacta luto*, 115-20; *Pe.* 7.11-12: *non illum gladii rigor/ non incendia*). Emeterius and Chelidonius, Cyprian and Agnes died by the sword, whereas Laurence, Eulalia and Fructuosus with his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, died by fire. Asclepiades had ordered a fire to be prepared to consume the martyr but, as Romanus had predicted (853-55), it was doused by a miraculous burst of rain (856-60).

135. *mors ... inclyta*: cf. 65: *gloriosa morte, Pe.* 13.46: *pulchrae necis. Inclytus* in the sense of ‘glorious, illustrious’ qualifies martyrs (*Pe.* 5.285: *martyr inclyte*, 537, *Pe.* 14.2) or their deeds (*Pe.* 10.778) in Prudentius. Here, in the context of the discussion about nobility, it also has the cognate meaning of ‘noble, aristocratic’ according to Christian criteria, since martyrdom is described in terms of an additional worldly honour given to someone who is already ennobled. Cf. n. 131-135 and 132.

*Cave benignus esse perverse velis,  
nec mi remissus leniter pepercetis;  
incumbe membris, tortor, ut sim nobilis!*

*his ampliatus si fruar successibus,*  
*genus patris matrisque flocci fecero.* 136-140

136-137. Prudentius demonstrates a stylistic *variatio* by using two different types of negative imperative (136: *cave* + present subjunctive, 137: *ne* + perfect subjunctive). For other forms of negation in the imperative, see n. 18-19.

138. *tortor*: this term is often used for the persecutor (whether torturer or examining magistrate) in the *Peristephanon* (1.47, 81, 103; 2.358; 3.91; 5.6, 132; 9.59; 10.762, 1101; 11.59, 63). It is not very clear whether Romanus addresses the torturer or the judge. Often in these texts it matters little whether it is the instigator or the executer. As Roberts (1993: 63-64) observes for the torments of Vincent, which also applies to the rest of Prudentius' poems on the martyrs: 'Response to the victim's physical endurance is displaced from the *iudex* to the *tortor*, who, along with the jailer, acts as an extension of the magistrate's power in its coercive aspect.' If Romanus addresses the torturer, this is probably a collective singular because as we were informed later, the torturers were more than one (446: '*statis ministri?*'). Cf. 75: *stupore mutis ipse tortorem trahit*, where the singular can be taken as a generalisation. In the vocative also encouraging the torturer, see *Pe.* 3.91-92: *ergo age, tortor, adure, seca,/ divide membra coacta luto*. Another designation is *carnifex*: see n. 92 s.v. *carnifex*. For a list of names attributed to the persecutors in the *Peristephanon*, see Opelt (1967: 247).

140. *genus patris matrisque*: cf. 124: *sanguis parentum*. Romanus once again inveighs against birth nobility: see nn. 123-125 and 126-130.

*flocci fecero*: 'to care not, to consider something insignificant/ of no value'. *Flocci facere* is a fixed phrase found mainly in Plautus (14 instances). There are only a couple of occurrences in other comic poets (Terence *Eunuch* 303, Iuventius quoted in Aulus Gellius 18.12.2) and few in Republican prose authors (Cato *Oratio* 8 frag. 2 Jordan, Cicero *Epistulae ad Atticum* 1.16.13, 4.15.4, 13.50.3). The comic register makes the contempt towards the traditional concept of nobility and the judge's

authority even more intense. Cf. similar expressions in 478 (*parvi pendo*) and *Pe.* 4.166 (*parvi facit*).

*Haec ipsa vestra dignitatum culmina  
quid esse censes? nonne cursim transeunt  
fasces, secures, sella, praetextae togae,  
lictor, tribunal et trecenta insignia,  
quibus tumetis moxque detumescitis?* 141-145

141-145. Having expanded on Christian nobility, which stands in contrast to worldly nobility (see n. 111-140), in this stanza Romanus attacks traditional symbols of magistrates' authority that also had religious connotations. The association with pagan religion becomes more evident in the next stanza (146-150). Attacking these symbols serves as a stimulus of a more general depreciation of pagan religion, which starts in this stanza and will end in line 305. This is one of the two anti-pagan invective sections of the poem (141-305) in which Romanus revisits themes often repeated in Christian apologetics: see Introduction 8iii. Christian apologists had pointed out the vanity of symbols such as are described in this stanza and the fake superiority that they give to their owners, which can have a deleterious influence on their state of mind. *Fascibus et purpuris gloriaris? vanus error hominis et inanis cultus dignitatis, fulgere purpura, mente sordescere*: Minucius Felix 37.10. According to Tertullian's rationale (*De idololatria* 18.3) insignia of high rank including purple cloths and *fasces* are associated with idolatry, since they are used to decorate idols or are carried before them. *Ceterum purpura vel cetera insignia dignitatum et potestatum insertae dignitati et potestatibus idololatriae ab initio dicata habent profanationis suae maculam, cum praeterea ipsis etiam idolis induantur praetextae et traebeae et lati clavi, fasces quoque et virgae praeferantur, et merito. Nam daemonia magistratus sunt saeculi huius; unius collegii insignia, fasces et purpuras gestant*. Wearing or carrying these *insignia* is almost synonymous with being a pagan as doing so prevents one from being clean. *Nemo in immundis mundus videri potest. Tunicam si induas inquinatam per se, poterit forsitan illa non*

*inquinari per te, sed tu per illam mundus esse non poteris* (*De Idololatria* 18.4). Prudentius' aim is twofold. He wants to highlight the emptiness, and underline the ridiculousness, of these *insignia*.

143-144. Cf. the asyndeton in 512, where Romanus scorns luxurious cloths and accessories that adorn the body: *inlusa vestis, gemma, bombyx, purpura*. For the allusion to Juvenal 10.35 (*praetextae, trabeae, fasces, lectica, tribunal*), see pp. 77-78.

143. *Fasces* were bundles of rods, sometimes containing an axe (*securis*), which symbolised magisterial power. They were carried by the lictors, subordinate officials, who preceded a magistrate: see Marshall (1984). In *Pe.* 2.325-28, the examining magistrate of Laurence is very surprised to see that *fasces* and *securis* stir no fear in the martyr: *adeone nulla austeritas,/ censura nulla est fascibus?/ adeon securem publicam/ mollis retudit lenitas?* Cf. also *CS* 2.424-25 where the decemvirate is described, although lines 423-27 have been convincingly athetised by Gnilka (2001: 1-8). The *sella curulis* was seat of the senior magistrates and *flamines*: see Mommsen (1887-88 i: 399-402) and *RE* s.v. *sella*. Cf. also *CS* 1.349 (*post trabeas et eburnam aquilam sellamque curulem*) in conjunction with n. 148. *Toga praetexta* is a *toga* with a purple border worn by high officials as well as children of both sexes: see Mommsen (1887-88 i: 418-23) and *RE* s.v. *toga*. For the coupling together of the *toga praetexta* and the *sella curulis*, see Oakley (2005: 100) with references. For attacks against these symbols of magisterial authority in Christian authors, see n. 141-145.

*praetextae togae*: this variant, attested in some of the MSS, is adopted by Bergman and Lavarenne. Erroneous variants transmitted in the MSS include *praetexta togae* and *praetexta et togae* (among the MSS that transmit this variant is the Ambrosianus = B). Cunningham adopts Heinsius' correction, *praetexta et toga*. However, this correction seems unnecessary. Firstly, *praetextae togae* is a metrically suitable variant attested in the MSS. What is more, we have a plural (*praetextae togae*) in a passage which, as Fux (2013: 286) points out, is characterised by the alternation

between singular and plural. Here, it should also be added that the same alternation occurs in Juvenal 10.35, to which Prudentius alludes in this passage: see pp. 77-78. Finally, it is evident that in the erroneous variant *praetexta et togae*, which seemingly prompted the correction *praetexta et toga*, the *et* must have resulted from a dittography of the letter *t* (first letter of the subsequent word *toga*), which combined with the final *e* of the plural *praetextae* was later interpreted as an *et*.

144. *lictor*: see n. 143.

*tribunal*: seat of the judges. Note that Asclepiades – as well as other examining magistrates in the *Peristephanon*, see 3.64, 6.32, 11.77 with Roberts (1993: 71-72) – must have been also sitting on such a chair while interrogating Romanus, as we see in 916: *reponit (sc. Asclepiades) aras ad tribunal denuo*.

145. *tumetis ... detumescitis*: *tumere* is often used in Prudentius to indicate the swelling up of pride caused by sin and vain honour: *Psych.* 296, *CS* 2.330, *Pe.* 10.171. In the *Hamartigenia* it is used to describe the personified Ambition (*Ambitio ventosa tumet*, 399) and Satan (169). Closer to our passage is *Pe.* 14.100-1, in which we also have an enumeration of earthly offices after Agnes' spirit has left her body and, being lifted up, watches over the world: *reges, tyrannos, imperia et gradus/ pompasque honorum stulta tumentium*. *Tumescere* is used in the same vein in *CS* 2.154 *pulchroque inflata tumescat honor*; Cf. *laetus tumescit gaudio/ praefectus*, *Pe.* 2.133-34 related to the prefect's greed when Laurence asked from him time in order to list and give him Christ's riches. *Detumescere* is found almost exclusively in Late Latin. In combination with *tumere*, see Augustine *Serm.* 21D.13: *Si tumes, bibe poculum, ut detumescant viscera tua, ut sanus esse possis*. In this metaphor the *poculum* is the cup of humility (*calix humilitatis*).

*Cum consulatum initis, ut vernae solent,  
(pudet fateri) farre pullos pascitis.  
aquila ex eburna sumit adrogantiam*



*gestator eius ac superbit beluae*  
*inflatus osse cui figura est alitis.*

146-150

146-147. Here Romanus refers to the practice of taking auspices *ex tripudiis*. This is one of the five types of auspices (*signa ex caelo, ex avibus, ex tripudiis, ex quadripedibus, ex diris*: Festus 316 L). According to Cicero, in the old times – which cannot be specified more precisely than: at some point before Cicero’s time; on that see Linderski (1986: 2156 n. 29) – any kind of bird could be used for the *auspicia ex tripudiis* (*De Divinatione* 2.73). In Cicero’s time chickens (*pulli*) were the only birds used for this kind of omen, thus transforming the *auspicia ex tripudiis* into *auspicia pullaria*. The chickens were kept without food in a cage by the *pullarius* (= keeper of the chicken). Once released, food was given to them. The omen was considered favourable if pieces of the food would fall from the birds’ mouths to the ground. Hence Cicero derives *tripudium* from *terram pavire* (*Div.* 2.72). This positive outcome of the auspice was called *tripudium solistimum* (Cicero *Div.* 2.72, Festus s.v. *sollistimum*). Cicero condemns this practice because the auspices were ‘forced’ (*Div.* 1.28): see also Linderski (1986: 2155-56). There was no doubt that the hungry chickens would eat the food given to them. On the few occasions in which the result of the auspices was unfavourable, nevertheless the enterprise was undertaken leading to defeat, see Linderski (1985: 226 n. 71) and Pease (1920: 135-38 = 1963: 293-96) with references. Some of the people mentioned in Cicero (P. Claudius: *Div.* 1.29, *Nat. D.* 2.7; L. Iunius: *Nat. D.* 2.7; C. Flaminius: *Div.* 1.77-8, *Nat. D.* 2.8) and other Classical authors (for references see Pease, *op. cit.*, 293-96) had become stock *exempla* of leaders who disregarded the auspices and are mentioned for the exact opposite reason in Minucius Felix, a Christian apologist (7.4, 26.1). Cicero uses these examples in order to show that neglect of the auspices leads or can lead to destruction. Minucius Felix compares these examples with Caesar, who despite ignoring the auspices, conquered the Pompeians in 47 BC, proving the futility of these religious practices. Prudentius, referring to the auspice *per se* and not to specific examples from Roman history, stresses the ridiculousness of the omen. For a discussion about the auspices *ex tripudiis*, see Linderski (1985: 226-27 = 1995: 515-16).

146. *Cum consulatum initis*: *consulatum* or *magistratum inire* forms a fixed phrase for referring to people who are entering their consulship or magistracy and is used mainly in historiography, esp. in Livy: see Ginsburg (2012: 261-62).

148. *aquila ex eburna*: the *triumphator* bore the *scipio eburneus*, an ivory sceptre surmounted by an eagle, in one hand and a laurel in the other (Valerius Maximus 4.4.5, Livy 30.15.11). In the imperial period the *scipio eburneus* was borne by the emperors and the consuls: see Versnel (1970: 60) and *RE* s.v. *sceptrum*. The picture of a high magistrate who swells with pride because he is sitting on the *curulis sella* and is holding the ivory eagle is also found in *CS* 1.349. Prudentius underlines the ridiculousness of the situation with a touch of Juvenalian satire. Here, the description of the high official who holds the ivory eagle might echo Juvenal's depiction of the praetor who presides over the Ludi Romani: ... *et volucrem, sceptro quae surgit eburno*, *Sat.* 10.43. As in the Juvenalian passage, the reference to the *scipio eburneus* occurs a few lines after the poet has given a list of *insignia* and underlined their emptiness and futility (see n. 141-145). For this allusion, see Stella Marie (1962: 46-48) and pp. 77-78.

149. *superbit* .../ 150. *inflatus*: cf. *Pe.* 2.237-38: *hunc, qui **superbit** serico,/ quem currus **inflatum** vehit*; and *Psych.* 178, where personified Superbia is portrayed as *inflata*: *forte per effusas **inflata Superbia** turmas. Inflare* ('to inflate, to puff up') is often associated with pride which stems from earthly vanities, cf. *Cath.* 1.93-95: *aurum, voluptas, gaudium,/ opes, honores, prospera,/ quaecumque nos **inflant** mala*; *Ham.* 168-69; 438: ***inflaturque** cavo pompae popularis honore*.

*Iam si sub aris ad sigillorum pedes  
iaceatis infra sectilem quercum siti,  
quid esse vobis aestimem proiectius?  
nudare plantas ante carpentum scio  
proceres togatos matris Ideae sacris.*

151-155

151-152. Cf. *Apoth.* 455: *augustum caput ante pedes curvare Minervae*.

151. *sigillorum*: also used for the statue of Jupiter's eagle in v. 233 and the palladium in CS 2.546.

152. *sectilem quercum*: cf. 381: *deasceato supplicare stipiti*. Romanus eliminates any divine quality that can be ascribed to a god's statue by referring to it as a piece of oak wood. Cf. *Cath.* 12.197-200 where Prudentius describes how people have abandoned the gods of their ancestors made of stone, metal or cut wood (*fumosa avorum numina,/ saxum, metallum, stipitem,/ rasum, dolatum, sectile*). Cf. also *Pe.* 5.34: *tu saxa, tu lignum colas*. For a more detailed discussion of Prudentius' view on the statues see n. 266-295. Arguments similar to those found in Prudentius, providing a rationalistic view about what the images of gods are actually made of, often occur in Christian apologists. Cf. Minucius Felix 24.6: *Deus enim ligneus, rogi fortasse vel infelicis stipitis portio, suspenditur, caeditur, dolatur, runcinatur*; Tertullian *Ad nationes* 1.12: *... stipite Pallas A<t>tica et Ceres Pharia, quae sine forma rudi palo et solo staticulo ligni informis repraesentatur*. Arnobius (6.14) reduces the statues of gods to the material they are made of, among which is wood: *lignum sumptum ex arbore*. Ultimately, this kind of argumentation has its origins in the Bible (e.g. Ezekiel 20.32: *neque cogitatio mentis vestrae fiet dicentium erimus sicut gentes et sicut cognationes terrae ut colamus ligna et lapides*).

154-160. In these lines Romanus' target is the ceremonial *lavatio* ('washing') of the Magna Mater, the washing of the statue of Cybele in Almo, a rivulet of the Tiber. This ceremony would take place on 27 March: see *CIL* I<sup>2</sup> p. 260 and Summers (1996). It bears similarities and is sometimes confused with the procession that would take place on the first day of the Megalesia, the festival celebrated in Rome in honour of Cybele (4-10 April). Descriptions of the latter procession are given in Ovid (*Fast.* 4.179-372) and Lucretius (2.600-60). The picture we have from Prudentius is similar to that given by Arnobius (7.49): see n. 156. The phraseology used by Prudentius echoes that of Ammianus who refers to the same rite in Book

23.3.7: *carpentum, quo vehitur simulacrum, Almonis undis ablui perhibetur*. For other parts of the text in which Prudentius inveighs against Cybele and the rites associated with her cult, see 196-200, 1006-50, 1061-85. The cult of Cybele was a target that the Christian apologists vehemently attacked: see Vermaseren (1977: 180-82) and Fear (1996). For references to ancient authors, see e.g. Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 3, Augustine *Civ.* 2.5, 7.24. The *lavatio* specifically is ridiculed by the author of the *CCP* 106 (see n. 155), Ambrose *Ep.* 18.30 and Augustine *Civ.* 2.4. Given Prudentius' satirical attitude towards Cybele, it is worth noting that Juvenal had also scorned the same cult, although his main target was Attis and his castration (*Sat.* 2.110-16, 6.511-16).

155. *proceres togatos*: the cult of Cybele was very popular among aristocratic circles at the end of the fourth century: see Graillet (1912: 534-42) and Fear (1996: 44 n. 38). In the anonymous *CCP*, the author sneers at the rites of Cybele, in which the *praefectus*, to whom the poem is addressed, as well as other aristocrats take part: *egregios proceres currum servare Cybellae*, 106.

*Lapis nigellus evehendus essedo  
muliebris oris clausus argento sedet,  
quem dum ad lavacrum praeundo ducitis  
pedes remotis atterentes calceis,  
Almonis usque pervenitis rivulum.* 156-160

156. *Lapis nigellus*: according to Livy (29.11.7), the meteoric stone which represented Cybele, was imported by the Romans from Pessinus in 204 BC: *sacrumque ... lapidem quam matrem deum esse incolae dicebant*. In Prudentius' and Arnobius' accounts (7.49) it seems that the stone has been carved, acquiring feminine characteristics.

*evehendus*: cf. n. 154-60 with Ammianus 23.3.7 and *CS* 1.187: *utque deum mater Phrygia veheretur ab Ida*, where amongst other gods and cults Prudentius refers to

the import of Cybele to Rome. Prudentius uses *vehere* to describe Cybele's importation to the Roman pantheon and a cognate (*evehere*) for the procession of the *lavatio*. If the choice is intentional then it discloses the strong bond between the two, since the *lavatio* was the ceremonial reproduction of Cybele's reception in Rome in 204 BC and followed almost exactly the same itinerary: see Alvar (2008: 286-87).

157. *argento*: Prudentius is the only source which attests that the stone had silver decoration. Rather than considering his testimony as a single detail which escaped all the other sources, it must be thought of as an indication of Prudentius' unfamiliarity with or lack of interest in accuracy about the pagan cults. The information he provides is drawn from trite apologetic arguments against paganism rather than firsthand experience: see Alvar (2008: 287 n. 310).

158. *lavacrum*: post-Classical word, appearing from Apuleius onwards. It is used for the Christian baptism in *Cath.* 6.126, 7.76, 9.87, *Pe.* 7.29 and *Ti.* 166.

160. Although there are sources attesting to the *lavatio* in various places of the Empire other than Rome (see Graillet (1912: 137) and Ammianus 23.3.7 with den Boeft et al. (1998: 50)), the reference to the river Almo connects the narrated events directly to the eternal city, adding to reader's impression that Romanus' martyrdom takes place in Rome. On the Romanisation of the martyr's story, see pp. 39-40.

*Quid illa turpis pompa? nempe ignobiles  
vos esse monstrat, cum luperci curritis.  
quem servulorum non rear vilissimum,  
nudus plateas si per omnes cursitans  
pulset puellas verbere ictas ludicro?*

161-165

161-165. In this stanza Romanus condemns the Lupercalia, a festival celebrated on 15 February. After goats were sacrificed at the Lupercal, their skin was cut into loincloths, which is the only clothing the Luperci would wear during their running, as

well as whips, with which they would strike women of childbearing age: see n. 162. This blow would enhance their chances of getting pregnant. On controversies as to the recipient of the cult and other aspects of the ritual (and esp. the route of the Luperci) see Michels (1953), Wiseman (1995a) and (1995b). The ritual was associated with the foundation myth. The same festival is mocked in *CS* 2.862-63 (*iamque Lupercales ferulae nudique petuntur/ discursus iuvenum*). Minucius Felix (22.8) mentions the Lupercalia in his list of ridiculous (*ridenda*) Roman rituals. At the end of the fifth century, pope Gelasius denounces the festival in a letter against the senator Andromachus. Recent discussions have demonstrated that this should not be taken as proof of the survival of a pagan rite threatening the primacy of Christianity but in reference to a street festival performed by professional actors, which was supported by the Roman nobility for reasons of self-promotion: see McLynn (2008).

162. *luperci*: were priests (*sacerdotes*) originally organised in two *collegia*, the Quinctiales and the Fabiani, named after the *gens* Quinctilia and Fabia respectively. In 45 BC a new *collegium* was added in honour of Julius Caesar, the Iuliani. A *magister* was in charge of each *collegium*. In *Pe.* 2.518-19, the death of Laurence had such an impact on the pagans that the people, who in the past had served as Luperci and Flamines, now worshipped the apostles and the martyrs.

164. *cursitans*: ‘to run about’. The majority of the sources on the Lupercalia indicate that the Luperci run in a circular way. They use the verb *discurrere* (Ovid *Fast.* 2.285, Tertullian *Spec.* 5, Minucius Felix 22.8, *OGR* 22.1, *CS* 2.863). Augustine in *Civ.* 18.12 implies that they ran up and down the Sacred Way. On that see Michels (1953).

*Miseret tuorum me sacrorum et principum  
morumque, Roma, saeculi summum caput,  
age explicemus, si placet, mysteria,  
praefecte, vestra; iam necesse est audias,*

*nolis velisne, quid colatis sordium.*

166-170

166-167. The connection between the Lupercalia and the history of the foundation of Rome in the text is underlined by the reference to the eternal city in this stanza. By criticising the Lupercalia, a festival linked to the story of the she-wolf and the twins, Prudentius implies that Roma, the *caput (mundi)*, is supported by shaky foundations.

166. *sacrorum et principum*: Romanus criticises Roman religious practices throughout this section (141-305). *Principum* alludes to Galerius, who was described negatively earlier on (31-35), and possibly also to those Roman kings who laid the foundations of Roman religion including Romulus and Numa Pompilius. Cf. 401-15 and 611-15. Further on in the poem, Romanus will refuse to pray for the emperor unless he converts to Christianity (426-45).

167. *caput*: in *CS.* 2.662, the personified Roma, after having converted to Christianity, calls herself *caput orbis*. For analogous imagery, see the hymn *Passio sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli* 31, attributed to Ambrose, where Rome is described as *electa gentium caput*; and Prosper of Aquitaine *Carmen de Ingratis* 40-41: *sedes Roma Petri, quae pastoralis honoris/ facta caput mundo ...*; In the two latter passages the prevalence of the eternal city is due to the apostles. Roma is portrayed as the head in Claudian's *Stil.* 3.129 and she is restored to that position thanks to Stilicho. Cf. also the portrayal of Bethlehem as the city in which Christ was born: *Sancta Bethlem caput est orbis quae protulit Iesum,/ orbis principium, caput ipsum principiorum, Ti.* 101-2. *Caput* is also used for a city in *Pe.* 4.13-16.

168. *si placet*: is in contrast with *iam necesse audias* (169) and *nolis velisne* (170). The roles of the interrogator and the interrogatee have been inverted.

*mysteria*: only here and in line 217 does *mysteria* refer to pagan cults. Elsewhere it is used for the mysteries of the Christian faith (*Cath.* 7.6, *Apoth.* 290, *Pe.* 10.589, *Pe.* 13.91, *Ti.* 188). In *Ham. Praef.* 43 it refers to Marcion's doctrine.

169. *praefecte*: see n. 41.

170. *quid ... sordium*: cf. *stuprorum sordidam prosapiam* (180), where the usage of a cognate adjective in combination with a verb which means worship as in 170 (170: *colatis*/ 177: *adorem*) suggests that line 180 is the elaboration of *quid sordium*.

*Nec terret ista, qua tumes, vaesania,  
quod vultuosus, quod supinus, quod rigens  
tormenta leti comminaris asperi.  
si me movere rebus ullis niteris,  
ratione mecum non furore dimica.* 171-175

171. *tumes*: see n. 145.

172. *quod...quod...quod*: triple anaphora. Cf. the accumulation of adjectives qualifying Asclepiades in v. 33.

*vultuosus*: ‘grimacing, having a grim look’, very rare word, also spelt *voltuosus*. A search of the *LLT-A* shows that there are only four other occurrences by Prudentius’ time (Cicero *Orat.* 60.20, Quintilian *Inst.* 11.3.183, Apuleius *Met.* 3.13 and Ammianus 29.2.7).

175. *ratione mecum non furore*: strong antithesis between *ratio* and *furor*. *Furor* is the quintessential characteristic of the interrogator in the *Peristephanon*: see pp. 67-68 and n. 111. By way of contrast, the martyr is characterised by *ratio*, which describes not only his ability to think clearly, unlike the judge who is possessed by demonic powers. The proximity of *ratio* and *mecum*, although the latter is construed with *dimica* at the end of the verse, reveals this connection between Romanus and *ratio* and appears to be in opposition with *tecum* two lines further on.



*Iubes, relictis Patris et Christi sacris  
 ut tecum adorem feminas mille ac mares,  
 deas deosque deque sexu duplici  
 natos, nepotes, abnepotes editos  
 et tot stuprorum sordidam prosapiam.* 176-180

177. Cf. 670: ... *conprecari mille formarum deos*; and CS 1.27: *cum Iove ... multa et cum plebe deorum*.

178-179. Here the repetition of cognate words in combination with the triple *homoiarcton* (*deas deosque, deque*) is used with a disdainful intention, implying the great number of the existing deities and stressing their similarity in essence. For the use of such rhetorical devices in the poem, see pp. 84-85.

178. Cunningham wrongly puts a comma after *duplici*: ‘Punctum post duplici posui ut tria diceret genera deorum’. The second *-que* does not connect *deos* with *de sexu duplici*, but *deos* with *natos, nepotes* and *abnepotes*. All the accusatives in lines 178-180 (*deas, deos, natos, nepotes, abnepotes, prosapiam*) are words in apposition explaining the phrase *feminas mille ac mares* (176).

179. Bergman puts a comma after *abnepotes*. This is misleading since *editos* obviously qualifies *abnepotes*; cf. *una matre quod septem editi/ gessere pueri*, *Pe.* 10.752-53.

180. Cf. 170: *quid colatis sordium* (with n. *ad loc.*).

*prosapiam*: the copyists of O and S preferred the alternative fifth declension form of the noun (*prosapias, -iei*), which was in use by the fourth century (*TLL* 10.2.2168.5-14). However, the first declension form used in all the other examples in which this word occurs (*Cath.* 11.89, *Psych. Praef.* 36, *Pe.* 10.112) makes the possibility of the variant *prosapiem* rather unlikely.

*Nubunt puellae, saepe luduntur dolis,  
 amasionum conprimuntur fraudibus,  
 incesta fervent, furta moechorum calent,  
 fallit maritus, odit uxor paelicem,  
 deos catenae conligant adulteros.* 181-185

181. *Nubunt puellae*: though many gods have walked down Olympus' aisle, here Romanus must specifically allude to the couples described in this stanza: Jupiter and Juno, and Vulcan and Venus, both examples *par excellence* of matrimonial infidelity and objects of anti-pagan attack. There may also be a hint at Pluto and Proserpina, mentioned later on in lines 236-38.

*saepe .../ 182. ... fraudibus*: this is a clear reference to the stratagems that Jupiter used to seduce various girls as well as Ganymede. Prudentius talks about Jupiter's disguises further on in the poem (221-27, 233-35), as well as in *CS* 1.59-81. In lines 201-5, Romanus avers that had Jupiter gone to trial, he would have been found guilty according to the *lex Iulia de adulteriis* and *lex Scantinia*: see n. 201-205.

*amasionum*: *amasio* (= 'lover', cognate of *amasius*) is a rare neologism (*TLL*, *LLT-A* and *B*) found for the first time in Apuleius *Met.* 3.22, 7.21. The word appears in a fragment of the poet Septimius Serenus (who probably flourished in the third century: see Courtney (1993: 406) and Cameron (2011: 563-64), sticking by his earlier (1980: 172-75) arguments) quoted by Diomedes (*Ars Grammatica* p. 514). There it describes *culicellus*, 'a little gnat'. The fragment is possibly part of an epitaph on a gnat: see Courtney (1993: 412-13). Interestingly, Arnobius (4.34), with the only other occurrence of *amasio* aside from Apuleius, Septimius Serenus and Prudentius, employs the same word in relation to Jupiter's promiscuous behaviour, the deity that Prudentius also seems to allude to: *Ipse ille Iuppiter, ... , amasio captus ab uxore describitur confiteri culpas suas, et vel<ut> demens ac nescius, quas amículas coniugi, quas uxori anteposuerit pelices, obduratus inverecundia publicare.* Cf. n. 181-182. The context of the four occurrences of the word *amasio* before

Prudentius (Apuleius, Septimius Serenus, Arnobius) underpins the broadly satirical and even disparaging connotations of the word, also present in the text of Prudentius.

184. Clear references to Jupiter (*maritus*) and Juno (*uxor*). Juno would often avenge her husband's paramours: see n. 287.

185. The famous incident of Vulcan taking his wife, Venus, and her lover, Mars, by surprise and trapping them in an invisible net that he had constructed was first narrated in *Od.* 8.266-366. By Prudentius' time it had become a very popular anti-pagan polemic topic: Tertullian *Apol.* 14.3, Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 9.2, Minucius Felix 23.7, *CAA* 135-37.

*Ostende, quaeso, quas ad aras praecipis*

*vervece caeso fumet ut caespes meus?*

*Delphosne pergam? sed vetat palestrici*

*corrupta ephebi fama, quem vester deus*

*effeminavit gymnadis licentia.*

185-190

186-200. Asking to which altars he should sacrifice enables Romanus to refer to two of the most popular pagan cult places, Delphi (188) and the pine grove of Cybele (196), although the latter is not geographically specified. Each of these places offers the martyr the opportunity to describe the debased behaviour of their patron gods, Apollo and Cybele. In both cases, the mythological story about the god's lover, Hyacinthus and Attis respectively, is associated with effeminacy and inversion of both the traditional and Christian role of the male (see n. 188-92 and 196-200). Having described the unfortunate liaison of Apollo and Hyacinthus, the poet prolongs the harangue against Apollo by referring to his deception by Mercury (193-95).

186-187. Turf (*caespes*) could be used as an altar (Horace *Carm.* 1.19.13 and *OLD* 3b). Prudentius refers to this in a scornful way also in *Apoth.* 187 and *Pe.* 5.50.

188-192. The reason that the martyr would never visit Delphi is because the place is associated with the love story of its patron god, Apollo, and Hyacinthus. The latter was accidentally killed by the god's discus. From his blood sprang the flower hyacinth (Ovid *Met.* 10.162-219, Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.3.3). Clement of Alexandria (*Prot.* 2), Arnobius (4.26) and Firmicus Maternus (*Err.* 12.2) refer to this idyll in relation to the list of gods who have fallen in love with mortals. See also Pseudo-Clement of Alexandria *Recogn.* 10.26.

190. *gymnadis*: *gymnas* (nom.= 'wrestling'), a very rare word. According to the *LLT-A*, before Prudentius it was used only by Statius (*Achil.* 1.354, *Silvae* 2.2.6, 3.1.43, 4.2.47, *Theb.* 4.101). It is also used in *CS* 2.517 where Prudentius talks in an ironic way about the practice of the Greeks wrestling while anointed with oil.

*Mox flevit inpuratus occisum gravi  
disco et dicavit florulentum subcubam.  
conductus idem pavit alienum pecus,  
furem deinde perdit passus gregis  
segnis bubulcus tela et ipsa perdidit.*

191-195

191. *inpuratus*: 'vile, filthy', a rare word (12 instances in the *LLT-A* by Prudentius' time). In secular literature, it is used mainly in comedy (Plautus *Rudens* 114, 127, Terentius *Phormio* 669, 962, etc.) and also in Apuleius (*Met.* 2.25, 9.10) and the satires of Lucilius (57 M). A possible addition to the count is Lucilius' 54 M, where *inpuratum* is an editorial conjecture for *iniuriatum*. Minucius Felix (24.7) uses it to qualify the sculptor of idols. Tertullian (*Apologeticum* 23.14) uses it to characterise the prophets of the pagans, whereas Augustine (*Civ.* 18.23) quotes from Lactantius the prophecy of the Sibyl about Christ's treatment by the non-believers, saying that: *et inpurato ore exspuent venenatos sputus.*

192. *florulentum*: ‘blooming, in the bloom of youth’, a rare Late Latin word. In addition to a single occurrence in Solinus 7.18 (*TLL* 6.1.926.81-82), which is the first in the extant literature, a search of the *LLT-A* and *B* yields 10 results in Prudentius’ time (Ambrose nine times and once in Rufinus’ translation of Origen’s lost *Commentarium in Cantica Canticorum*). There is one more occurrence in the insecurely dated *Pervigilium Veneris* (19). *Florulentus* means ‘blooming, full of flowers’ (e.g. Ambrose *Exameron* 1.4.13) or can refer to someone who is in the bloom of youth (e.g. Ambrose *De virginibus* 2.6.39). In *Pe.* 10, as Thomson (1953: 242) notes, *florulentus* alludes both to Hyacinthus’ tender age and to his metamorphosis into a flower.

*subcubam*: rare post-classical word, <*subcubere*, hence it means ‘the one who lies under’ and by extension ‘lover, adulterer’. Aside from this passage, it occurs twice in Apuleius (*Met.* 5.28, 10.24).

193-195. Apollo was sentenced to serve Admetus, the king of Pherae in Thessaly, for a year (*Il.* 2.763-67, Euripides *Alcestis* 1-9). Admetus appointed him as a herdsman, but the cattle were stolen by Apollo’s brother, Mercury. This theme, very often in combination with the other two stories of gods’ servitude to mortals (Hercules and Poseidon), was very often picked up by Christian apologists (Clement *Prot.* 2.35.1, Tertullian *Apol.* 14.4, Minucius Felix 23.5, Arnobius 4.25). For Hercules’ servitude to Omphale, see n. 239-240.

194. *perditi*: cf. *perdidit* (195).

*An ad Cybebes ibo lucum pineum?  
 puer sed obstat gallus ob libidinem  
 per triste vulnus perque sectum dedecus  
 ab inpudicae tutus amplexu deae,  
 per multa Matri sacra plorandus spado.*

196-200

196-200. In this stanza Prudentius refers to Attis and his castration. His castration set the example for the Galli, Cybele's priests. There are many variants to the story as to whether Attis was Cybele's beloved and whether his castration was self-inflicted or the goddess' punishment. Attis is the subject of Catullus 63, in which his castration is depicted as the corollary of his passionate enthusiasm for Cybele's cult. According to Ovid's *Fast.* 4.221-44, Attis broke his promise to the goddess to remain chaste and fell in love with the nymph Sagaritis. The goddess drove him mad and Attis in his delirium fled to mount Dindymus, where he castrated himself. Christian apologists presented Attis' castration as a punishment for scorning Cybele's love (Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 3.1, Minucius Felix 22.4, *CAA* 79-92). For other references in Christian apologists and divergent versions of the story, see Tertullian *Apol.* 15.2, 15.5, and Arnobius 5.5-7. Cf. also *CS* 2.51-52: *cur Berecyntiacus perdit truncata sacerdos/inguina, cum pulchrum poesis castraverit Attin?*

196. *pineum locum*: the pine is Cybele's sacred tree. Aeneas' ships were made of the trees from the pine grove of Cybele on Mount Ida (*Aen.* 9.114-16, 10.230-31). On 22 March a pine trunk symbolising Attis, decorated with ribbons and wreaths, was carried by the *dendrophori* (= tree bearers) to the temple of Cybele on the Palatine hill. This procession is known in the Roman calendars as *Arbor Intrat*: see Alvar (2008: 70, 288-90). For a possible allusion to *Arbor Intrat* see n. 302.

197. *gallus*: here, Attis and from him onwards the priests of Cybele who followed his example in emasculating themselves. The word was also used as synonymous with eunuch (*TLL* 6.2.1687.50-66). Cf. *spado* (200). Many attempts to etymologise the word have been made since antiquity. Ovid (*Fast.* 4.363) derives the name *galli* from the river Gallus in Phrygia. Stephanus Byzantinus (s.v. γάλλος) traces its origin back to the king Gallus who emasculated himself. Jerome's view (*Commentarii in prophetas minores CCL 76 In Osee* 1.4) that the Romans gave to Cybele's priest the name of the Gauls was restated by Lane (1996: 117-33). On the name of the *galli* see also Vermaseren (1977: 96). Romanus describes the mutilation of one's genitals as part of worshipping Cybele in 1060-75. For references to the *galli* in Prudentius, see *CS* 2.521-23 and 863-64.

*Sed, credo, magni limen amplectar Iovis,  
 qui si citetur legibus vestris reus,  
 laqueis minacis implicatus Iuliae  
 luat severam victus et Scantiniam  
 te cognitore dignus ire in carcerem.* 201-205

201-205. The actions of Jupiter, though a god, contradict Roman laws and it is very likely that he would have been found guilty had he been summoned before a court. The same rationale is followed by Athanasius, after having contemplated (among other things) Jupiter's love affairs and his falling out with Saturn (*Contra Gentes* 11-12). On the incongruity between the gods' behaviour and the laws, see also Aristides *Apol.* 13.7 and Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 12.2. Note that the two aforementioned laws are part of Laronia's attack on passive homosexuality in Juvenal's *Sat.* 2.36-44.

202. *citetur ... reus*: 'being summoned for trial at court, accused', legal expression recurring in Latin prose, esp. in Cicero: see *TLL* 3.0.1200.48-54. Prudentius uses the same expression when Asclepiades accuses the doctor who cut out Romanus' tongue after the martyr is miraculously revealed to still be able to speak: *postremo medicum saevus insontem iubet/ reum citari* (968-69).

*Iuliae: lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, a statute complementing the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, was enacted in 17 BC under Augustus and punished adultery: see e.g. McGinn (2003: 141-215).

204-205. *luat ... Scantiniam* is equivalent to *luere poenam* (or *poenas*) *legis*, and hence it means 'to pay the penalty of, to undergo the punishment of the Scantinian law': see Lavarenne (1933: 466). On the usage of *luere*, cf. n. 93-94. *Et*, which is often postponed in this poem, connects the two participles, *implicatus* and *victus* (cf. n. below s.v.). A translation of this passage would be 'entangled (sc. Jupiter) in the

nooses of the threatening Julian law and convicted, he would pay the penalty of the stern Scantinian law'. On the *lex Scantinia*, see n. below s.v.

*victus*: the variant *vinctus* is probably constructed by analogy to the meaning of *implicatus* ('entangled, enwrapped') and also reminds us of the expression *vinctus + lege* or *legibus* ('bound by the law', see e.g. Ovid *Tr.* 5.31: *sic mea lege tua vincta atque inclusa Thalia*; Aurelius Victor *Caesares* 39.44: *Neque minore studio pacis officia vincta legibus aequissimis*). However, here *Scantiniam* is the object of *luat*; it is not construed with *vi(n)ctus*. It is also possible that the variant *vinctus* is associated with the fact that often in the trial scenes of the *Peristephanon* the martyrs are portrayed as or about to get *vincti* ('tied up'; cf. *Pe.* 5.109, 11.67, and 13.50). The picture of Jupiter as tied up would be compatible with Prudentius' satiric approach in this section. However, what seems to be Prudentius' point is that judgements made on the basis of both laws governing the sexual actions of mortals would have found Jupiter guilty.

*Scantiniam*: although we do not possess the text of the *lex Scantinia*, the surviving sources suggest that it punished sex crimes (*stuprum*) against free-born boys or (originally at least) *stuprum* with free-born persons of either sex. Thus, depending on the interpretation, Jupiter's conviction under the *lex Scantinia* can refer either to his affair with Ganymedes or to his liaisons with various married women. Cf. 182-84, 221-22, 227, and 235. On the *lex Scantinia*, see Richlin (1993: 554-71) and Williams (2010: 130-36).

*Quid aureorum conditorem temporum  
censes colendum? quem fugacem non negas  
latuisse furtim, dum reformidat malum,  
quem si beate vivere audit Iuppiter,  
plectat necesse est occulendi conscios.*

206-210



206. *aureorum conditorem temporum*: the Golden Age, a period of absolute bliss and prosperity, was associated with Saturn (Kronos), Jupiter's father. The latter, trying to escape his son's rage, took refuge in Latium (see n. 208). After this period of bliss humankind began to deteriorate (*Aen.* 8.319-27). In *CS* the Golden Age (*saecla aurea*) is described as the fictitious product of 'rank stupidity': *saecla vetusto/hospite* (sc. *Saturno*) *regnante crudus stupor aurea finxit*, *CS* 1.73-74. In *CS* 1.42-53 Prudentius describes how Saturn introduced the people of Latium to pruning vines and making tools, and ordered them to build a city called Saturnia (cf. *Aen.* 8.319-29). On Saturn's story in other apologists, see Tertullian *Apol.* 10.7-11, Minucius Felix 23.9, Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 12.8. All the aforementioned apologists, as well as Prudentius in *CS*, adopted the euhemeristic interpretation of Saturn, considering him a mortal man who had been deified by the people.

208. *latuisse*: common folk-etymology among ancient authors associating Latium with the verb *latere* (= to hide, to lurk), because it was the place in which Saturn had hidden (famously formulated in *Aen.* 8.322-23). For references, see Maltby (1991) and Marangoni (2007) s.v. *Latium*. This etymology is repeated by Prudentius in *CS* 1.48.

207. *quem ...* / 209. *quem*: the double *anaphora* where in both cases the relative pronoun is used at the beginning of the sentence instead of *eum* emphasises the answer to the question in ll. 206-7.

209-210. Romanus talks about the paradox inherent in worshipping Jupiter as well as Saturn, an enemy of his: see n. 211-215.

*Quid inter aras dissidentum numinum  
putas agendum? Martis indignabitur  
offensa virtus, si colatur Lemnius;  
Iunonis iram sentiet quisque ut deum  
signo aut sacello consecrarit Herculem.*

211-215

211-215. Following his remark on Saturn, Romanus in this stanza gives examples of such inconsistencies that make pagan religion seem absurd. The first two lines of this and the previous stanza share a parallel syntactical pattern: they both start with the interrogative pronoun *quid* and in the following verse have a verb of thinking (*censes*, 207- *putas*, 211) and the gerundive in the form of the infinitive (*colendum* (*esse*), 207- *agendum* (*esse*), 211).

212-213. The reason why Mars would be angry if Vulcan were to be worshipped is of course Venus: see n. 185.

213. *Lemnius*: Lemnos is the island on to which Vulcan was thrown by his father Jupiter. There, the Sintians, the local people, took care of him (*Iliad* 1.590-94) and this land became his favourite (*Od.* 8.284).

214-215. The expression *Iunonis iram* is repeated in the same part of the verse in 287 (see n.). Juno is generally associated with *ira* ('anger, wrath') which is often directed toward her husband's paramours (e.g. Vergil *Geo.* 3.152-53 and Ovid *Her.* 14.85, against Io). A famous expression of Juno's wrath is found in the *Aeneid* (... *saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram*, 1.4) because of the great future promised to Rome (rather than to Carthage, her preferred city), the judgement of Paris and the rape of Ganymede. Here, Juno's *ira* is mentioned with reference to Hercules. Juno's hatred of Hercules, an extra-marital progeny of her husband with the mortal Alcmena (see n. 227), is attested since the age of the Homeric epics (*Il.* 18.119: ἀργάλεος χολός). Juno tried to have Hercules killed at birth and later during infancy (e.g. Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 2.4.8), while she continued her persecution in the course of his labours (e.g. Ovid *Her.* 9 *passim*).

*Dicis licenter haec poetas fingere,  
sed sunt et ipsi talibus mysteriis  
tecum dicati quodque describunt colunt.*

*tu cur piaculum tam libenter lectitas,  
cur in theatris te vidente id plauditur?* 216-220

216-219. In *CS* there is also this connection between poetry and the art of painting on the one hand, and paganism on the other. In *CS* 2 Prudentius (through Arcadius and Honorius, in whose mouths this speech is put) accuses the poets of creating pagan gods: *ad simulatis/ iure poetarum numen componere monstris*, 39-40. Here, Romanus talks about poetry, but he will chastise painting soon afterwards (266-95). Prudentius does not disapprove of poets as such. After all he is writing poetry himself and calls himself a poet (*Pe.* 2.574). Where he has a problem is with those poets who write about pagan gods and their behaviour: such poets, like Homer (*CS* 2.46), Prudentius holds responsible for creating false deities and encouraging their erroneous worship. Minucius Felix also attacks the stories narrated in Homer's poems because such tales stoke people's vices and corrupt the younger generation (24.2-8). Tertullian attacks poets who write stories that debase the gods such as the wounding of Venus by Diomedes, the servitude of Apollo and Neptunus, Aesculapius being struck by a thunderbolt, etc. (*Apol.* 14.2-6): see Brown (2003: 107-9). For further references, see n. 216.

216. *poetas fingere*: cf. Tertullian *Ad nationes* 1.10: *Exinde quis non poetarum ex auctoritate principis sui (sc. Homeri) in deos insolens aut vera prodendo aut falsa fingendo?* Tertullian accuses Homer and the poets who reiterated his stories about the gods. The combination of the words *poetae* (regardless of the case) and *fingere*, used in a sense analogous to that of Prudentius' passage, occurs several times in Augustine; *Civ.* 4.10 (on the invention of the tale on the birth of Minerva from Jupiter's head), 9.7 (rendering Apuleius' words according to which the poets make demons into gods), etc.

219. *piaculum*: syncope here inevitable due to metrical restrictions. In all other instances *piaculum* (*Apoth.* 544, *CS* 1.522, *Pe.* 10.1047). For other examples of words ending in *-culum* and alternatively in *-clum* in Prudentius' oeuvre see Lavarenne (1933: 35).

219-220. The poetry of Homer and other poets who narrated mythological stories debasing gods and by extension their worshippers, and the poetry of the dramatists, which is re-enacted on stage, treat the same or similar topics. Cf. e.g. Augustine *Civ.* 7.26: *quid sunt ad hoc malum* (sc. the castration of Cybele's eunuchs) *furta Mercurii, Veneris lascivia, stupra ac turpitudines ceterorum, quae proferremus de libris, nisi cotidie cantarentur et saltarentur in theatris?*

220. Any kind of public spectacle in general (gladiatorial games, horse races), and theatrical performances in particular, were the target of the early Christian writers. Prudentius' view is along the same lines. For Christian writers' and Prudentius' attitudes towards theatre, see Introduction 9ii. Romanus' question gives him the opportunity to talk about the pantomime in the two following stanzas. The pantomime was performed by a dancer (*pantomimus* or *histrion*) who imitated-interpreted emotions and movements, and was accompanied by other performers who were singing and playing music. Pantomimes represented famous incidents from tragedies and comedies. On the pantomime, see Manuwald (2011: 184-86) with bibliography. Such performances, and especially the involvement of the stories of gods in them, were very often attacked by the apologists. See Tertullian *Apol.* 15.4, Arnobius 4.35, Tatian *Oratio ad Graecos* 22, Theophilus 3.15; and n. 219-220.

*Cygnus stuprator peccat inter pulpita,  
saltat Tonantem tauricornem ludius;  
spectator horum pontifex summus sedes  
ridesque et ipse nec negando diluis,  
cum fama tanti polluat numinis.* 221-225

221-227. Jupiter and his love affairs were a common target for the Christian apologists (Tertullian *Apol.* 21.8, Firmicus *Err.* 12.2, Arnobius 4.26, *CCP* 9-12, Aristides *Apol.* 9). Each author provides his own list of Jupiter's paramours, adding or omitting individual cases. Such lists stress the ridiculousness of the situation in

which the father of the gods takes the form of various animals to seduce innocent women, and thus proving himself unworthy of his worshippers' respect and violating laws which even humans are supposed to observe (cf. 201-5). Prudentius lists some of Jupiter's love affairs in *CS* 1.59-81: Europa, Leda, Daphne, Ganymedes. On Jupiter's disguises on stage, see Cyprian *Ad Donatum* 8.

221. *Cygnus*: Jupiter turned into a swan in order to seduce Leda, Helen's mother. References to this myth can be found in many authors: Ovid *Met.* 6.109, *Her.* 8. 67-68, Statius *Thebaid* 503-5, Seneca *Phaedra* 301-2. Cf. Juvenal *Sat.* 6.63 referring to the actor Bathyllus who plays Leda in a *pantomimus* performance.

*inter pulpita*: *pulpita* (pl.) is the stage. Here, *inter* + accusative is used to denote the place where (= in): see Svennung (1935: 360). Cf. 1016 where Romanus describes the wooden platform built above the priest for the *taurobolium*.

222. Jupiter disguised as a white bull abducted Europa and carried her off to Crete (Ovid *Met.* 2.833-75, *Fast.* 5.605-17, Apollodoros *Bibliotheca* 3.1.1, Hyginus *Fabulae* 178).

*salat*: with accusative, see Kühner and Stegmann (1912-1914: I.278).

*Tonantem*: see n. 277.

*tauricornem*: *hapax legomenon*. On other compounds created by Prudentius, see Lavarenne (1933: 427-28).

223. *pontifex summus sedes*: *pontifex summus* could be interpreted as another form of *pontifex maximus* (which here would not fit in the metre). The same appellation is documented in Juvenal 4.46 and Tacitus *Annales* 3.58.3. *Pontifex maximus*, the head of the *collegium pontificum*, was the most important office in the Roman religion and since Augustus had been held by the emperor. Gratian has traditionally been considered the last emperor to hold this title or the first to abjure it. However, as

Cameron has clarified (2011: 51-56), it seems more probable that the title of *pontifex maximus* around that time was replaced by the title of *pontifex inclitus*, a title which was redefined in a Christian sense. In any case, it would be strange for Romanus to address the judge as *pontifex summus*, a title which had been used as equivalent to *pontifex maximus*. To heal the anomaly, Cunningham corrects *sedes* to *sedet* in his edition. Hudson-Williams (1967: 295) rejects the correction and refers to the first line of the next stanza (*Cur tu, sacrate, per cachinnos solveris*: 226). Cunningham (1971: 69) restated his view a few years later: ‘Surely, line 224 *ridesque et ipse* would be as suitable and nearer to line 223. But *et ipse* in 224 in fact helps to support the suggestion that the *pontifex summus* (222) and the *tu* (224) are not the same but different person’. Cunningham’s correction could be one solution to the problem. However, Tertullian refers to the high priest of Mithras as *summus pontifex* (*De praescriptione haereticorum* 40). In this light, *summus pontifex* can imply a high priest of some of the cults practised in the context of Roman religion. Fux (2013: 301) also connects this passage to *sacratus* in line 226 and suggests that it might allude to Praetextatus: ‘le martyr semble apostropher le *pontifex maximus* (l’empereur), mais ses propos sont adressés à son représentant, appelé *sacrate* au v. 226 (possible allusion à Prétextat, dévot préfet de la Ville)’. Praetextatus, urban prefect in 368, seems to be the subject of the *CCP*. The author of this poem employs various forms of the word *sacratus* (cf. n. 226 s.v.) to refer to him: see Cameron (2011: 305-6). Regardless of whether Prudentius refers to someone specifically, *pontifex summus*, interpreted as high priest and coupled with the image of Asclepiades who is described as prefect (see n. 41-42), creates the impression of a pagan high official who could also hold a religious office. This solution to the problem, which seems the most plausible, renders Cunningham’s correction unnecessary. For *pontifex* in Prudentius, used to describe pagan priests, see *Apoth.* 461, *Pe.* 2.525, 5.36 and 10.1043.

*Cur tu, sacrate, per cachinnos solveris,  
cum se maritum fingit Alcmenae deus?  
meretrix Adonem vulneratum scaenica*

*libidinoso plangit adfectu palam,  
nec te lupanar Cypridis sanctae movet?*

226-230

226. *sacrate*: used as a substantive only here in Prudentius. It conveys the meaning of both ‘initiate’ and ‘cursed’: see Cameron (2011: 305-6). If *pontifex summus* (223) and *tu* (226) is the same person, then both meanings fit in well with the judge (see n. 223).

*cachinnos*: Gnilka (2001: 250-52) considers this word here and in *CS* 2.403 to be a signifier pointing to Juvenal’s satirical programme (*Sat.* 10.31). The laughter of the Christians stemming from the absurdities of the heathen customs (as will be revealed in 246-50) is analogous to that of the pagans who laugh while watching theatre: see n. 246-50. *Cachinnus* is also mentioned in *Pe.* 2.323 in a context relevant to that of *Pe.* 10. After it is revealed that the treasures of the church Laurence was supposed to be assembling are actually the poor and disabled people of the church, his judge asks the martyr if he has been making fun of him all that time using the phrase *saltas fabulam* (320), which applies to the pantomime: see Fux (2003: n. 320 and 323).

227. Jupiter disguised as Amphitryon, Alcmene’s husband, in order to seduce her while her real husband was away. It was a very popular theme in both comedy and tragedy: De Melo (2011: 6-8). However, the only complete extant play on the theme in Latin is Plautus’ comedy *Amphitruo*.

228. *meretrix ... scaenica*: actors were people of low status: mainly slaves, foreigners and freedmen: see e.g. Manuwald (2011: 85-89) and esp. for Late Antiquity, see French (1998). Actresses were often associated with prostitution: see Edwards (1997).

*Adonem*: Venus’ lover whose myth has many variations (see e.g. Ovid *Met.* 10.503-59, 707-39; Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 3.14.3-4). A boar (which in some versions is Mars, jealous of his rival, transformed into the wild animal) killed the youth (Lactantius *Inst.* 1.17, Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 9.1).

The variant *spadonem*, eunuch, fits the metre but not the context and must have been the result of the confusion between the situation of Venus and Cybele (cf. 200).

228-229. Prudentius' description of Venus' lament on stage bears similarities with Arnobius' (4.35): *regnatoris et populi procreatrix amans saltatur Venus et per **adfectus** omnes **meretriciae** vilitatis inpudica exprimitur imitatione bacchari*. In both texts Venus is suffering on stage in a way that she can therefore be assumed to be a harlot. On Venus' pantomimic portrayal on stage cf. Cyprian *Ad Donatum* 8: *Exprimunt inpudicam Venerem*. Arnobius (7.33), inveighing against the argument that the pagan *spectacula* appease the gods, is wondering whether Venus is going to be pleased by watching a pantomimic enactment of Adonis: *Obliterabit offensam Venus si Adonis in habitu gestum agere viderit saltatoriis in motibus pantomimos?* For Venus in an inappropriate appearance mourning for Adonis see also CCP 19-20: ***Plangitur** in templis iuvenis formosus Adonis:/ nuda Venus deflet*.

230. *lupanar*: 'brothel' and metonymically the 'acts carried out there' (TLL 7.2.1847.18-29).

*Quid quod sub ipsis veritas signis patet  
formata in aere criminum vestigiis?  
quid vult sigillum semper adfixum Iovi  
avis ministrae? nempe velox armiger  
leno, exoletum qui tyranno pertulit.* 231-235

231-240. In the next two stanzas, Romanus describes two famous myths as depicted in statues. The role of art in the creation and dissemination of pagan religion is discussed in 266-295 (see n. *ad loc.*).

232. *formata in aere*: cf. 266: *Sed pulchra res est forma in aere sculptilis*.



233-235. Ganymedes, a youth of exquisite beauty, was Jupiter's lover. According to Homer (*Il.* 20.232-35) the gods carried him off to Olympus to become Jupiter's cup-bearer. However, later authors present Jupiter himself (Vergil *Aen.* 5.252-55) or Jupiter disguised into an eagle as Ganymedes' ravisher (Ovid *Met.* 10.155-61). It was a recurrent theme among Christian apologists. It is included on the list of homosexual liaisons in Greek mythology (Arnobius 4.26, Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 12.2, Clement *Prot.* 2). On Ganymedes among Jupiter's paramours see Arnobius 5.44, 7.33. Cf. also n. 188-92. Reference to Ganymedes justifies why Jupiter would have been convicted under the Scantinian law had he been summoned to court (204-5). Cf. CS 1.69-71 referring to the same incident: *armigero modo sordidulam curante rapinam/ conpressu inmundo miserum adficiens catamitum/ pelice iam puero magis indignante sorore.*

234. *armiger*: for the eagle as Jupiter's arm-bearer (i.e. the creature who carries Jupiter's thunderbolts) in Ganymedes' rape cf. *quem* (sc. Ganymedes) *praepes ab Ida/ sublimem pedibus rapuit Iovis armiger uncis*, Vergil *Aen.* 5.254-55.

235. *exoletum*: past participle of the verb *exolesco* 'to grow up', which came to mean 'male prostitute' or '*puer deliciae* who has passed the age of childhood': see Butrica (2005: 223-31) and Williams (2010: 90-93). In Christian authors, as we can infer from Arnobius (5.31, 6.13) and the present text, *exoletus* became synonymous with *cinaedus* or *pathicus*. Cf. n. 240.

*Facem recincta veste praetendit Ceres;*

*cur, si deorum nemo rapuit virginem,*

*quam nocte quaerens mater errat pervigil?*

*fusos rotantem cernimus Tirynthium;*

*cur, si Neerae non fuit ludibrio?*

236-240

236-238. Persephone's/ Proserpina's rape by Pluto/ Dis is mentioned for the first time in Hesiod's *Theogony* 914 and described in more detail in the *Homeric Hymn to*

*Demeter*. Among later authors, see Ovid *Fast.* 393-620 and Hyginus *Fabulae* 146. Minucius Felix 22.2 and Arnobius 5.24-25 use the story to explain the origins of the Eleusinian mysteries and the Thesmophoria respectively. Firmicus Maternus uses the euhemeristic interpretation to explain the story (*Err.* 7). According to him, all the people involved in the story were mortal. Proserpina was kidnapped by Pluto, a rich country landowner. Ceres, upon learning about her daughter's abduction, arouse armed men against Pluto. The latter drove his chariot into the middle of a lake where it drowned. The people of Henna where the incident took place asserted that Pluto was the immortal king of the Underworld in order to console the mother mourning her drowned daughter. Prudentius discusses Proserpina's rape and the various forms in which she appears in *CS* 1.355-78. For Proserpina as Hecate, see also *Apoth.* 460-502. Note that roughly the same time when Prudentius is writing the *Peristephanon* poems, Claudian is working on his *De raptu Proserpinae*: see Introduction liii and iv.

239-240. As a result of the murder of Iphitus Hercules was sold to Omphale, the queen of Lydia, to serve as a slave doing female tasks for a year (Sophocles *Trachiniae* 69-70, Propertius 4.9.47-50). In Attic comedy the story of Hercules and Omphale was used for contemporary political allegory with implicit reference to Pericles and Aspasia (see e.g. Fowler 2013: 320). Ovid (*Fast.* 2.303-58) uses the story to provide an aetiology for why people are naked during the Lupercalia; that is because Hercules was caught wearing Omphale's clothes. Christian apologists included the story of Hercules' servitude on their list of gods who served mortals: Clement *Prot.* 2.35.1, Arnobius 4.25. For Apollo's servitude to Admetus, see n. 193-195. Hercules' servitude to Omphale is also mentioned in Origen *Contra Celsum* 7.54. On Omphale, see Easterling (2007). The hero's enforced service to Omphale here is explained as the result of a love affair (*Neaerae ludibrio*), contrary to most other versions. Elsewhere, Hercules' punishment is in atonement for the murder of Iphitus, Iole's brother. Having completed his punishment, the Greek hero sacks Oechalia because of his desire for Iole (according to the messenger Lichas, *Trach.* 352-57, 431-33, 476-78) and takes her as a prisoner. So, the murder of Iphitus and not Iole is the cause of Hercules' servitude. The same driving force, his desire for

Iole, made Hercules sack Oechalia in the background story of *Hercules Oetaeus*. However, it is not clear here whether the love affair portrayed as the cause of Hercules' involvement with women's work (*Neerae ludibrio*, 240) is with Omphale or Iole. There are sources attesting to the love affair between Hercules and Omphale, the product of which was a son (Ovid *Her.* 9.54, Diodorus Siculus 4.31.8, etc.). On the other hand, Iole, as well as Omphale, is portrayed as the cause of the hero's effeminate behaviour in Ovid's *Her.* 9. The closest parallel to our text is Arnobius (4.25) who connects the servitude in Lydia with a love affair: *mercennariam ... servitutem servisse ... Herculem Sardibus amoris et petulantiae causa*.

240. *Neerae*: used as a noun, not as a proper name, meaning 'mistress' (*OLD* s.v.). Cf. Vergil *Ecl.* 3.3 with Clausen (1994: 93), and Horace *Carm.* 3.14.21. In *CS* 1.139 it is used for Ariadne. *Neerae*, a characterization filled with associations with prostitution (ever since Demosthenes 59), corresponds to *exoletum* (235); both words occur at the same place in the last line of the stanza.

*Quid rusticorum monstra detester deum,  
Faunos, Priapos, fistularum praesides,  
nymphas natantes incolasque aquatiles,  
sitas sub alto more ranarum lacu,  
divinitatis ius in algis vilibus?*

241-245

241-245. The ludicrous picture of pagan deities who preside over pipes and abide at the bottom of lakes reminds us of Arnobius' description of Di Indigetes (1.36), a group of Roman tutelary deities. After referring to Fenta Fauna, Faun's wife, Arnobius, in a way similar to that of Prudentius' portrayal of the nymphs, describes the Indigetes as swimming in the rivers and living along with frogs: *Fenta Fatua, Fauni uxor, Bona Dea quae dicitur sed in vini melior et laudabilior potu; Indigetes illi qui flumen repunt et in alveis Numici cum ranis et pisciculis degunt*.

241. *monstra ... deum*: *deum* is a genitive plural. *Monstra deum* alludes to Vergil's *Aen.* 8.698-700 (*omnigenumque deum monstra et latrator Anubis/ contra Neptunum et Venerem contraque Minervam/ tela tenent*), in which the battle of Actium is also portrayed as a battle between the Roman and Egyptian pantheons. Vergil depicts Egyptian deities with a scornful tone, emphasising their theriomorphic and hybrid nature. In so doing, he makes the contrast between Roman gods such as Venus and Minerva and Egyptian gods stronger. This Vergilian passage is often quoted or alluded to by Christian authors of Prudentius' era (Hilary *Commentarius in Matthaeum* 1.6, Jerome *Commentarii in Isaiam* CCL 73A 13.46.1, *Commentarii in Ezechielem* 3.8, Augustine *Confessions* 8.2, *Serm.* 26D.34 and CAA 122). Prudentius alludes to that passage in *CS* 2.530-37, in which he also describes the battle of Actium: see Lühken (2002: 115-18). For his description of Egyptian deities in *Pe.* 10, however, Prudentius alludes to Juvenal. See pp. 76-77. Prudentius also alludes to *Aen.* 8.698 in *CS* 1.433-34, where Theodosius admonishes personified Roma: *non patiar veteres teneas ut me duce nugas,/ ut cariosorum venereris monstra deorum*. In *Pe.* 10, *monstra deum* is employed in order to describe deities who preside over pipes and live at the bottom of lakes. In both *CS* and *Pe.* 10, Prudentius employs Vergil's scornful tone and phraseology in order to attack and ridicule pagan gods. On *monstrum* and its cognates used to describe pagan gods and their cult in the *Peristephanon*, see 1.69: *vosque qui ridenda vobis monstra divos fingitis*, 2.7 and 2.451. Note that in *Aen.* 3.59 as well as in other poems (Valerius Flaccus 3.356, Statius *Thebaid* 11.143, Claudian *Bellum Geticum* 229) *monstra deum* stands for 'portents of gods'.

242. *Faunos, Priapos*: Faunus was an Italian forest-god who was assimilated to the Greek god Pan and the Satyrs: see *OCD* and *RE* s.v. *Faunus*. This assimilation resulted in his being pluralised. Faunus often occurs in combination with the nymphs (Lucretius 4.580-81, Ovid *Am.* 8.314-16, *Met.* 1.192f., etc.). Cf. 243. Priapus is an ithyphallic deity connected to fertility, originally worshipped in the city of Lampsacus on the Hellespont before his cult spread throughout Greece and Rome: see *OCD* and *RE* s.v. *Priapus* and *Priapos* respectively. Although there are many instances where Faunus is in the plural, Priapus, considered as a distinct deity, is in

the singular. The only two instances before Prudentius where Priapus occurs in the plural are in the *Priapea* 33.1 and Moschus 3.27. Here, given Priapus' affinity with other ithyphallic deities, he is pluralised in a way analogous to that of Faunus. Alternatively, both *Faunos* and *Priapos* can be taken as appellatives, i.e. perceived as types rather than names, in which case they will be translated as 'gods like Faunus and Priapus' (cf. Thomson's translation in the Loeb edition). In a similar vein, cf. the pluralisation of Saturn, Juno and Venus in *Apoth.* 189: *quamvis Saturnis, Iunonibus et Cythereis*. Cf. also *CS* 1.265-67: *hanc, tibi, Roma, deam titulis et honore sacratam/ perpetuo Floras inter Veneresque creasti*. For examples from other apologists, see e.g. Arnobius 1.28: *Et illi cati sapientes prudentissimi vobis videntur nec reprehensionis ullius, ... qui Pausos reverentur atque Bellonas*. The plural certainly adds a contemptuous tone, lumping different deities together. Doubting the existence of the Fauns and the nymphs is not something new or specifically Christian. Lucretius (4.580-81), while describing the phenomenon of the echo, explains that this is what the local people attribute to the Satyrs, the nymphs and the Fauns: *haec loca capripedes Satyros Nymphasque tenere/ finitimi fingunt et Faunos esse loquuntur*. Augustine (*Civ.* 15.23) identifies the Fauns and the Satyrs with the fallen angels that followed Satan. In *CS* 1.102-15 Prudentius adopted the euhemeristic interpretation in the description of Priapus' origins. According to him, Priapus was a wealthy man known for his gardens and his sexual promiscuity.

243. *aquatiles*: 'living in water', a word that, based on evidence from the *LLT-A*, does not occur in poetry before Prudentius (with the exception of Varro *Sat. Men.* 576) but rather in scientific treatises (Cicero *Nat. D.* three times, Varro *Ling.* once, *Rust.* three times, Vitruvius once, Columella 6 times, Pliny *NH* 34 times) and often in late antique exegetical literature (Hilary *Tractatus super Psalmos* twice, Ambrose *Exameron* twice, Jerome *Commentarii in prophetas minores CCL 76A in Sophoniam* once, Augustine *Gen. ad litt.* twice, Chalcidius once). Romanus' pretentiously scientific phraseology adds to the sarcasm of his question.

245. *in algis vilibus*: seaweed was synonymous with worthlessness (cf. Horace *Carm.* 3.17.10-12). The expression *vilior alga* seems to be proverbial: Horace *Sat.* 2.5.8, Vergil *Ecl.* 7.42.

*Ad haec colenda me vocas, censor bone?  
potesne quidquam tale, si sanum sapis,  
sanctum putare? nonne pulmonem movet  
derisus istas intuens ineptias,  
quas vinolentae somniis fingunt anus?*

246-250

246. *censor bone*: a characterisation used for Caesar in *CS* 2.434: *dictator censorque bonus morumque magister*. In *CS* 2.271, Prudentius addresses Symmachus as *Italiae censor doctissime gentis*.

247-249. Cf. *CS* 2.403: *quae quis non videat sapientum digna cachinno?* also in the context of debunking pagan religion.

248-249. Allusion to Juvenal 10.33: *perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat*, where the satirist describes the attitude of Democritus, the laughing philosopher (in contrast to Heraclitus, the weeping one): see pp. 77-80. Gniska (2001: 251) draws a parallel between the laughter of the pagans watching theatre (cf. n. 226) and the Christians laughing over the pagan gods: ‘Wie der Heide im Theater, bricht der Christ allenthalben in Gelächter über die Götter aus. Und das ist eben wieder der satirische *cachinnus*’.

250. Cf. Cicero *Nat. D.* 2.70: *Videtisne igitur ut a physicis rebus bene atque utiliter inventis tracta ratio sit ad commenticios et fictos deos? Quae res genuit falsas opiniones erroresque turbulentos et superstitiones paene aniles. Et formae enim nobis deorum et aetates et vestitus ornatusque noti sunt*. Cicero’s attack against superstition is quoted or paraphrased by Christian authors and turned into an attack against paganism: Lactantius *Inst.* 1.17.2, *Epit.* 17.4, Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 17.4,

Augustine *Civ.* 4.30. Further on in the text, Romanus equates simple-minded worshippers of pagan religion with the ‘mawkish babblings of toothless hags’: *quibus* (sc. *fatuis vulgaribus*) *omne sanctum est, quod pavendum rancidae/ edentularum cantilenae suaserint* (304-305, with n. *ad. loc.*). Cf. also *Apoth.* 297-99, where among the many ways with which Christian doctrine had not been handed down is a garrulous nurse (*garrula nutrix*). In *Pe.* 9.17-18, the verger warns the narrator of the poem that the picture of Cassian’s martyrdom that he sees is neither an empty nor an old wife’s tale: ‘*quod prospicis, hospes,/ non est inanis aut anilis fabula*’.

*Aut si quod usquam est vanitatis mysticae  
nobis colendum est, ipse primus incipe.  
promisce adora, quidquid in terris sacri est,  
deos Latinos et deos Aegyptios,  
quis Roma libat, quis Canopus supplicat.*

251-255

251-265. Prudentius’ rationale in the following three stanzas resembles what he said in *CS* 2.865-72, although the starting point is the opposite in each case. In *CS* Prudentius states that some people are prepared to worship vegetables, as happens in Egypt, for both Egyptian and Roman gods belong to the same phenomenon of superstition (*CS* 2.872: *una superstitio est, quamvis non concolor error*). In *Pe.* 10 Romanus invites Asclepiades to worship both Roman and Egyptian gods. Since he can be a worshipper of Venus, he can also be a worshipper of the ape, an animal considered as sacred in Egypt. Since some one is capable of revering anthropomorphic gods, they are equally capable of worshipping theriomorphic gods, such as those venerated in Egypt. Accordingly, since the prefect can become a worshipper of Egyptian gods, he can also worship vegetables, as the Egyptians do. After all, Romans believe in and pay reverence to the Lares, gods who exist in fireplaces, so there should be no objection in principle to consider as divine and worship what grows in one’s garden. In *CS* Prudentius starts his argument by referring to the veneration of vegetables and subsequently lumps together Egyptian

and Roman deities, whereas in *Pe.* 10 he follows the opposite line of reasoning. For a similar train of thought, see Arnobius 7.16. On the veneration of animals and vegetables in Egypt, see also Minucius Felix 28.8-9 and Aristides *Apol.* 12. Criticism of Egyptian deities as well as worship of animals was made by secular and Christian authors alike. See e.g. Cicero *Nat. D.* 1.82, 101, *Tusc.* 5.8, Juvenal 15.1-8, Tertullian *Apol.* 24.7, Arnobius 3.15. For further references see Clarke (1974: 324 n. 466). For other passages where Prudentius criticises Egyptian deities, see *Apoth.* 195-96 (cf. n. 258), *CS* 1.629-30, *CS* 2.354-55, and 530-33.

255. *Roma ... Canopus*: metonymy, the cities represent the people who live in them. *Roma* and *Canopus* correspond to *deos Latinos* and *deos Aegyptios* (254) respectively. The *anaphora* in both verses (*deos ... deos, quis ... quis*) suggests a stylistic correspondence between the two lines. In the analogous argument from *CS* 2 we have the rivers, instead of cities, representing Rome and Egypt respectively: *hos* (sc. gods) *tu, Nile, colis, illos tu, Thybris, adoras* (871). For further examples, where *Canopus* stands for Egypt, see *TLL* O.2.143.1-9. Cf. also n. below.

*Canopus*: a coastal town on the western part of the Nile delta. It is mentioned again in *CS* 2.921 as part of Prudentius' argument that a famine should not be regarded as the gods' vengeance, but rather as a bad harvest suffered by Rome's suppliers. Cf also *Pe.* 3.59: *regna Canopica*.

*Venerem precaris, conprecare et simiam.*

*placet sacratus aspis Aesculapii,*

*crocodillus, ibis et canis cur displicent?*

*adpone porris religiosas arulas,*

*venerare acerbum caepe, mordax allium.*

256-260

256-258. For criticism against Egyptian theriomorphic gods, see n. 251-265.



256. *precaris, conprecare*: it is characteristic of Prudentian style to use two cognate words close to each other. On Prudentius' usage of *figurae etymologicae*, see p. 84. Here Prudentius' argumentation is reflected in his style. As *precari* has a meaning analogous to *conprecari*, Venus can have in the mind of simple pagan people the same significance as the ape (and thus can easily be deified as well).

257. *aspis Aesculapii*: in other similar accounts the snake is part of the list of Egyptian sacred animals. Here Romanus, to support his rationale, refers to the snake of Asklepios, the god of medicine. On the connection between the snake and the cult of Asklepios see e.g. Hyginus *Astronomica* 2.14 and Pausanias 2.28.1. Since Romans considered this animal as sacred, there is no reason why they should not pay reverence to other animals venerated by the Egyptians (see n. 258). The Egyptians held the asp in particularly high regard (Aristides *Apol.* 12, Origenes *Contra Celsum* 6.80, Athenagoras *Legatio* 1). However, it was not the asp in particular that was the symbol of Asklepios, but the snake in general. *Anguis* (Pliny *NH* 29.72) or more rarely *serpens* (Arnobius 7.45, Augustine *Civ.* 10.16) are words used for the god's preferred animal. Thus, Prudentius here has contaminated the Egyptian sacred animals with Asklepios' snake. This could be either accidental: referring to *anguis Aesculapii* he took a glimpse on his source(s) on the Egyptian animals he was to compare it to in order to show the analogy between the two cults and one of the animals mentioned there (*aspis*) took the place of *anguis*; or intentional: Prudentius shows that paying reverence to Asklepios' snake is so similar to the Egyptian practice that he adopts the very specific type of snake that the Egyptians had idolised. However, the latter option seems more probable as in this case the *aspis Aesculapii*, blurring the boundaries between animals venerated by Egyptians and Romans respectively, epitomises Prudentius' argument that if there are certain animals Romans consider as sacred, they can do the same for the animals that the Egyptians hold sacred.

258. *crocodillus, ibis, canis*: on the crocodile and ibis being regarded as sacred animals in Egypt see Pease (1955: 414-15). For the dog, an animal sacred to Anubis,

see Kees (1983: 26-36). Cf. also *Apoth.* 195-96 and *CS* 2.354-55 with reference to Anubis.

259-265. *porris.../ caepe ... allium*: Diodorus Siculus (1.89.4) informs us that the Egyptians abstained from onions, among other vegetables. Pliny the Elder (19.101, cf. 2.19) reports that the Egyptians would swear by garlic and onion, considering them as deities. On the reason why the onion was considered as sacred, Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride* 8.353F) mentions a story (to which he does not give credence): Dictys, Isis' son, was drowned in a lake, while trying to reach an onion. To that story he opposes a more rational explanation: 'But the priests keep themselves clear of the onion and detest it and are careful to avoid it, because it is the only plant that naturally thrives and flourishes in the waning of the moon. It is suitable for neither fasting nor festival, because in the one case it causes thirst and in the other tears for those who partake of it' (tr. Babbitt). The latter also appears in Aulus Gellius 20.8.7. The veneration of the onion was confined to the city of Pelusium (Lucian *Iupp. Trag.* 42, Aulus Gellius *op. cit.*). Ancient authors attest to the veneration of the onion in combination with garlic (Aristides *Apol.* 12, *Acta Apollonii Romani* 20, Pliny the Elder *op. cit.*). A combined reference to onion and leeks, apart from *Pe.* 10, occurs also in Horace *Ep.* 1.12.21: *verum, seu piscis seu porrum et caepe trucidas*, though the context is different. Even if we agree that there is a certain anthropomorphism implied by the verb *trucidas* (= to murder), as Stella Marie (1962: 50 n. 8) suggests, there is no implication of the sacredness of the vegetables. Here, it is worth noting that the idolisation of garlic and onion is documented in apologetic texts (Aristides *Apol.* 12, *Acta Apollonii* 20), a tradition on which Prudentius heavily draws in this section. At the same time, in the passage under examination, as discussed on pp. 76-77, Prudentius alludes to Juvenal 15.9-11. In this light, it seems more likely that Prudentius displays an allusive *contaminatio*, blending Juvenal and the tradition of Christian apologetics. Prudentius echoes the same Juvenalian passage in *CS* 2 (see the table below), a text sharing many anti-pagan arguments with *Pe.* 10.

<i>Porum et caepe nefas violare et frangere morsu;/</i>	<i>sunt qui quadriuis brevioribus ire parati /</i>	<i>adpone porris religiosas arulas, venerare acerbum caepe, mordax</i>
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<p><i>o sanctas gentes quibus haec nascuntur in hortis/ numina! ...</i></p> <p>Juvenal 15.9-11</p>	<p><i>vilia Niliacis <b>venerantur</b> <b>holuscula in hortis</b>,/ <b>porrum et caepe deos</b> inponere nubibus ausi/ alliaque et serapen caeli suprastra locare.</i></p> <p>CS 2.865-68</p>	<p><i>allium./ fuliginosi ture placantur lares, et respuuntur consecrata <b>holuscula</b>?/ aut unde maior esse maiestas focis/ quam <b>nata in hortis sarculatis</b> creditur?/ si <b>numen ollis, numen et porris</b> inest.</i></p> <p>Pe. 10.259-65</p>
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*Fuliginosi ture placantur lares  
et respuuntur consecrata holuscula?  
aut unde maior esse maiestas focis  
quam nata in hortis sarculatis creditur?  
si numen ollis, numen et porris inest.* 261-265

261. *Fuliginosi ture placantur lares*: cf. Horace *Carm.* 3.23.3-4: *si ture placaris ... Lares*. Lares were tutelary deities of uncertain origin who guarded a house, cross-roads or a place: see Orr (1978). The *Lares domestici* or *familiae* would guard the household and their images would be placed by the hearth. That is why they are described as smoky and black here and in CS 1.204. Here they are not only depicted as smoky, hence being placed by the hearth, but portrayed as deities presiding over the fireplace (263). *Tus* was one of the things offered to them (Horace *op. cit.*, Juvenal 9.137, Tibullus 1.3.34, Ovid *Fast.* 2.631).

265. *numen ollis ... numen et porris*: It is not clear whether *ollis* is the dative of *olla* (= pot, jar; cf. *Epil.* 17: *est et olla fictilis*) or the archaic form of the pronoun *ille* (cf. *Apoth.* 305, *Ham.* 139, 544, 730) in which case it refers to *focis* (263). Lavarenne (1951: 225 n. 2) argues for the first on the grounds that there are references to prayers addressed to the *ollae* in the rituals of the *Fratres Arvales*. Cf. Syme (1980:

106). It is not impossible that the ambiguity here is deliberate. However, it is legitimate to assume that *ollis* is the archaic form of *illis*, as the archaic language with its pretentiously solemn character adds to the poet's derisive tone when referring to absurd deities who preside over or are identified with fireplaces.

*et*: used as *pariter*, *idem*: see Kühner and Stegmann (1912-1914: II.6-7).

*Sed pulchra res est forma in aere sculptilis.*

*quid inprecabor officinis Graeciae,*

*quae condiderunt gentibus stultis deos?*

*forceps Myronis, malleus Polycliti*

*natura vestrum est atque origo caelitem.*

266-270

266-295. In these lines Romanus is concerned with art as a means of creating and propagating pagan religion. This part of his speech begins and ends by presenting famous sculptors as creators of gods (269-70, 291-93). For this reason many words relating to creation are used (*origo*: 270, *seminandis*: 271, *parentes*: 293). In the main part he describes gods' statues and how their pose, countenance or accessories can affect the people who worship them. Here it is worth considering how statues are presented in other parts of Prudentius' oeuvre, whether they are in agreement with the portrayal of art in *Pe.* 10 or not, and why. In *CS* 1.501-5, the Roman nobility is invited to let the statues be cleansed so they will not serve any evil purpose, i.e. pagan worship. Following Solmsen (1965a) this passage has been interpreted as an allusion to *CTh.* 16.10.15 issued in 399 at Ravenna, a law preventing the destruction of pagan works of art: see Introduction liii. Palmer (1989: 260) sees the passage as an allusion to *CTh.* 16.10.8 (382 AD). This passage has verbal and thematic similarities, as pointed out by Cameron (2011: 347-49), with *Pe.* 2.473-84, where Laurence foresees the advent of an emperor who will set Rome free from paganism. 'Then at last her marbles will shine bright because they will be cleansed from all blood, and the statues that stand in bronze, which now she thinks of as idols, will be guiltless (*Pe.* 2.481-84)'. The emperor can be securely identified as Theodosius. As

Cameron argues, there is no correlation between the 399 law and the aforementioned passages, since there is no indication that the statues face any threat of destruction. What is hoped for in both cases is the end of sacrifice. Thus, the statues themselves, although symbols of the old religion, not only should not be in any danger but they should show their splendour. Hence it becomes obvious that Prudentius (through Theodosius in *CS* 1 and Laurence in *Pe.* 2) by no means disapproves of pagan works of art. On the contrary, he acknowledges their beauty, which will be revealed after they are detached from any connotation of paganism. *CS* 2.17-66 comes closer to the passage in consideration from *Pe.* 10. Prudentius refutes Symmachus' argument (*Relatio* 3.4, paraphrased in lines 12-16) that the statue of Victory favoured the triumphs of their Roman ancestors with a response put into the mouths of Arcadius and Honorius (18-66). The emperors attribute their victories to training and courage. Then, they inveigh against the triptych poetry-painting-paganism. The art of painting either devises deities following the poetic licence or gives shape and decorates something taken from a shrine aided by poetry, a fellow art (39-44). Thus Homer, Apelles and Numa, representing poetry, the art of painting and pagan religion respectively, conceive the same visions and serve an analogous purpose (*sic unum sectantur iter, sic cassa figuris/ somnia concipiunt et Homerus et acer Apelles/ et Numa, cognatumque volunt pigmenta, Camenae,/ idola, convaluit fallendi trina potestas*, 45-48). Then two examples are mentioned (Attis and Hippolytus) exemplifying the relationship between poetry and pagan religion. The emperors command the people to stop divinising empty objects such as a bird-goddess and decorating the Roman senate with the spoils of war. This part of the text closes rather severely: *frange repulsorum foeda ornamenta deorum*, 64. The contradiction between the statements against and in favour of the statues in *CS* 1.501-5 and *CS* 2.18-66 respectively can be resolved if we presume that in the latter case it is a command of purely theological value: see Döpp (1986: 67-69) and Brown (2003: 99-101). The emperors encourage Symmachus as well as the reader to stop holding void objects as representations of gods. *Frangere* (64) should not be taken at face value but rather as the destruction of divinity attributed to inanimate objects and inexistent gods. These objects were conceived and created by people and Prudentius (via Honorius and Arcadius) has attempted to describe their creation in his description of

the collaboration of poetry and the art of painting (39-44). What should be destroyed is not necessarily the statue of Victory, but the belief in her divinity and the ascription of previous military triumphs to her. The divinisation of works of art is also found in *Pe. 10*. Shanzer (1989a: 452 n. 1) here sees a ‘standard universal condemnation of sculpted images’ in contrast with *Pe. 2*.481-84. Similarly, Prolingheuer (2008: 74) states: ‘Der Kunstbegriff in PE. 10 ist durchweg negativ’. He sees a contradiction between *CS 1* and *Pe. 2* on the one hand and *Pe. 10* on the other (2008: 71-75), which he attempts to explain by the different contexts in which they occur and the different purpose that these passages serve. *CS 1* and *Pe. 2* are in line with imperial policies, whereas *Pe. 10* represents ‘die unbeugsame Einstellung des Märtyrers der christlichen Frühzeit in seiner fundamentalen Ablehnung aller heidnischen Kultur’. Although context does play a decisive role and there is no reason to doubt a relationship between the passages from *CS 1* and *Pe. 2*, and aspects of contemporary history, there is no contradiction. We do not have any indication from the text that the works of art are not aesthetically valuable or accepted as such. On the contrary, see line 266: *Sed pulchra res est forma in aere sculptilis*. Romanus accuses the workshops of Greece of creating gods (*condiderunt deos*, 268) for stupid people who believe in them (*gentibus stultis*), not condemning them for making statues for those who can appreciate them as works of art. Furthermore, *Pe. 10* must be examined more carefully in its context as well as in comparison with other texts in the same vein in order to be fully understood. *Pe. 10*.266-95 occurs in a distinctive part of the text where Romanus, engaging with Christian apologetics, attacks pagan religion (141-305; see Introduction 8iii) drawing from an anti-pagan invective tradition. The idea that material becomes a god as a result of the artist having lavished his skill upon it (Justin *Apologia* 9.2, Athanasius *Contra Gentes* 13) as well as the related idea that a work of art can never be better than the artist that produced it, are a recognisable part of Christian polemics (see e.g. Wisdom 15.15-17, used by Cyprian *Ad Fortunatum* 1 and followed by Minucius Felix 28.2). Cf. 380: *id quod creatum est conditorem credere*. Arnobius (6.13) describes very cynically how Phidias’ Jupiter a little earlier was nothing but gold, stones and ivory ‘formless, separated and confused’. In Tertullian *De resurrectione* 6.6, the ivory statue of Jupiter made by Phidias is worshipped and people no longer see it as mere elephant

tusk. The Christian author wonders that it should be considered more appropriate that the person creates a god rather than vice versa (*an hoc supererit, ut honestius homo deum [saeculi] quam hominem deus finxerit?*). Athanasius (*Contra Gentes* 13) provides an argument analogous to that of Prudentius in *Pe.* 10: ‘But if one had to admire them (i.e. the idols) one would have to acknowledge the skill of the artist’s knowledge and not to give more honour to what has been made by him than to the maker. For matter did not adorn and deify skill, but skill matter. So it would be much more just that they adore the artist than what has been made by him, because he existed before the gods who are the products of his skill and because they came into being according to his will.’ (tr. Meijering). In conclusion, in *Pe.* 10, Prudentius puts in Romanus’ mouth what the reader would have expected him to say. Indeed the martyr expresses a fundamental rejection of paganism, as Prolingheuer argues, but channelled through the apologetic tradition and spiced with a touch of Juvenalian satire. For the allusion to Juvenal in the passage see p. 80. Prudentius’ treatment of the statues here is confined by the speaker, a Christian martyr, and the place where it occurs (a speech uttered by the martyr containing apologetic commonplaces). The context of the passage and the affinity with other texts of the same mindset prove that there is a negative stance towards idols – symbols of pagan religion, not works of art. For a discussion about the idolisation of the material of which a statue of a god is made, see n. 152.

266. *sculptilis*: ‘carved, sculptured’; according to the *LLT*, the word occurs almost exclusively in post-classical Christian texts. The only exception is Ovid’s *Pont.* 4.9.28. The next instance is in Tertullian *Scorpiace* 2, referring to the images of the pagan gods: *sculptilia ... deorum*. Cf. the similar in meaning words *fusilis* (284) and *conflatilis* (295) with nn. *ad locc.*

269. ... *Myronis* ... *Polycliti*; with 291. ... *Mentorem*,/ ... *Phidias* ...: these are all famous Greek sculptors, who flourished in the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Myron of Eleutherai worked mainly in bronze. The statue he is most famous for is his *Discobolus* (‘discus thrower’). Polyclitus of Argos also worked mainly in bronze. His most well-known work is the *Doryphorus*, which represents a virile youth holding a

spear. Similarly, Mentor of Rhodes is known for his work in metal. Finally, Phidias of Athens was involved in or possibly directed the construction of the exterior sculptures of the Parthenon at Athens. Famous works of his include the chryselephantine statues of Zeus at Olympia and Athena in the Parthenon. For all the sculptors mentioned here, see *OCD* and *RE* s.v. For a possible allusion to Juvenal's *Sat.* 8.102-4, in which the reference to the four sculptors shows the excessive wealth of the governor, see p. 80. In Martial's epigram 4.39, the satirist doubts the genuineness of Charinus' silver referring to Myron, Praxiteles, Scopas, Phidias and Mentor. For other lists of sculptors, see Cicero *In Verrem* 2.4.12, *De Oratore* 3.29, Ovid *Pont.* 4.1.32-34, Phaedrus *Fabulae* 5. *Pr.* 6-7 and Statius *Silvae* 2.2.64-67.

*Polycliti*: for the prosody of the word *Polyclītus*, see pp. 88-89.

*Ars seminandis efficax erroribus*

*barbam rigentem dum Iovis circumplicat,*

*dum defluentem leniter flectens comam*

*limat capillos et corymbos Liberi*

*et dum Minervae pectus hydris asperat,*

271-275

272-275. *dum ... dum ... dum*: triple *anaphora*, the last part of which makes a transition from the hair of Jupiter and Liber to Minerva's snakes, pointing out the terror that works of art can cause, something elaborated on in the next stanza. The three *dum* clauses correspond to the three consecutive clauses in the next stanza, although the order is different (272: Jupiter, 273-74: Liber, 275(-76): Minerva ~ 276: Jupiter, 277: Minerva, 278-79: Liber).

272. *barbam*: Jupiter is typically represented as bearded, see Cicero *Nat. D.* 1.83, 101. Arnobius, when criticising the images of the gods, refers to Jupiter as *barbatus* (6.25). See Augustine (*Civ.* 6.7) for a similar representation of the gods by the poets: *Numquid barbatum Iovem, imberbem Mercurium poetae habent, pontifices non*



*habent?* For representations of young Jupiter as beardless see Juvenal 6.15-16 and Horace *Sat.* 1.5.26.

*circumplicat*: rare word. *LLT-A* gives only seven instances up to Prudentius' time. When it means 'to recoil', it is used almost exclusively for snakes (Cicero *Div.* 1.49, 79, 2.62, Arnobius 5.19), thus giving a very vivid portrayal of Jupiter's beard which further may hint at the snake-Devil (see n. 36) and can be connected to the snakes on Minerva's cuirass that are mentioned two lines further on (*hydris*).

273-274. Liber's hair flowing freely is a characteristic image in Classical literature: *Hymn. Hom.* 7.4, Euripides *Bacchae* 150, Seneca *Hercules Furens* 472-73. For Prudentius' euhemeristic interpretation of Liber see *CS* 1.122-44.

273. *defluentem ... flectens*: these two similarly-sounding participles must be part of Prudentius' wordplay, showing the relationship between art (the subject of *flectens*) and the material used (possibly bronze, 277). Art bends the material so that it depicts Liber's flowing hair.

275. Minerva's aegis, a breastplate with the Gorgon's head and snakes as described in *Aen.* 8.435-38. Cf. also *Aen.* 2.615-16.

*iniecit atram territis formidinem,  
ut fulmen aeris ceu Tonantis horreant,  
tremant venenum sibilantis Gorgonae,  
putent ephebum post triumphos Indicos  
ferire thyrsos posse, cum sit ebrius.* 276-280

276-290. An excellent sample of Prudentius' *variatio*. The Christian author uses a pleiad of synonymous words to describe the fear aroused in pagans by idols: *terrītis*, *formidinem*: 276, *horreant*: 277, *tremant*: 278, *pertimescunt*: 282, *paventum*, *terror*: 286.

277. *Tonantis*: ‘The Thunderer’, an epithet used for Jupiter, esp. by the Silver Latin poets – for references see e.g. Henriksén (2012: 340) – it eventually became synonymous with Jupiter. Prudentius uses *Tonans* for the Christian God in his poems (*Cath.* 6.81, 12.83, *Ham.* 376, 669, *Apoth.* 171, *Psych.* 640, *Pe.* 6.99), as did many Christian authors in Late antiquity (Pseudo-Hilary *Metrum in Genesin* 125, Paulinus of Nola *Carm.* 22.149, Avitus 2.243). The only poem of Prudentius in which *Tonans* refers to Jupiter is *Pe.* 10 (222, and here). In line 222 the grand epic epithet is in contradiction with the described scene of pantomime, where the actor pretends to be Jupiter disguised as a bull. Here ‘the Thunderer’ seems to be the appropriate way for Romanus to refer to the father of the gods since he is talking about his thunderbolt (*fulmen*). On *Tonans* in Prudentius see also Bilby (2012: 228, n. 59). On *Tonans* characterising both Jupiter and the Christian god in the authors of Prudentius’ era, see Irvine (1994: 369).

278. *Gorgonae*: cf. n. 275.

279. Cf. *CS* 1.122-24: *Thebanus iuvenis superatis fit deus Indis,/ successu dum victor ovans lascivit et aurum/ captivae gentis revehit spoliisque superbus*. Arrian (*Indica* 7.4-5), based on Megasthenes, tells of Dionysos who conquered and civilised India. It became a very popular theme in literature (see e.g. Ovid *Met.* 4.20-21, Seneca *Phaedra* 753-56). Liber’s expedition to India was the subject of the late antique epic poem *Dionysiaca* of Nonnus of Panopolis (mid-fifth century AD).

280. *thyrsos*: a staff covered with vine leaves or a fir-cone carried by Dionysos and his followers. Cf. *CS* 2.858: *aut hos (i.e. idols) thyrsgeri rapit ad Dionysia Bacchi*.

*Tum quod Dianam molle succinctam vident,  
venantis arcum pertimescunt virginis;  
si forte vultum tristioris Herculis*

*liquore crispo massa finxit fusilis,*  
*clavam minari, ni colatur, creditur.* 281-285

281. *Dianam ... succinctam*: Diana is depicted as high-girt in order for her to be able to move freely during her hunting: *cum succincta iacit calamos, Latonia virgo est*, CS 1.366. It is not impossible, although far-fetched, that Diana's description here, esp. if we take into account the verb used in the sentence (*vident*), echoes an Ovidian passage (*nomine Gaggraphie, succinctae sacra Dianae: Met. 3.156*) reminding us of Actaeon's 'sin': to gaze upon naked Diana. For other Ovidian women adopting Diana's dress code: (a type of woman described in the *Ars Amatoria*) *altera succinctae religetur more Dianae: A.A. 3.143*; (Syrinx) *ritu ... cincta Dianae: Met. 1.695*; (one of the Naiads) *nymphe ritu succincta Dianae: Met. 9.89*; (Venus) *vestem ritu succincta Dianae: Met. 10.536*.

284. *finxit*: the usage of *ingere* for the creation of the stern face of Hercules, which earlier on was used to describe the creation of stories about gods by the poets (*haec poetas ingere, 216*) – and hence gods themselves – may imply that poetry and the arts of painting and sculpture are fellow arts, as stated in CS. 2.39-50. See also n. 266-95.

*fusilis*: 'cast, molten', mainly a post-classical word. With the exception of *Aetna*, there are only two mentions of the word in Classical Latin (Caesar *De bello Gallico* 5.43.1 and Ovid *Met. 11.126*). From the second half of the second century up to about Prudentius' time, the *LLT-A* gives approximately 30 occurrences including the Vulgata. The word is often used to describe idols made of metal or clay. See e.g. Tertullian *Scorpiace 2: maledictus homo qui fecerit sculptile aut fusile aspernamentum, opus manuum artificis, et collocauerit illud in abscondito. In levitico vero: ne sequimini, inquit, idola et deos fusiles non facietis vobis*; Augustine *Locutiones in heptateuchum 4.122: et omnia idola fusilia eorum perdetis ea*. Prudentius employs *fusilis* in a similar context in *Cath. 4.40: illum fusile numen execrantem* (referring to the story of Bel and the Dragon; Daniel 14). Cf. the similar in meaning words *sculptilis* (266) and *conflatilis* (295) with nn. *ad locc.*

*Iam quis paventum corda terror occupat,  
Iunonis iram si polite expresserit?  
velut retortis intuens obtutibus  
avertat ora de litantis hostia,  
lapis severa fronte mentitur minas.* 286-290

287. *Iunonis iram*: this expression occupies the same position in 214 (see n. 214-215). In the latter passage, the wrath of Juno was in relation to people who worship Hercules, an extra-marital progeny of her husband. Given Juno's renowned vindictiveness (see n. 214-215), the worshipper of her images is more inclined to feel fear and interpret the way she is represented in them as menacing.

288. *retortis ... obtutibus*: 'to cast/ gaze back'. *Retorquere* is normally construed with *oculos* (Cicero *In Catilinam* 2.2, Seneca *De clementia* 1.11.1, Pseudo-Quintilian *Declamationes maiores* 8.8, 14.2, Firmicus Maternus *Err.* 7.3), the ablative of which (*oculis*), however, would not fit into the metre here (having three syllables instead of four).

*Mirror quod ipsum non sacra stis Mentorem,  
nec templum et aras ipse Phidias habet,  
fabri deorum vel parentes numinum,  
qui si caminis institissent segnius,  
non esset ullus Iuppiter conflatilis.* 291-295

291-295. For Mentor and Phidias, see n. 269. For the representation of sculptors as creators of gods, see n. 266-295. The irony here is obvious as Mentor and Phidias (291-92), in being described as *parentes numinum* (293, cf. ... *origo caelitum/ ars seminandis efficax erroribus*, 270-71), take up the role of Jupiter (295) who is

normally portrayed as father of the gods (e.g. *divom pater*, Vergil *Aen.* 1.65; *genitorque deorum*, Statius *Silv.* 1.1.74).

292. Cf. a similar argument about the veneration of vegetables: *adpone porris religiosas arulas* (259).

295. *conflatilis*: ‘cast, molten’, post-classical word. Very often used in the Bible (e.g. Exodus 32.4, 8, Deuteronomy 9.16, Ezra 2.9.18: *vitulum conflatilem*, the golden calf that Aaron made when Moses was on Mount Sinai, Leviticus 19.4: *nec deos conflatis faciatis vobis*, God’s admonition to Moses for his congregation) and the texts of Christian authors, esp. their Commentaries on the Bible (e.g. John Cassian, *Contra Nestorium* 2.3; Augustine, *Speculum* 1, etc.) to describe the statues of idols and pagan gods. It is very often accompanied by the adjective *sculptilis* (Deuteronomy 27.15, Judges 17.3, 4, 18.14, Isaiah 48.5, Nahum 1.14, etc.). Cf. 266: *pulchra res est forma in aere sculptilis*. Prudentius, by utilising the two adjectives, which normally go together, at the beginning and towards the end of his speech on the statues (note the affinity between the two passages: in both stanzas we have the names of famous artists and the attribution to them of the creation of gods), encloses his satiric anti-pagan attack in a biblical frame. Cf. also the synonymous *fusilis* (284).

*Non erubescis, stulte, pago dedite,  
te tanta semper perdidisse obsonia  
quae dis ineptus obtulisti talibus,  
quos trulla, pelvis, cantharus, sartagine,  
fracta et liquata contulerunt vascula?*

296-300

296. *pago dedite*: the use of the word *paganus* to designate the non-Christian is seen from the second half of the fourth century onwards. Other meanings of the word existing prior to that include ‘rural’ from *pagus* (= rural district), the earliest meaning, and ‘civilian’ as opposed to ‘military’. Here Prudentius alludes to an etymological attempt to derive the word *paganus* (= rural) from *pagus* and uses it to

add a pejorative tone to his characterisation. Cf. *fatuis ... vulgaribus* in the first line of the next stanza. For similar associations of paganism with *rusticitas*, see *Cath.* 11.85-88: *sed cum fideli spiritu/ concurrat ad praesepia/ pagana gens et quadrupes/ sapiatque quod brutum fuit*; *CS* 1.449: *sint haec barbaricis gentilia numina pagis*. The same association is made in Orosius (*Adv. pag.* 1 *prol.* 9). However, as Cameron has shown (2011: 14-19), these texts prove neither that *paganus* derives from *pagus* nor that contemporary writers believed in that etymology. Authors such as Prudentius and Orosius rather used the *paganus-pagus* wordplay as a derogatory etymological pun.

299-300. Allusion to Juvenal 10.64: *fiunt urceoli, pelves, sartago, matellae*: see pp. 78-80. Not only are there obvious verbal correspondences between the two lists of utensils, but furthermore there is a thematic analogy. In both cases the poets underline the emptiness of the ones who are idolised in each case. A similar passage is found in Arnobius (6.14), although the latter includes not only utensils, as Juvenal and Prudentius did, but also further bizarre items such as ‘trinkets of harlots and women’s toilet tables, camel bones or the tooth of the Indian beast (= elephant)’. Tertullian (*Apol.* 12.2) argues that the material that the images of gods are made of is akin to the one that is used for pots (*vascula*) and tools (*instrumenta*). Further on in the same text, Tertullian holds that Lares, gods of the house, are treated according to the householder’s power and can be pledged, sold or changed into something else; Saturn can be transformed into a cooking pot and Minerva into a wash basin (*demutando aliquando in caccabulum de Saturno, aliquando in trullam de Minerva*, 13.4). In the same vein, see Minucius Felix 22.3-4. It is possible that Prudentius’ passage displays an interesting *contaminatio*, combining Juvenal with the apologetic tradition. For the stylistic effect of the asyndeton, see p. 85.

*Ignosco fatuis haec tamen vulgaribus,  
quos lana terret discolora in stipite,  
quos saepe falsus circulator decipit,*

*quibus omne sanctum est, quod pavendum rancidae  
edentularum cantilenae suaserint.* 301-305

301. *fatuis ... vulgaribus*: the ‘simpletons of the masses’, for whom Romanus can make an allowance as to what they may believe in, stand in contrast to the *eruditos ... et doctos viros* (306), who surprisingly live in ignorance as to which higher power has created and governs the universe. Earlier on in the text, Asclepiades described in a similarly pejorative way the people who believe in the Christian doctrine (*vulgi levis*: 78, *inperita turba*: 80, *inlitterata ... frequentia*: 82).

302. A variant of this verse is *quos verum latet qui fidunt in stipite*. Some manuscripts transmit both verse 302 and its variant in succession (CD), some others only the variant (MOSNU) and some only verse 302 (VPE). In U, the variant is written in the margin. The variant should be athetised as metrically impossible. The second and fourth theses are long (*verūm, fidūnt*), whereas the first syllable of *latet* needs to be oddly elongated to fit in the metre: see Gnilka (2000: 239-41).

Cf. 381: *deasceato supplicare stipiti*. Cf. also Arnobius 1.39, referring to the days before he converted to Christianity: *Venerabar, o caecitas, nuper ... veteriosis in arboribus taenias*; Romanus must be referring to the ceremonial procession of the *Arbor Intrat*: see n. 196. He may (in addition) allude to the celebration of the Terminalia – the festival in honour of Terminus, god of boundaries – also mentioned in CS (see below). A stone or a tree trunk could be used as a boundary marker and to these items offerings were made on the god’s feast day (Ovid *Fast.* 2.639-84). Other objects that could be used as *termini* are mentioned by Siculus Flaccus (2.3 = Guillamin p. 37), a land surveyor. The *terminus* (whether a stone or a tree-trunk) would be anointed and crowned with garlands (Ovid *Fast.* 2.641-44: *Termine, sive lapis sive es defossus in agro/ stipes, .../te ... coronant,/ binaque sarta tibi ... ferunt*; Siculus Flaccus: *lapides ... et unguento velaminibusque et coronis eos ornabant*); Cf. CS 2.1010-11: *et quae fumificas arbor vittata lucernas/ servabat, cadit ultrici succisa bipenni*. Given Prudentius’ lack of precision when it comes to describing Roman festivals, it is highly likely that he blends the two religious practices (*Arbor Intrat*

and Terminalia) or is deliberately vague regarding the ceremony he is describing. If we accept that there is (also) an echo of the Terminalia, at least two further implications can emerge: i) the reference to the Terminalia serves as a boundary. As the termini demarcated the land, the reference to the festival is placed in the last stanza of the anti-pagan invective part of Romanus' speech. From then on (306-75), Romanus embarks on a new part where he describes the nature of the Christian God and how he wishes to be worshipped. ii) The Terminalia of 303 (the year of Romanus' execution) is the date that the first edict against the Christians was issued (24 February): see n. 34. Thus, it was a very important date both for Christianity in general and Romanus' martyrdom in particular who was among the first martyrs to die as a corollary of the first edict: see Introduction 5 n. 52.

305. *edentularum cantilenae*: cf. Jerome *Contra Iohannem* 14: *et aniles et superfluas cantilenas longo sermone convincimus*; Augustine *Ep.* 203.9: *et quasi anilem reputant cantilenam*. Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 16.4 (regarding the song of Necessity who is portrayed as an old woman): *ut ridiculam anilis fabulae cantilenam non erubesceret scriptis suis* (i.e. *Platonis*). On devaluing rivalling beliefs as old-womanish, see Kahlos (2011: 624). For a similar dismissive attitude towards the beliefs of pagan religion equated with the 'tipsy old wives' dreams', see 247-50: *nonne pulmonem movet/ derisus istas intuens ineptias/ quas vinolentae somniis fingunt anus?*

*Vos eruditos miror et doctos viros,  
perpensa vitae quos gubernat regula,  
nescire vel divina vel mortalia  
quo iure constant, quanta maiestas regat,  
quidquid creatum est, quae creavit omnia.* 306-310

306. *eruditos ... et doctos viros*: in contrast with *fatuis ... vulgaribus* (301, see n. *ad loc.*)



306-310. Romanus alludes to an argument used by the pagans against the Christians: that Christians are ignorant and uneducated (compared to the educated and erudite pagans): see Clarke (1974: 44-45). It may come as an answer to Asclepiades' words in lines 81-82: *populare quiddam sub colore gloriae/ inlitterata credidit frequentia*. The martyr suggests that there is a contradiction inherent in the alleged erudition of the pagans by arguing that they do not know anything about the divine power which has created everything.

307. *quos*: in this place and not at the beginning of the line *metri causa*.

308-310. These lines give us a foretaste of the following stanzas, where Romanus will expand on the nature of God (311-25) and the creation of the world (326-40), namely the things that learned and educated pagans appear to ignore.

*Deus perennis, res inaestimabilis,  
non cogitando, non videndo clauditur,  
excedit omnem mentis humanae modum  
nec comprehendi visibus nostris valet,  
extraque et intus inplet ac superfluit.* 311-315

311-321. Prudentius draws a quasi-architectural structure with *Deus*, the first word of the stanza, and *Filius*, the last word of the next stanza, presented side by side, each occupying a hemistich (marked by double *anaphora*) on line 321.

311-315. On the inadequacy to comprehend God, see *CS* 2.94, 97-98: *nam cum divinis agimus de rebus et illum,/.../ coniectare animo contendimus, exigua est vis/ humani ingenii tantoque angusta labori*. On the incapacity to perceive God with the senses in combination with his limitless existence, see *Apoth.* 809-11: *at Deus ingens/ atque superfusus trans omnia nil habet in se/ extremum, ut claudi valeat sensuve teneri*. For similar statements in other apologists, cf. Minucius Felix 18.8: *Hic* (sc. Deus) *nec videri potest, visu clarior est; nec comprehendi potest nec*

*aestimari: sensibus maior est, infinitus, immensus, et soli sibi tantus, quantus est, notus. Nobis vero ad intellectum pectus angustum est, et ideo sic eum digne aestimamus, dum inaestimabilem dicimus.* Cf. also n. 312.

311. *perennis*: ‘everlasting’, compared to *intemporalis* (316) which means ‘timeless’, ‘a-temporal’; The same epithet used for God in Prudentius: *Cath.* 4.93, 6.7, 7.47, *Ham. Praef.* 60, *Ham.* 46, *CS* 2.113-14, *Pe.* 6.46, *Pe.* 10.389, 596. There are various passages in the Bible referring to or suggesting God’s everlasting existence. See e.g. Genesis 21.33, Psalm 101.28, Revelation 1.8.

*inaestimabilis*: often used for God among Christian authors. See e.g. Tertullian *Apol.* 17.2, Minucius Felix 18.8, (Pseudo-)Cyprian *Quod idola dii non sint* 6.

312. *non videndo clauditur*: cf. *invisibilis* in *Apoth.* 123. Cf. also 314. In the *Apoth.* (6-14, 74-81) Prudentius underscores the impossibility of grasping God with the senses (*sensuve oculisve manuve*: 8) and esp. with sight referring to John (1.18: *Deum nemo vidit umquam*: the same idea repeated almost verbatim in *Cath.* 6.2). Cf. also the analogous use of *claudi* in *Apoth.* 811 in n. 311-315 *op. cit.* On the inability to see God the father, see *Apoth.* 7-8, 11-12, 16-17, 78-80, 111-12, 123-24. In 601, Romanus stresses that Christ was visible: *Hic se videndum praestitit mortalibus* (see with n. *ad loc.*).

*Intemporalis, ante quam primus dies,  
esse et fuisse semper unus obtinet;  
lux ipse vera, veri et auctor luminis,  
cum lumen esset, lumen effudit suum,  
ex luce fulgor natus hic est Filius.*

316-320

316-325: note the *variatio*: 318: *lux, luminis*, 319: *lumen* (twice), 320: *luce, fulgor*, 322: *lumine, splendor*, 323: *claritatis*.

316-317. Cf. *Apoth.* 89-90: *Cui non principium de tempore, sed super omne/ tempus et ante diem maiestas cum Patre summo, CS 2.95-96: qui (i.e. Deus) vel principio caruit vel fine carebit/ quique chao anterior fuerit ...; Cath.* 4.7-8: *... Deum vocamus,/ expers principii carensque fine.*

316. *Intemporalis*: see n. 311.

318-320. Cf. *Apoth.* 278: *totus et ex toto Deus est, de lumine lumen.* It also evokes the Nicene Creed 7. *Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero.*

318. *lux ipse vera*: cf. *Cath.* 5.153: *tu lux vera oculis.* See also n. above.

*veri et auctor luminis*: Genesis 1.3: *dixitque Deus fiat lux et facta est lux.* The creation of light by God prepares us for the catalogue of God's creations in lines 326-35. It also points to Jesus, a light which emanated from God's light (320). Cf. *Cath.* 5.1: *Inventor rutili ... luminis; Apoth.* 74: *lucis genitor; Apoth.* 701: *auctorem lucis; Pe.* 5.37: *lucis auctorem Patrem.*

*Vis una Patris, vis et una est Filii  
unusque ab uno lumine splendor satus  
pleno refulsit claritatis numine;  
natura simplex pollet unius Dei  
et, quidquid usquam est, una virtus condidit;*

321-325

321-325. The double *anaphora* of the first line in combination with the polyptoton of the numerals *unus*, *-a* (*vis una, vis et una*: 321; *unusque ab uno lumine*: 322; *unius Dei*: 324; *una virtus*: 325) shows the singularity of the Godhead, leaving no room for considering the Father and the Son as separate gods. Prudentius has repeatedly stressed this and dealt with it more thoroughly in the *Apotheosis* and *Hamartigenia* where he attacked heresies and expanded on the orthodox dogma. See e.g. *Ham.* 43-47, 51-52: *unum semper erit gignens atque unus ab uno/ ante chaos genitus .../ quis*

*dixisse duos maiestate sub una/ regnantem propriamque sibi retroque perennem/  
ausit, et unius naturae excindere vires?/ .../ forma Patris veri verus stat Filius ac se/  
unum rite probat dum formam servat eandem.*

323. *claritatis*: Later on, Romanus visualises himself holding a torch which only the sane (*sanus*) can see, whereas the one who is not will ask the light be taken away from him because ‘*iniuriosa est nil videnti claritas*’: 594. These two are the only occurrences of the word *claritas* in Prudentius’ oeuvre.

*caelum solumque, vim marini gurgitis,  
globos dierum noctiumque praesides,  
ventos, procellas, fulgura, imbres, nubila,  
septentriones, Hesperos, aestus, nives,  
fontes, pruinas et metalla et flumina,* 326-330

326-335. The catalogue of God’s creations: Prudentius alludes to the creation of the world in Genesis 1. There we find a description of how God distinguished the sky from the Earth and created every inanimate thing and animate being. The Christian poet does not give a mere list of God’s creations from the Genesis, but knows how to be both selective and inventive regarding the things he includes in his catalogue. He varies the biblical hypotext by replacing the biblical vocabulary with synonymous words: cf. pp. 51-52. More specifically, he replaces *terram*, *lignum* and *bestias* of Genesis 1 with *solum*, *arbores* and *feras* respectively. Whereas in the Old Testament, the author speaks of the creation of the stars simply as *fecitque ... stellas* (Genesis 1.16), Prudentius refers only to two specific groups of stars in his catalogue: *septentriones*, ‘the stars of the Wain’ and *Hesperos*, ‘the evening star’ (331), both evoking mythological associations and relating to the Classical literary tradition. Hesperus, the personification of the evening star (<*Vesper*>), or in other words, the planet Venus in the evening, was the son of the goddess Eos and the mortal Cephalus or Astraeus. On the sources for Hesperus see *RE* s.v. Hesperos. *Septentriones* or *Triones* stand for the two constellations of seven stars each, also known in Latin as

*Ursa maior* and *Ursa minor*. Their myth was popular in Roman literature, and was famously narrated by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* (2.405-31) and the *Fasti* (2.193-242). Although Prudentius refers to *Hesperus* and *Septentriones* elsewhere (see n. 329), he knows how to describe the creation of the world in more generic terms and uses the word *astra* at the beginning of *Cath.* 3.4-5: *sed prius in genitore potens,/ astra, solum, mare quam fierent*. Note, however, that in the latter passage *astra* refers collectively to the sky rather than the stars *per se*. Furthermore, the description in the first book of Genesis is a comparatively general outline of God's creations. In contrast, Prudentius' catalogue is more detailed, listing all the weather phenomena: *ventos, procellas, fulgura, imbres, nubila* (328). In addition, he enriches his list with smaller creations not found in the Old Testament, such as flowers and bushes (334). As in the text of Genesis, he begins with the generic, moving gradually to the specific. A more compressed version of the creation of the world, with emphasis on God's command (as in 337: *iussione*) is narrated in *Cath.* 9.13-15: *ipse iussit, et creata, dixit ipse, et facta sunt/ terra, caelum, fossa ponti, trina rerum machina,/ quaeque in his vigent sub alto solis et lunae globo*. In the final lines of *Cath.* 9, the poet calls a choir (consisting of people of different ages and genders) as well as natural phenomena to sing in unison for God. What is mentioned when Prudentius urges nature to celebrate God bears resemblance to the catalogue of God's creations in *Pe.* 10: *fluminum lapsus et undae, litorum crepidines,/ imber, aestus, nix, pruina, silva et aura, nox, dies/ omnibus te concelebrent saeculorum saeculis* (112-14). Cf. also *Ham.* 116: *ipse opifex mundi terram, mare, sidera fecit*. (= Marcion's words). For a list of catalogues in the *Peristephanon*, see Fux (2003: 108). Thus, Prudentius uses the catalogue, a characteristically epic device, while alluding to and enriching the beginning of the first book of the Bible, which describes the Christian cosmogony. For allusions to the Bible, see Introduction 8i. For the epic associations of this catalogue, see p. 64.

327. Cf. Genesis 1.16: *duo magna luminaria luminare maius ut praeesset diei et luminare minus ut praeesset nocti*. For similar descriptions of the sun and the moon, see 537-38: *rotati solis ... globus/ spheram ... menstruaem*; and 573-75 (with nn. *ad locc.*).

329. *septentriones*, *Hesperos*: the two constellations are also found in *Cath.* 5.145-49, where Prudentius compares the lamps gleaming during the vigilance for the Easter service (141-44) to the Twin bears and the evening star. In both passages the word *Hesperus* is in the plural, a usage elsewhere unattested. It is not likely that Prudentius misinterpreted the Greek singular nominative (*Hesperos*), which is also used in Latin texts (Ovid *Fast.* 2.314, Statius *Silv.* 2.6.37, etc.), with the Latin accusative plural. In our passage, Romanus lists the creations of the world alluding to Genesis: see n. 326-335. So *Hesperos* (as well as *septentriones*) stands for the stars in general (*pars pro toto*), not necessarily for the evening star *per se*. If we assume that *Pe.* 10 was written before the *Cath.*, it is possible that *Pe.* 10 inspired the starry imagery of *Cath.* 5. So in both texts Prudentius takes advantage of the poet's licence in order to deviate from the norm and enrich the possibilities of his vocabulary. For other instances where Prudentius uses a number or a gender for a noun that it would typically rarely be applied to, see Lavarenne (1933: 40-43). On plurals of proper names used as appellatives, see nn. 242 and 406-410.

*praerupta, plana, montium convallia,*  
*feras, volucres, reptiles, natatiles,*  
*iumenta, pecua, subiugales, beluas,*  
*flores, fructa, germina, herbas, arbores,*  
*quae sunt odori quaeque vernant esui.*

331-335

331. *convallia*: rarely in the neuter plural. For other instances see *TLL* 4.813.80-4.814.6.

332. *natatiles*: 'creatures that can swim/ live in water', a mainly post-classical word, according to the *LLT*. It was used for the first time in Apuleius *De Mundo* 28 in reference to the three different types of animals: *volucrum, natatiliū atque terrestrium*. Apart from a single occurrence in Tertullian (*Adversus Hermogenem*

33), it is not found in texts until the works of Augustine (who uses it 12 times) onwards.

334. Cf. Genesis 1.11: *et ait germinet terra herbam virentem et facientem semen et lignum pomiferum faciens fructum iuxta genus suum cuius semen in semet ipso sit super terram et factum est ita.*

334-335. Cf. Genesis 1.29: *et universa ligna ... ut sint vobis in escam.*

*Haec non labore et arte molitus Deus  
sed iussione quam potestas protulit  
mandavit esse; facta sunt, quae non erant,  
Verbo creavit omniformem machinam,  
virtus paterna semper in Verbo fuit.* 336-340

337. *iussione*: *iussio* (nom.= ‘order, command’), a post-classical word, according to the *LLT*. Without taking into account Cyprian’s pseudepigrapha, it is found for the first time in Lactantius.

338. Cf. Psalm 32.9 = 148.5: *ipse mandavit et creata sunt*; and *Cath.* 9.13: *ipse iussit, et creata, dixit ipse, et facta sunt.*

339. *omniformem*: a rare post-classical word, see *TLL* and *LLT*. It translates the Greek adjective παντόμορφος (*princeps est, quem παντόμορφον vel omniformem vocant*, Ps.-Apuleius *Asclepius* 19) or παντοδαπός (Chalcidius’ translation of Plato’s *Timaeus* p. 51). Passages describing the world and its manifold creations, as in Prudentius’ text (*mundus autem praeparatus est a deo receptaculum omniformium specierum*: 3; 34), or the creator (19 *op. cit.*; 35) are found in the Pseudo-Apuleian hermetic treatise *Asclepius*. Paulinus of Nola (*Ep.* 8.3: *ut te ad dominum harmoniae omniformis artificem modulamine carminis evocarem*) and Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* 9.24: *cecinissee dictus omniforme canticum*) used the

adjective in the context of composing poetry. In this light, it is possible that Prudentius hints at a link between God's (Ποιητής) creation and the poem (ποίημα), a poet's creation. Cf. also other compound adjectives with the word *forma* in Prudentius' oeuvre which have similar meaning: *Cath.* 6.37-38: *imitata multiformes/ facies sibi ipsa fingit*; and *Cath.* 9.55: *pulsa pestis lubricorum milleformis daemonum*, with Augustine' usage of *omniformis* in *Civ.* 10.11: *genus (sc. daemonum) ... omniforme, multimodum, simulans deos et daemones et animas defunctorum*.

*machinam*: referring to the universe as in *Cath.* 9.14 and *Ham.* 249. This phraseology, esp. given that it occurs after the description of the creation of the cosmos by enumerating its elements (*elementa*), invokes the Lucretian *machina mundi* (5.96) as in the afore-mentioned passages: see Rapisarda (1950: 55) and Malamud (2011: 235).

*Cognostis ipsum; nunc colendi agnoscite  
ritum modumque, quale sit templi genus,  
quae dedicari sanxerit donaria,  
quae vota poscat, quos sacerdotes velit,  
quod mandet illic nectar inmolarier.*

341-345

341-355. Having described the Christian God (see n. 341), Romanus goes on to expand on how he should be worshipped. The vocabulary he utilises (*donaria*: 343, *sacerdotes*: 344, *inmolarier*: 245) in combination with his description, although it has already been used metaphorically or literally in a Christian context, suggests that the martyr embarks on his task using pagan imagery and phraseology (cf. n. 351-353). He pretends to be planning to use terms with which the members of his audience are familiar. Romanus' method of introduction to the topic is, as we saw earlier (307-10), through a series of indirect questions. However, in this passage the indirect questions correspond more precisely to the following stanzas. Line 242 (*quale sit temple genus*) corresponds to the next strophe where it is revealed that Romanus



refers to a pure, clean temple within one's soul. The priest he intends to talk about in line 344 is Fides, described one stanza later (351-55). The offerings (*donaria*) and sacrifices (*inmolarier*, cf. *poscit litari victimas*: 354) that the Christian God expects are described in the next stanza (356-60), and they pertain to various facets of Christian behaviour. In the next five lines Romanus describes how God delights in these offerings (*hostiis*). A similar phraseology and imagery is used for the offerings of *pax* to God in *Psych.* 785-87: see n. 357. This stanza (341-45), and the description of the temple of God in the following verses as *aedes viva* (345-46), can be compared to 1 Peter 2.5: *et ipsi tamquam lapides vivi superaedificamini domus spiritualis sacerdotium sanctum offerre spirituales hostias acceptabiles Deo per Iesum Christum*. Many of the characterisations of the temple of God refer, or can very easily be applied, to the soul, making it clear that the temple stands for the human person or the human soul (see nn. 347 s.v. *sensualem*, s.v. *flabilem*). Similarly, an allegorical temple of the soul is described towards the end of the *Psychomachia* (823-77): see n. 352.

341. *Cognostis ipsum*: referring to lines 311-40 in which Romanus introduced his audience to the Christian God.

*cognostis*: the contracted form *metri causa*.

345. *inmolarier*: archaic present passive infinitive. See n. 97 s.v. *inmoler*.

*Aedem sibi ipse mente in hominis condidit  
vivam, serenam, sensualem, flabilem,  
solvi incapacem posse nec destructilem,  
pulchram, venustam, praeminentem culmine,  
discriminatis inlitam coloribus.*

346-350

346. *Aedem .../ 347. vivam*: the temple is living because it is the faithful themselves (1 Corinthians 3.16), in whom the living God abides (2 Corinthians 6.16). Cf.

Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 5.19: *cum tota domo tua non manufacta, quia vos estis templum Dei vivum, aedificatum in fundamentis apostolorum in Christo Deo*. Cf. also Augustine *Civ.* 12.9.

347. *sensualem*: ‘able to feel with the senses’. Up to Prudentius’ time it was used almost exclusively by Christian authors: see *LLT*. Often in the context of describing the soul: Tertullian *De carne Christi* 12: *sensualis est animae natura*, and further on: *nihil sensuale sine anima*. Cf. also Claudius Marius Victorinus *Adversus Arium* 3.1, Augustine *De Trinitate* 12.12. *Sensualitas* is something that we have in common with animals (Augustine *Civ.* 5.11, *De Trinitate op. cit.*, Claudianus Mamertus *De statu animae* 1.21).

*flabilem*: ‘airy, spiritual’, a mainly post-classical word. Apart from a single occurrence in Cicero’s *Tusculanae Disputationes* 1.26 (quoted by Lactantius in *De Ira Dei* 10.45), where it is used to describe the soul (*nihil ne aut umidum quidem aut flabile aut igneum*), it is found twice in Arnobius (2.49, 6.21) and then is mainly used by Augustine (six times): see *LLT*. In *Apoth.* 867, it is used to refer to the human soul (*res flabilis*).

348. *destructilem*: ‘destructible’, occurs only twice in the extant Latin texts available to us, according to the *LLT*. The first instance is in Lactantius’ *De Ira Dei* 24.14: *Sit nobis deus non in templis sed in corde nostro consecratus: destructilia sunt omnia quae manu fiunt*.

350. *inlitam coloribus*: with negative connotations in Ambrose *De Fide* 1.18, for the deception of the Arians.

*Illic sacerdos stat sacrato in limine  
foresque primas virgo custodit Fides,  
innexa crines vinculis regalibus*

*poscit litari victimas Christo et Patri,  
 quas scit placere candidatas, simplices:*

351-355

351-353. Romanus continues to describe Christianity using pagan terms. His portrayal of Fides as a virgin priestess guarding a temple evokes the Vestal Virgins. Prudentius criticises them in *CS* 2.1064-113.

352. *Fides*: the most frequently personified abstract in Prudentius' oeuvre. In *CS* 2.91-123, she is described as giving an answer to Roma's statement (85-90) that every race can seek the great mystery in its own way: see Brown (2003: 127-28). Although Fides does not give an answer, either in direct or indirect speech, Prudentius describes how vain and impossible it is for human nature to try to perceive God. Thus, Fides essentially is the answer because it is with faith and not the force of the human mind that one can approach the nature of God. In *Pe.* 10 she is the priestess of the temple-human soul and guards it (*custodit*). This protective attitude towards the soul can be compared to that of Fides in *Ham.* 852-55 where she receives the soul once it is reinstated in heaven and consoles it for the labours it went through when she was in the mortal body. In the *Psychomachia* (as well as in *Pe.* 2.17-20), she is a warrior. She is the first to engage in battle with one of the personified Vices, *Veterum Cultura Deorum* (21-39). Her appearance, as befits a warrior, is very different from that in *Pe.* 10: *agresti turbida cultu,/ nuda umeros, intonsa comas, exerta lacertos* (21-22). However, a relationship between Fides and the temple of the soul is also found here as in *Pe.* 10. Towards the end of the poem she directs the other Virtues to build the temple of *Sapientia* (814-15), the allegorical temple of the soul. Cf. n. 341-355.

353. *innexa crines*: cf. Vergil *Aen.* 6.281: *crinem ... innexa*.

354-355. The similarity in sound of *poscit* and *quas scit* is surely part of Prudentius' wordplay.

355. *candidatas*: used for Christ's chosen ones: *Pe.* 1.67 for Christ's cohorts and *Pe.* 4.145 for the eighteen martyrs of Caesaraugusta. The white colour of the Christian God stands in contrast to the red of the pagan sacrifices.

*simplices*: with *victimae* (354) echoes Prudentius' portrayal of the death-sacrifice of the Innocents in Bethlehem in *Cath.* 12.129: *Vos prima Christi victima,/ grex immaculatum tener,/ aram ante ipsam simplices/ palma et coronis luditis.* Cf. also *Cath.* 2.49: *te mente pura et simplici.* Similarly, Jerome *Ep.* 73.3 says that the sacrifice should not be an animal, *sed pane et vino, simplici puroque sacrificio.* *Simplicitas* here is meant not in the sense of artlessness and stupidity (*Ham.* 425) but innocence and ingenuity, characteristics that should be followed on behalf of the Christians in order to attain salvation. Cf. Psalm 36.37: *custodi simplicitatem et vide rectum quia erit ad extremum viro pax*; and Ambrose who defends *simplicitas* in *Explanatio Psalmorum xii Psalm* 61.21.1: *pretium nostrum munditia atque simplicitas est, quia scriptum est: possessio pretiosa vir mundus; nihil enim pretiosius viro simplici.*

*frontis pudorem, cordis innocentiam,  
pacis quietem, castitatem corporis,  
Dei timorem, regulam scientiae,  
ieiuniorum parcitatem sobriam,  
spem non iacentem, semper et largam manum.*

356-360

356-365. The two stanzas evoke ideas described in *Apologeticum* 30, where Tertullian talks about the noble sacrifices God demands in contrast to the bloody sacrifices of the pagans: *qui ei (sc. Dei) offero opimam et maiorem hostiam, quam ipse mandavit, orationem de carne pudica, de anima innocenti, de spiritu sancto profectam, non grana turis unius assis, arabicae arboris lacrimas, nec duas meri guttas, nec sanguinem reprobis bovis mori optantis, et post omnia inquinamenta etiam conscientiam spurcam.* These spiritual offerings to God also recall the *Epil.* 1-6: *Inmolat Deo Patri/ pius, fidelis, innocens, pudicus/ dona conscientiae,/ quibus beata*

*mens abundat intus./ alter et pecuniam/ recidit, unde victitent egeni. Innocens, pudicus* and the two final lines of the aforementioned passage correspond to *cordis innocentiam* (356), *frontis pudorem* (356) and *semper et largam manum* (360) respectively.

357-359. *pacis* and *ieiuniorum* are genitives *inhaerentiae*: see p. 83.

356. *frontis pudorem*: Chastity is personified as Pudicitia in the *Psychomachia*, and is also once referred to as Pudor (245). Cf. n. 357.

*cordis innocentia*: cf. Psalm 100.2, *perambulabam in innocentia cordis mei in medio domus meae*.

357. *pacis quietem*: In *Psych.* 769-87, Concordia talks about the significance of *pax* and says that it is not acceptable to offer a gift to God's altar when angry. She concludes this part of her speech by stating that: *quisque litare Deo mactatis vult holocaustis,/ offerat in primis pacem: nulla hostia Christo/ dulcior, hoc solo sancta ad donaria vultum/ munere convertens liquido oblectatur odore* (784-87). Both the imagery (an offering to God being lifted up as incense) and the vocabulary (*litare, hostia, donaria, odore*: cf. 354, 361, 343, 362) relate to our passage. Thus, peace that God favours is defined as the lack of anger and might be in opposition with the persecutor's *ira*. Later, when Romanus is being tortured, even though he is keeping himself calm and showing no signs of pain, he is characterised as *quietus* (457).

*castitatem corporis*: *Castitas* is how the mother of Christ is referred to in *Cath.* 11.14. This often appears side by side, or is the corollary of, purity of the spirit. Cf. Tertullian *De pudicitia* 5: *Post spiritalem enim castitatem sanctitatemque corporalis sequebatur integritas*; Ambrose *Ep.* 9.69.20: *Et quidem plerique actus interioris hominis perveniunt ad exteriorem hominem, quemadmodum castimonia interioris hominis transit etiam ad castitatem corporis*. Thus, here there might be a close relationship with *cordis innocentiam* (356). Cf also n. 356.

359. *ieiuniorum parcitatem sobriam*: Ambrose uses the same adjective with *parcitas*: *frugi esse ac modestum et sobriae parcitatis tenere mensuram probatur a pluribus, sed sibi soli proficit*, *Expositio Psalmi cxviii* 16.14. Sobriety and Fasting are personified in *Psych.* 244: *arida Sobrietas, albo Ieiunia vultu*. In *Psych.* 397, the personified Sobriety talks about *sobria ieiunia* when narrating the episode where Jonathan broke his fasting and ate honey. To attain a sober state of mind, Prudentius explains the destructive indulgences that dull the senses and must be restricted (*Cath.* 7.11-15). Prudentius wrote two hymns on fasting: *Cath.* 7 (*Hymnus Ieiunantium*) and *Cath.* 8. (*Hymnus post Ieiunium*). Fasting here is part of the catalogue of the offerings/ sacrifices to God by the faithful and as such offering is also presented in *Cath.* 7.5: *ieiuniorum dum litamus victimam* (cf. *Pe.* 10.354: *poscit litari victimas Christo et Patri*).

*Ex his amoenus hostiis surgit vapor  
vincens odorem balsami, turis, croci,  
auras madentes Persicorum aromatum,  
sublatus inde caelum adusque tollitur  
et prosperatum dulce delectat Deum.*

361-365

361. *Ex ... hostiis*: cf. *Cath.* 9.88: *... inmolatam corporis sacri hostiam*, for Christ's sacrifice. *Hostia* is also used for the martyrs (*Pe.* 1.96, 4.51, 14.84) as well as pagan sacrifices (*Apoth.* 478, *Pe.* 10.288, 1024). Later on in the poem, the mother of the child-martyr describes the tongue of one of the Maccabean brothers as an offering (*hostia*) worthy of God (*Pe.* 10.770). Here sacrifice imagery and the idea that the aroma of the offering is most pleasant to God reminds us of the offering of *pax* in *Psych.* 769-87: see n. 357.

*vapor*: in the sense of the sacrificial vapour-offering also in *Apoth.* 441: *perdidit insanos mendax Dodona vapores*.

362-363. *vincens odorem ... aromatum*: cf. Paulinus Diaconus *Vita Sancti Ambrosii* 32.4: *Etiam odore tanto repleti sumus, ut omnium aromatum vinceret suavitatem* (on the odour that comes from a deceased martyr's body). Cf. also Ovid *Pont.* 2.4.28: *calthaque Paestanas vincet odore rosas*. Some of the offerings that the vapour of the Christian virtues outstrips are also used in a Christian context. However, here they are meant as pagan and/ or luxurious tributes in opposition to the impalpable Christian offerings.

362. *odorem*: cf. *Cath.* 12.70-71: ... *et fragrans odor/ turis Sabaei*.

*balsami*: described as part of both Christian (*Pe.* 11.194) and pagan (*Apoth.* 482) offerings. It is also a feature of luxury (cf. n. 362 and *Psych.* 319) and plenty (cf. *Cath.* 5.117: the description of paradise; *Cath.* 11.76: the miraculous response of nature to Christ's birth).

*turis*: 'incense'. Cf. n. 261. and see above n. s.v. *odorem*. See *Apoth.* 631 and *T.H.* 106, where it is one of the gifts for Christ's birth. As part of pagan offerings, see *CS* 1.151, 222, 353, *Pe.* 10.261. In *Pe.* 3.29, 123 and 5.50 it is part of the sacrifice to the gods as proof that someone is pagan. For the censer, see *Apoth.* 479: *turibolis frigentibus* and *Pe.* 3.130.

362. *croci*: saffron, a perfume made of the stigmas of the plant *crocus sativus*. It was often used for sprinkling on theatre stages, see Suetonius *Nero* 25.2 and Martial 11.8.2. In *Pe.* 3.200-1, Prudentius urges boys and girls to offer violets and crocuses (referring to the flower) at the tomb of the martyr Eulalia.

363. *Persicorum*: in both Greek and Latin literature, Persian was synonymous with luxurious. Cf. Horace *Carm.* 1.38.1-2 with Nisbet & Hubbard (1970: 423-24).

365. *dulce*: serves as an adverb. For further examples, see Lease (1895: 51-52).

*Hanc disciplinam quisquis infensus vetat,  
vetat probatum vivere et sanctum sequi,  
vetat vigorem mentis alte intendere  
nostrique acumen ignis ad terram vocat  
nec excitari vim sinit prudentiae.* 366-370

366-380. There is a strong contrast between being concerned with earthly affairs and being interested in spiritual matters. The former attitude is exemplified as having a calling towards or looking down to the earth, whereas the latter is represented as having a desire to head or gaze up towards the sky, in other words towards where one can find salvation. The earth is connected to the mortal body (*Ham. Praef. 2.50-51: cuius litamen sordet et terram sapit/ terram caduci corporis*). It symbolises death and we may also have a hint at greediness and thirst for wealth. Cf. n. 378 s.v. *terrulente* with *Pe. 2.195*. Cf. also *Apoth. 1027: tantus amor terrae*. For the contrast between earth/ body and sky/ spirit, see *Cath. 10. 25-32: si terrea forte voluntas/ luteum sapit et grave captat,/ animus quoque pondere victus/ sequitur sua membra deorsum./ at si generis memor ignis/ contagia pigra recuset,/ vehit hospita viscera secum,/ pariterque reportat ad astra*. The antithesis between being concerned with earthly or spiritual affairs and exemplified through gaze imagery is picked up further on in the text (431-40).

366-370. Polysyndeton with the asyndetic connection between the first three lines (marked by the triple *anaphora: vetat*) followed by the enclitic *-que* (*nostrique: 369*) and *nec* introducing the final sentence.

367. The adjectives *probatum* and *sanctum* function as adverbs. Cf. n. 365.

368-369. Both *vigor mentis* and *acumen ignis* represent the soul, also depicted as the fiery breath of God bestowed with the ability to reason in *Cath. 3.186-90: oris opus, vigor igneolus/ non moritur, quia flante Deo/ conpositus superoque fluens/ de solio Patris artificis/ vim liquidae rationis habet*. The latter passage (and possibly the lines under consideration) echoes the fiery energy described in Vergil *Aen. 6.730-31:*



*Igneus est ollis vigor et caelestis origo/ seminibus.* Cf. O'Daly (2012: 115) and Buchheit (1986: 273-74). For more on the fiery nature of the soul, see n. 439.

368. *alte intendere*: in opposition with *ad terram vocat* (369). The Christian ideal is to free themselves from earthly bonds and gaze towards heaven, an act which symbolises their efforts to gain salvation. Cf. also line 375 and n. 369.

369. *ad terram*: cf. 374: *terris amicum*, 378: *terrulente*. Cf. also *ad terram vocat* with *Cath.* 1.4: *iam Christus ad vitam vocat*, and n. 368.

*O mersa limo caecitas gentilium,  
o carnulenta nationum pectora,  
o spissus error, o tenebrosum genus  
terris amicum, deditum cadaveri,  
subiecta semper intuens, numquam supra!* 371-375

371-375. Tetracolon: four exclamatory phrases in succession. The first three exclamations include words synonymous with paganism (*gentilium*: 371, *nationum*: 372, *error*: 373).

371. *caecitas*: very often used as a metaphor for a lack of faith, heresy and paganism. In the morning hymn, it is spiritual blindness that God's light dissolves (*Cath.* 2.93). Similarly, in *Apoth. Praef.* 2. 37-40, the blind man goes astray and runs into obstacles and the *fax sola fidei* leads him to the right path. For *fax*, see n. 586-595 and 591. In *Pe.* 2, Laurence compares the literal weakness of the poor and the sick of Rome with the spiritual blindness of paganism (232: *et caeca fraus nihil videt*). Cf. also *Pe.* 2.377: *inpiorum caecitas*; 456: *Iuli caecitas*. This type of blindness prevents Asclepiades from understanding the Christian doctrine: *scio incapacem te sacramenti, inpie,/ non posse caecis sensibus mysterium/ haurire nostrum. Nil diurnum nox capit* (588-90).

372. *carnulenta*: ‘fleshly, carnal’, very rare post-Classical word, according to the *LLT* and *TLL*. Before Prudentius it was used only by Solinus (2.41, 49.9). Cf. the adjective *carnalis* in *Apoth.* 982 and *Pe.* 2.487.

372. *nationum pectora*: cf. Ambrose *Explanatio Psalmorum xii* 43.16.1: *quae maior est gloria quam pectoribus nationum cognitionem divinitatis infundere?*; idem. 45.16.3: *inclinata est perfidia, postequam fides coepit in nationum regnare pectoribus.*

374. *terrīs amicū*: cf. 369: *ad terram*, 371: *mersa limo* and 378: *terrulente*.

*cadaveri*: implying both the real nature of the pagan gods (385) and the path where their worship leads, i.e. death.

375. Cf. 390: *mors et ipsa subiacet*. Cf. also Cyprian *Ad Demetrianum* 16: *Quid te ad falsos deos humilias et inclinas, quid ante inepta simulacra et figmenta terrena captivum corpus incurvas? Rectum te Deus fecit et cum cetera animalia prona et ad terram situ vergente depressa sint, tibi sublimis status et ad caelum adque ad dominum suum vultus erectus est.*

*supra*: enallage, instead of *superna*.

*Furorne summus ultima et dementia est  
deos putare, qui creantur nuptiis,  
rem spiritalem terrulente quaerere,  
elementa mundi consecrare altaribus,  
id quod creatum est conditorem credere,*

376-380

376. *Furorne*: Asclepiades’ main characteristic throughout *Pe.* 10 (see n. 111) which can also be applied to paganism in general.

*dementia*: also often ascribed to pagans, see e.g. Cyprian *Ad Demetrianum* 16: *desipientium caeca et stulta dementia*. In Prudentius it is used only here and in CS 2.450-51, where Prudentius states that pagans might go so far as to believe that a genius is present in every building (*restat ut et fatum similis dementia cunctis/aedibus inponat*).

*ultima et dementia: et postponed metri causa*.

377. Romanus is picking up his arguments from ll. 176-85, where he talked about the great number of gods and their progenies, their marriages as well as their affairs.

378. *spiritalem terrulente*: the same contrast as in 375. Cf. n. 366-95.

*terrulente*: ‘in an earthly manner’, very rare word unattested before Prudentius, cf. *LLT*. There are two more instances in his oeuvre. In *Ham. Praef. 5* (*Hic terrulentis, ille vivis fungitur*), *terrulenta* characterises Abel’s way of making a living (in contrast to *viva*, livestock, which was his brother’s means of support). In *Pe. 2.195*, *terrulentum* has negative connotations and qualifies gold (*quod terrulentum ac sordidum*) which is excavated from dirty mud by people who have been forced into penal labour. After Prudentius, the word is only found in the high Middle Ages in William of Malmesbury (*Liber super explanationem Lamentationum Ieremiae prophetae* 1.1.13, 4.4.5) and Folchino dei Borfoni (*Cremonica* 4.5: *de orthographia*). Cf. 369: *ad terram* and 374: *terris amicum*.

379. *elementa mundi*: a common theme in Christian literature that pagans had deified the elements of nature such as fire, water, earth and air. See e.g. Lactantius *Inst.* 2.5.38: *iam illud quam repugnans et absurdum, quod cum caelestes ignes ceteraque mundi elementa esse deos adfirment, idem mundum ipsum deum dicunt!*; *op. cit.* 2.13.12 *ceteri autem qui per terram dispersi fuerant admirantes elementa mundi, caelum solem terram mare, sine ullis imaginibus ac templis venerabantur et his sacrificia in aperto celebrabant, donec processu temporum potentissimis regibus templa et simulacra fecerunt eaque victimis et odoribus colere instituerunt;*

Augustine *Serm.* 26D.10; *Civ.* 18.14. Prudentius shares the same opinion: *CS* 1.297-300. Apart from interactions with Christian texts, it is not impossible that there is also a Lucretian touch. Not only do we have two keywords but also the only other time that Prudentius uses the same phrase in *Apoth.* 733, describing the small first creation that grew bigger by the addition of enlargements, again evoking Lucretius (731-35).

380. Romans 1.25: *coluerunt et servierunt creaturae potius quam Creatori*. Cf. n. 379. Cf. also Romanus' analogous argument that it is peculiar that the pagans have not deified the sculptors who with their art essentially create gods (n. 266-295).

*deasceato supplicare stipiti,  
verris cruore scripta saxa spargere,  
aras ofellis obsecrare bubulis,  
homines fuisse cum scias, quos consecras,  
urnas reorum morticinas lambere?* 381-385

381. *deasceato ... stipiti*: cf. 152: *sectilem quercum*, and 302: *quos lana terret discolora in stipite* with *mn. ad locc.*

*deasceato*: 'hewn', very rare word, see *LLT* and *TLL* s.v. *deascio*. In Apuleius *Met.* 2.15 (*et lagoena iuxta orificio caesim deasceato patescens*) *deasceato* is in all probability what the oldest manuscript transmits, whereas the majority of the later manuscripts transmit *deascento*: see Zimmerman (2012: 34). *Deasciari* is found in Plautus *Miles gloriosus* 884 used in a comic way and *CIL* VI.24799.

382. *verris cruore*: uncastrated boar's blood (Varro *Rust.* 2.4.8, 21). Cf. Horace's offer to Diana: *verris obliquum meditantis ictum/ sanguine donem* (*Carm.* 3.22.7-8).

*scripta saxa*: inscribed altars. Prudentius uses the inscribed *saxa* with the same verb (*spargere*) for describing the care taken by the living for the tombs of the dead: *titulumque et frigida saxa/ liquido spargemus odore*, *Cath.* 10.171-72.

383. *ofellis*: very rare word, the diminutive of *offa* (= a bit, a piece). Before Prudentius it is found in broadly satirical writings, cf. *LLT*: Martial 10.48.15, 12.48.17, 14.221, Juvenal 11.144. Prudentius here is using satiric language which adds to the absurdities he is describing. In addition, apart from Prudentius, *ofella* occurs only in the context of dinner or food preparation. Thus its usage here where Romanus is talking about sacrifices to gods makes his tone even more sarcastic.

*bubulis*: cf. 1007: *Meus iste sanguis verus est, non bubulus*, a line by which Romanus introduces the description of the taurobolium.

384. According to the euhemeristic interpretation, the gods were mortals who consequently were deified by the people: see p. 56. By worshipping the gods, pagans essentially worship dead people. Prudentius adopted this method of interpretation in *CS* 1 (*passim*) about a series of gods.

385. *urnas reorum morticinas*: enallage for *urnae mortuorum*.

*lambere*: cf. another image of worship in *Apoth.* 456: *fictilis et soleas Iunonis lambere*; and *Pe.* 5.339-40: *hic purpurantem corporis/ gaudet cruorem lambere*, for the respect that the faithful pay to the martyr.

*Desiste, iudex, saeculi tantum nefas  
viris iubere fortibusque et liberis!  
nil est amore veritatis celsius;  
Dei perennis nomen adserentibus  
nihil pavori est, mors et ipsa subiacet.'*

386-390

386. *nefas*/ 387. *viris iubere*: *iubere* + accusative + dative of person= to impose.

386. *iudex, saeculi*: given that in all the other texts that the two words occur together they refer to God (Augustine *Serm.* 380.2, Sulpicius Severus *Chron.* 2.50.5, Jerome *Ep.* 52.11), it is more likely that we should write a comma after *iudex*. Cf. also 1133: *sempiterno iudici*.

387. *fortibusque*: due to Romanus' admonitions the people of Antioch have become brave enough to oppose the edicts (*agmen imperterritum*, 56).

388. *amore veritatis*: an expression used frequently in Augustine (*Contra Academicos* 2.3, 4.24, *Ep.* 149.2, *De vera religione* 15, etc.). Given that love for the truth equals love for the true faith, the expression might be used almost as synonymous to *amor religionis* (CS 2.591, *Pe.* 11.192) as well as *amor Dei* or *Christi* (*Psych.* 735: *Christi sub amore*, *Pe.* 1.45: *Christi amore interrita*, 2.495: *amore sublimis Dei*, 10.714: *amore Christi*). For similar expressions, see also CS 1.523 and *Pe.* 6.71. As with *amor coronae* (71) earlier on, *amor veritatis* makes people overcome their fear and state's laws.

389. *nomen adserentibus*: cf. 1: *Romane, Christi fortis adsertor Dei*; 785: *Persiste et horum munerum auctore adsere* (the mother's admonition to the child martyr).

*perennis*: see n. 311.

390. *nihil*: cf. 388: *nil*.

*et*: postponed *metri causa*.

*Dudum coquebat disserente martyre  
Asclepiades intus iram subdolam  
stomachatus alto felle, dum longum silet*

*bilemque tectis concipit praecordiis,  
tandem latentis vim furoris evomit:*

391-395

391-395. Cf. 866-67: *quod cum tumentis nuntiatum iudici,/ commovit iram fellis inplacabilis*, when Asclepiades learns that Romanus' supposed punishment to be burnt alive was not executed because of a sudden burst of rain. Similar imagery and phraseology is found in *Pe.* 5.377-80: *at Christiani nominis/ hostem coquebant inrita/ fellis venena et lividum/ cor efferata exusserant*, where Prudentius describes Vincent's persecuting rage, which is not diminished even after the martyr's death. This progressively increasing anger, which is silent at the beginning but consequently bursts out, is also applied to Cassian's students in *Pe.* 9.45-46 (*Quantum quisque odii tacita conceperat ira/ effundit ardens felle tandem libero*) and Impiety in *CS 1 Praef.* 52-58. On the latter, see nn. 393 s.v. *silet* and 395. Similar images are found in *Pe.* 10.509-10 when Romanus talks about the corrupted nature of the human body: *inflatum ira, solvitur libidine,/ plerumque felle tincta livores trahit*. Cf. also *Aen.* 7.345-47: *feminae ardentem curaque iraque coquebant./ huic dea caeruleis unum de crinibus anguem/ conicit, inque sinum praecordia ad intuma subdit*, where Allecto poisons the queen Amata. Both *fel* (gall) and *bilis* (bile) are related to and are very often used in describing the venom of the snake, thus reinforcing a bestialised picture of the judge who represents the serpent (i.e. Satan). For the black bile and its association with anger, see n. 487.

391. *coquebat .../ ... iram*: cf. Silius Italicus *Punica* 2.327-28: *namque impatiens asperque coquebat/ iamdudum immites iras*; 2.539-40: *et quicquid scelerum, poenarum quicquid et irae/ pectore fecundo coquitur tibi*; 4.538: *cui consul, namque ira coquit*; 7.403: *... atque iras cum fraude coquentem* (sc. *leonem*); 14.103: *quos ira metusque coquebat*. Cf. also n. 391-395.

*disserente*: cf. 22: *Christus luculente disseret*.

393. *stomachatus*: cf. *Ham.* 195-96: *inflavit fermento animi stomachante tumorem/ bestia* (referring to Satan); *Psych.* 132: *scililet indomitos postquam stomachando lacertos* (referring to the personified *Ira* – cf. 392 –).

*felle*: cf. *CS 1 Praef.* 58: *succensi stomacho fellis inaestuans*; *Lactantius Inst.* 6.15.4: *quodsi, ut medici adfirmant, laetitiae adfectus in splene est, irae in felle, ...*; *De opificio Dei* 14.4, 7; *Jerome In Hiezechielem* 1.47.

*longum*: cf. n. 365.

*silet*: cf. 395: *latentis ... furoris*, *Pe.* 9.45: *tacita ... ira*.

394. Cf. *Romanus'* words in 461: *dolet quod error pectori insidet tuo*.

395. *latentis ... furoris*: cf. n. 393 s.v. *silet* and *latens impietas* (*CS 1 Praef.* 56). For *furor*, see n. 111.

*evomit*: cf. *Pe.* 12.23: *evomit in iugulum Pauli Nero fervidum furorem*.

*'Pro Iuppiter! quid est quod ex hoc audio?*

*stat inter aras et deorum imagines*

*et quod fateri cogor in medio foro*

*tacente memet ac perorat perditus,*

*quidquid sacrorum est ore foedans inpio.*

396-400

396. *Asclepiades'* invocations are related to his argument that starts in the next stanza about Christianity being a recently invented religion compared to Roman religion: see n. 401-415.

397. *inter aras et deorum imagines*: sacrificing to the gods was used as a proof of not being a Christian: see n. 35. That confession of pagan faith was what *Asclepiades*



expected to extract from Romanus. In 421-25, the judge asks Romanus to pray to the gods for the emperor's life, a request which the martyr refuses. Towards the end of his martyrdom, Romanus spits on the altars and the animals that have been prepared for his sacrifice (916-20).

398. *foro*: Romanus' martyrdom, as well as that of other martyrs in the *Pe.* (3.177, 6.14, 126, cf. also 1.47), takes place in the forum. In these cases, the sense of the forum, since it is also the place where the martyr's interrogation takes place, is coupled with that of the court. Cf. the *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 6. For the public character of the martyrdoms, see n. 86 s.v. *spectaculum*. Cf. also 816-17: *abiens at ille* (sc. Romanus), *cum foro abriperent virum/ truces ministri*; and 1106: *dixit* (sc. Asclepiades) *foroque protrahi iussit virum*.

399. *memet*: Prudentius very often adds the particle *met* at the end of personal pronouns, see Lavarenne (1933: 37).

*O fas priorum, moris o prisca status!*  
*inventa regum pro salute publica*  
*Pompiliorum nostra carpunt saecula.*  
*quis hos sophistas error invexit novus*  
*qui non colendos esse divos disputent?*

401-405

401-415. Asclepiades' argument in these three stanzas is that Roman religion was established in ancient times (in contrast with the recently invented Christianity), and was part and parcel of the foundation of Rome and its cultural history up to that point. The same charge is repeated by the judge in lines 583-85. Romanus' answer to that comes in lines 611-35 (see n. *ad loc.*), where he argues that the Christian doctrine dates back to the creation of the world with the cross, symbol of the Christian faith, having been predicted by various people and in various ways. Apart from the argument as a whole, various specific points of Romanus' argument counter-attack those made by Asclepiades: see n. 407 and 409. For a reading of the

two passages in dialogue (401-25 and 611-35) as suggestive of a unified Christian and pagan history, see Mastrangelo (2008: 52-81). In *Pe.* 6.37-40, the judge Aemilianus addresses a similar argument to the martyr Fructuosus, echoing some of the key-words of the next stanza: ‘*tu, qui doctor,*’ *ait* ‘*seris novellum/ commenti genus, ut leves puellae/ lucos destituant, Iovem relinquunt,/ damnes, si sapias, anile dogma.*’ In what follows in both texts (*Pe.* 10 and *Pe.* 6), the judge appeals to the emperor and paganism as the official religion of the state (*Pe.* 10.417-25 ~ *Pe.* 6.41-42). To that Fructuosus replies that he worships the true God who is the creator of himself as well as the emperor (44-47), while Romanus claims that the emperor, if he desires to be his emperor, should convert to Christianity and become a soldier of Christ (426-45). The charge that Christianity is new compared to the ancient or immemorial tradition of paganism often had to be defended by Christian authors. Tertullian (*Ad nationes* 1.10) reflects this charge back on the pagans by arguing that the latter, although praising and claiming to follow their ancestors, essentially reject them since they have changed their institutions and habits. Tertullian sees the fact that worshippers of pagan religion can not worship all the gods, but have to select some of them, as another form of rejection of revered *antiquitas*. Lactantius (*Inst.* 2.6.7-12) argues that what one should stress is not how old a religion is but how reasonable it is, and he finds pagan religion totally irrational. Other attempts to attack this accusation on chronological grounds have also been made: see n. 621-635. Tertullian (*Apologeticum* 19), Lactantius (*Inst.* 4.5.3-10), Tatian (36-41), Theophilus (3.1, 16-29), Origen (*Contra Celsum* 6.43), and Eusebius (*Praeparatio Evangelica* 10.9-14) discuss chronology and claim that the scriptures are much older than the writings of all Greek and Egyptian authors. According to some of these authors, Moses, the author of the Pentateuch, lived 900-1000 years prior to the Trojan war (Tertullian 19.3, Lactantius 4.5.5, Theophilus 3.21) and even the prophets who came after him predate the other authors, with Zechariah, the last of them, having lived during the reign of Darius (Lactantius 4.5.8, Theophilus 3.23). For Theophilus 3.23, see also n. 618-619. For Christian writers who argue against the alleged novelty of their religion and more specifically for their arguments that the Christian culture represented by Old Testament writers such as Moses antedate ancient Greek culture represented by writers such as Homer, see Droge (1989) and Young (1997: 49-75).

402. *regum*/ 403. *Pompiliorum*: Numa Pompilius was believed to have been the second king of Rome and to have established many of Rome's religious institutions, such as the *pontifex maximus*, the Salii and Vestal Virgins (Livy 1.20, Plutarch *Life of Numa* 13). Christian authors credited him with the creation of Roman religion (see e.g. Lactantius *Inst.* 1.22.1-8, Augustine *Ep.* 102.13: *Numa Pompilius deos colendos Romanis instituit*). In *CS* 2.45-46, Numa along with Homer and Apelles (representing poetry, the art of painting and pagan religion respectively) form the triptych that creates and promotes pagan deities. In *Pe.* 2, Numa is used as a symbol of pagan religion, making more powerful the description of the conversion of the pagans (*et ipse iam credat Numa*: 444 and 513-16). Gnilka (2000: 375) argues that *Pompiliorum* cannot mean 'kings like Numa' (as translated by Thomson in the Loeb edition). He points out that the *nomen gentilicium* can only refer to different members of the same *gens*. And since *Pompiliorum*, as an allusion to 'an indefinite plurality of Roman kings', would not make much sense, he takes it as a true plural referring to Numa Pompilius and his grandson, Ancus Marcius, who renewed and furthered the work of his grandfather. The reference to these two Pompilii specifically does not seem necessary and it would be confirmed only if there was an allusion to Ancus Marcius or his deeds. Something else that might suggest a broader application of the plural *Pompiliorum* comes from a passage in *CS* 1 (526-32). In this passage, Prudentius makes a comparison between the contribution of Cicero to the state and that of Theodosius, concluding that the emperor banished many Catilines that were not threatening the state but the souls of people: *multos Catilinas/ ille domo pepulit ...* (529-30). In this case, the plural *Catilinas*, though it represents the *cognomen* (and not the *nomen* of the *gens*), evidently does not refer to one person specifically but to people like him in general, who as enemies of the Christian religion, which in Prudentius' eyes is interrelated with the state, are considered as traitors in a way analogous to that of Catiline. In this light, it is possible that the plural *Pompiliorum* (which might have been more likely used by a Christian in a dismissive way rather than Asclepiades, cf. n. 242) points to the early Roman kings such as are mentioned in *CS* 1.193: *hos habuere deos Ancus, Numitor, Numa, Tullus*. In the latter passage, Prudentius resorts to the euhemeristic interpretation and argues that gods and heroes

were merely mortals, who were deified after their death. These mortals, Prudentius tells us, were considered as gods by early kings. From this statement we can assume that Prudentius in a way saw all these kings as the people who founded or worked towards the crystallisation of Roman religion at an early stage. They deified mortals who from early on came to be a quintessential part of the Roman pantheon. It is to such early founders that Asclepiades appears to refer with the *inventā regum .../ Pompiliorum* (402-3). Furthermore, the vagueness that the plural yields might imply that not even Asclepiades himself, who is supposed to defend paganism, is certain about who created Roman religion. Cf. the use of the plural in 408: *Nestoras*. For further references to Numa Pompilius in Prudentius, see CS 1.103, 2.543. For the prosody of the word *Pompiliorum*, see p. 89.

404. *sophistas*: although Christian writers were opposed to sophistry (Cf. e.g. Origen *Contra Celsum* 3.39, Clement *Stromateis* 1.3), the word can be taken as referring more broadly to philosophers or wise/ erudite men. Cf. *Apoth. Praef.* 29-30: *Idcirco mundi stulta delegit Deus, / ut concidant sophistica, CS 2.890: trahit (sc. daemon) inde sophistas/ barbatos*. Celsus, as we know from Origen's point of view, had accused Christians of having borrowed notions from pagan philosophers (*Contra Celsum* 1.9, 6.11-19). As Tertullian claims, it is because both poets and philosophers (*sophistae*) have drunk from the fountain of the prophets to which philosophy and Christianity can be compared (*Apol.* 47.2). In addition, 'crucified sophist' is a characterisation that Lucian applies to Christ in *The Death of Peregrinus* 13. Romanus repeats this accusation back to Asclepiades and the erudite pagans later on, calling them *sophistae saeculi* (608).

*error ... novus*: *novus* alludes to the argument provided in the next stanza on the 'newness' of Christian religion. Cf. 409: *novellum*. Interestingly, Asclepiades attacks Romanus using the terms that the martyr used against the pagans (*o spissus error*, 373). Cf. 404 s.v. *sophista*, a word employed in the attacks of both Romanus and his persecutor.

*Nunc dogma nobis Christianum nascitur  
 post evolutos mille demum consules  
 ab urbe Roma, ne retexam Nestoras.  
 quidquid novellum surgit, olim non fuit.  
 vis summa rerum nosse? Pyrrham consule.*

406-410

406-410. Gnilka (2000: 373-84) unconvincingly athetises this stanza. He raises a series of points that can be effectively rebutted. Firstly, he points (2000: 373) to the fact that *Nestoras* (408) is used as an appellative. However, there seems to be no problem with that, especially given that *Pompiliorum* (403) is used in this sense in the previous stanza (see n. *ad loc.*). On the contrary, given how frequently Prudentius employs names as *pars pro toto* (see 242: *Priapos*, 329: *Hesperos* and 403: *Pompiliorum* with nn. *ad locc.*), it appears that it is actually a comparatively common feature instead of being an anomaly that should occasionally alert us to suspicions of interpolation. Further, Gnilka points out (2000: 377-78) that Nestor is the person *par excellence* to denote *senectus*, old age, but here he is mentioned as a representative of ancient times. For him, this is a distorted use of *antomasia*. Nestor is the carrier of a certain quality, that is, longevity, but instead of being raised to the status of type for this quality, as is the case with *antonomasia*, he is raised to the status of a type for another quality, that is, antiquity. However, being a Homeric hero, Nestor is also a point of reference for this epoch, an argument that Gnilka dismisses. Very suggestive of the association between Nestor and the ancient period of the Homeric heroes are Aper's words in Tacitus' *Dialogus* 16.5, stating that when he hears a discussion about 'ancients' he visualises heroes like Ulysses and Nestor: *Ego enim cum audio antiquos, quosdam veteres et olim natos intellego, ac mihi versantur ante oculos Ulixes ac Nestor, quorum aetas mille fere et trecentis annis saeculum nostrum antecedit*; Aper refers to Nestor as representative of ancient times rather than as synonymous with old age. Another argument (2000: 374-76, 380) is that this stanza (406-10) interrupts the coupling together of Numa and Romulus featuring in the stanzas before and after 406-10 respectively. Their joint forces contributed to the establishment of Roman religion and consequently to the welfare of the state. The poet portrays them together as representatives of the old Roman paganism in *Pe.*

2.443-44 (*fiat fidelis Romulus,/ et ipse iam credat Numa*). The succession of Numa by Romulus shows progress from the less to the more ancient. Lines 406-10, moving temporally back and forth with the mention of the consuls and Pyrrha, would interrupt this sequence. Nonetheless, that a reference to Numa is to be followed by a reference to Romulus, forming a duo that played a quintessential role in the foundation and establishment of Roman religion, is possible but not necessary. The next point that Gnilka (2000: 382-83) raises has to do with Romanus' response to the arguments made by Asclepiades in this stanza. Lines 406-10 anticipate something mentioned in 614-15, namely the thousand years that separate Rome from its foundation (*vix mille fastis inplet hanc aetatulam/ cursus dierum conditore ab augure*). Romanus uses as a counter-argument the same calculation of years that Asclepiades referred to but to achieve the exact opposite goal, that is not to show how ancient but how recent Roman religion is. According to Gnilka (2000: 382), this is introduced in line 613 (*si res novellas respuis, nil tam recens*), as if not mentioned before, probably in order to show how short-sighted an idea the judge has of history. However, Gnilka (2000: 382-83) asserts that it would not be possible to achieve this goal, if the calculation made earlier by Asclepiades (406-410) was now presented as new (613-615) and the sum of a thousand *consules* or *fasti* was now registered on the negative side of the ledger. In other words, Gnilka suggests that lines 613-615 can be presented as a new and valid argument only if the mention of the thousand years from the foundation of Rome in stanza 406-410, and by extension the stanza itself, did not exist. However, the one thousand years since the foundation of Rome, used to achieve the exact opposite goal, rather shows how Prudentius portrays the difference in the way pagans and Christians interpret the idea of *antiquitas*. An even more revealing argument that Gnilka (2000: 382-83) puts forward is that lines 615-620, in which Romanus refers to empires before the foundation of Rome, would have no value if Asclepiades had traced the origins of pagan religion back to the flood and thus the beginning of the human race. However, it is possible that Romanus' chronological limits extend far beyond those of Asclepiades. The judge refers to Nestor, i.e. to the age of Homeric heroes, and Pyrrha, i.e. to the flood and the subsequent genesis of the human race. Yet the flood was a consequence of Jupiter's wrath (see n. 410). The martyr states that there were plenty of kingdoms long before

Jupiter suckled the Gnosian she-goat (616-19), i.e. long before Jupiter's infancy and hence certainly long before the flood. Finally, there are other minor points that Gnilka makes regarding the banality and lack of clarity that characterises certain phrases. Overall, Gnilka's arguments are not decisive enough to prove that this stanza is an interpolation.

406. *dogma*: picked up at 583: *tantus novelli dogmatis regnat furor*.

407. Picked up at 614-15: *vix mille fastis inplet hanc aetatulam/ cursus dierum conditore ab augure*.

*consules*: used as a metonymy for *annus* (TLL 4.0.568.4-13).

408. *ab urbe Roma*: i.e. *condita*.

*Nestoras*: Nestor was king of Pylos known in the *Iliad* as a good counsellor of old age (*Il.* 1.247-53). Here it is used as an appellative, standing for Homeric heroes, and thus referring to the time of the Trojan War or Homer himself, both of which are often points of reference when Christian apologists discuss matters of chronology (see e.g. Tertullian *Apol.* 19, Tatian 41, Origen *Contra Celsum* 6.43). For more on the plural, see n. 406-410.

409. *novellum*: see 583 (where Asclepiades' argument is repeated with n. 406 *op. cit.*), and Romanus' response: *si res novellas respuis, nil tam recens* (i.e. from the foundation of Rome), 613; and 621-23: *crux ista Christi, quam novellam dicitis,/ nascente mundo .../ expressa signis, expedita est litteris*. The word is used in *Pe.* 6.37, when the judge Aemilianus used the same word addressing a similar argument to the martyr Fructuosus and in *Apoth.* 548-49, where Prudentius refers to the conversion of the Romans to Christianity.

*olim non fuit*: picked up at 584: *hic nempe vester Christus haud olim fuit*; and 620: *sed illa non sunt* (i.e. *regna pridem condita*), *haec et olim non erunt*.

410. *Pyrrham*: Pyrrha together with her husband Deucalion, king of Phthia and son of Prometheus, were the only survivors of the great flood sent by Jupiter. A detailed account is given in Ovid's *Met.* 1.244-437. Pyrrha and Deucalion started the human race again, following its destruction by the deluge, by throwing stones out of which sprang men and women. For the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha in other apologists, see Theophilus 3.18, Arnobius 5.5, 8. Cf. also *Apoth.* 292: *venerator Deucalionum*, where *Deucalionum* stands for idols or deified mortals or more specifically serves as a metonymy for 'stone' and hence 'statues of people', as Bergamin (2005: 172) argues.

*Ubi iste vester tunc erat summus Deus,  
divum favore cum puer Mavortius  
fundaret arcem septicollem Romulus?  
quod Roma pollet auspicato condita,  
Iovi Statori debet et dis ceteris.* 411-415

411-415. Asclepiades refers to the story of the foundation of Rome by Romulus (Livy 1.3-16) and ascribes this achievement to the pagan gods (*divum favore*: 411, *Iovi Statori debet et dis ceteris*: 415). On the same story in Prudentius see CS 1.174-9, 227-8 (with n. 412 s.v. *Mavortius*), CS 2.395-98. The judge with his reference to Jupiter Stator (n. 415) alludes to incidents where the Roman state was in danger and it was aided by the intervention of Jupiter, thus presenting the gods as an integral ingredient of both the foundation and the continuation of Rome.

411. On the priority of paganism over Christianity, see n. 401-415.

412-414. Cf. Anchises' prophecy of the foundation of Rome in Vergil *Aeneid* 6.777-83: *quin et avo comitem sese Mavortius addet/ Romulus, Assaraci quem sanguinis Iliia mater/ educet. Viden, ut geminae stant vertice cristae/ et pater ipse suo superum iam signat honore?/ en huius, nate, auspiciis illa incluta Roma/ imperium terris,*



*animos aequabit Olympo, septemque una sibi muro circumdabit arces.* On this allusion, see Petruccione (1985: 159) and pp. 61-63.

412. *puer Mavortius*: cf. Horace *Carm.* 4.8.22-23: *Quid foret Iliae/ Mavortisque puer.*

*Mavortius*: Romulus was believed to be the son of Mars and Rhea Silvia, also known as Ilia. Livy (1.3-4) already doubts the credibility of Romulus' paternal parentage. The adjective *Mavortius* is used again in Romanus' renunciation of this myth: *antiquitatem Romuli et Mavortiam/ lupam renarras*, 611-12) and is mainly found in epic poetry. Prudentius also uses the cognate adjective *Martius* in *CS* 1.181: *Martia ... sacra.*

413. *septicollem*: *hapax legomenon.*

414. *Roma pollet*: cf. *Pe.* 1.4, where in contrast to Rome's indebtedness to pagan gods, Spain owes her glory to the relics of Hemeterius and Chelidonius: *pollet hoc felix per orbem terra Hibera stemmate.*

415. *Iovi Statori*: the temple of Jupiter Stator that Romulus vowed to build during the battle against the Sabines. This vow strengthened the Romans and resulted in their victory (Livy 1.12.3-6). Nevertheless, the temple was not built until M. Atilius Regulus made a similar vow when he was fighting against the Samnites (Livy 10.36.11).

*Hoc sanctum ab aevo est, hoc ab atavis traditum:*

*placanda nobis pro triumphis principis*

*delubra, faustus ut secundet gloriam*

*procinctus utque subiugatis hostibus*

*ductor quietum frenet orbem legibus.*

416-420

416-425. In the first stanza, Asclepiades connects the worship of gods with the emperor's military triumphs. This reminds us of an argument found in Symmachus' *Relatio* for the restoration of the altar of Victory in 384, which was not answered in Ambrose's response to Symmachus in *Ep.* 17 and 18. In *Rel.* 3.3, Symmachus associates Rome's military success with the altar of Victory. Prudentius paraphrases Symmachus' argument in *CS* 2.12-16. It is very likely that refuting this argument was the reason why Prudentius decided to write *CS* 2 (soon after the battle of Pollentia in 402) nearly twenty years after Symmachus' plea, now that Stilicho's triumph proved that Goths could be defeated without Victory's patronage: see Introduction 1iii. The fact that Asclepiades' connection of Roman religion with the welfare of the state seems to be in line with the arguments of Symmachus is also pointed out by Gnilka (2000: 374). For the date of *Pe.* 10, based on this passage, see Introduction 1iv. According to Prudentius, it is God who has given Rome her success: *felices, si cuncta Deo sua prospera Christo/ principe disposita scissent, qui currere regna/ certis ducta modis Romanorumque triumphos/ crescere ... voluit* (*CS* 1.287-90); *omne quod ex mundo est tibi subiacet (sc. Roma); hoc Deus ipse/ constituit, cuius nutu dominaris et orbi/ imperitas et cuncta potens mortalia calcas* (*CS* 1.427-29). After asking the martyr to pray *pro triumphis principis* and a prosperous reign (416-20), the judge requests him to pray *pro principali vita* (421-25). A similar request was made to Perpetua by the procurator Hilarian: *Fac sacrum pro salute imperatorum* (*Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 6), and to Crispina by the proconsul Anullinus: *ut omnibus diis nostris pro salute principum sacrifices* (*Passio S. Crispinae* 1). In *Apologeticum* 28.2, Tertullian talks about praying to pagan gods on the pretext of praying for the safety of the emperor: *formati estis ab eisdem utique spiritibus, ut nos pro salute imperatoris sacrificare cogatis, et imposita est tam vobis necessitas cogendi, quam nobis obligatio periclitandi*. Christians were willing to pray for the emperor's wellbeing (Tertullian *Apol.* 30.1, *Ad Scapulam* 2, Athenagoras *Legatio* 37) as they were instructed to pray for their kings already in the Bible: *pro regibus et omnibus qui in sublimitate sunt ut quietam et tranquillam vitam agamus in omni pietate et castitate* (1 Timothy 2.2). What they refused to do was to pray to the emperor as if he were a god himself (Tertullian *Apol.* 32.2: *Sed et iuramus, sicut non per genios Caesarum, ita per salutem eorum, quae*

*est augustior omnibus geniis*; Theophilus 1.11, Tatian 4, Justin *Apol.* 1.17). On how the emperor should act according to Romanus, see n. 426-45. On praying for the welfare of the emperor in relation to the welfare of the citizens, see n. 420 s.v. *quietum ... orbem*. In addition, the emperor serves as a role model for his subjects. The judges of both Vincent and Fructuosus emphasise that all citizens have to worship what the emperor worships: *haec saxa, quae princeps colit,/ placate fumo et victima* (*Pe.* 5.27-28); *iussum est Caesaris ore Gallieni,/ quod princeps colit, ut colamus omnes* (*Pe.* 6.41-42). In *Pe.* 10.893-95, upon giving the order to the doctor to remove the martyr's tongue, Asclepiades recalls this attack against the old established religion and the emperor. Cf. also 450, where the judge commands his soldiers to beat Romanus who has attacked the emperor (*in principem*).

416. Cf. *CS* 1.241-42: *ex atavis quondam male coepta, deinde secutis/ tradita temporibus serisque nepotibus aucta*, where Prudentius refers to the pagan gods and religious practices handed down from their ancestors. That allegedly revered antiquity, Prudentius does not fail to criticise. For a systematic attack on the old religion, see esp. *CS* 1.42-407, and *passim*.

417. *pro triumphis principis*: see n. 416-425 and 420 s.v. *quietum ... orbem*.

419. *subiugatis hostibus*: cf. 777: *hostem ... subiugatum*, referring to the seven Maccabean brothers who overcame their persecutor.

420. *ductor*: used for Galerius in line 32 – also in combination with the word *orbis* (*Galerius orbis forte Romani statum/ ductor regebat*) – thus intensifying the impression that Asclepiades here refers to Galerius. On why Diocletian is not mentioned, see n. 31. Alternatively, the judge might refer to the emperor unspecifically.

*frenet ... legibus*: on the *imperium* of Rome, see *CS* 2.585: *... ut mundum frenet habenis*. Cf. also the invocation of *Cath.* 8.1-4: *Christe .../ mollibus qui nos moderans habenis/ leniter frenas facillique saeptos/ lege coerces*. The noun *frenum* is

also used in similar phrases in connection with Rome's dominion over nations: *iussit Romuleis addictam (sc. Carthaginem) vivere frenis*, *CS* 2.500; *populosque frenis presseras*, *Pe.* 2.6. *Frenet ... legibus* also evokes Prudentius' description of himself being a governor in *Praef.* 16-17: *bis legum moderamine/ frenos nobilium reximus urbium*.

*frenet ... orbem*: a parallel for this passage, listed by Bergman (1926: 467), comes from the proem of the second book of Claudian's panegyric for Stilicho's consulship (400 AD): *hactenus armatae laudes: nunc qualibus orbem/ moribus et quanto frenet metuendus amore*, *Stil.* 2.1-2. In view of my arguments regarding the date of *Pe.* 10 (391-394; see Introduction 1iv), it seems likely that Claudian borrowed from Prudentius rather than vice versa. If so, Claudian thought that the description of the emperor's ruling in *Pe.* 10 fitted well with what he had in mind for the representation of the deeds of Stilicho. Alternatively, it is possible that both poets drew on the same source (the closest extant parallel of *frenare + orbem* is the description of Tiberius in Manilius' *Astronomica* 777: *et propriis frenat pendentem nutibus orbem*) or independently happened to express their ideas in a similar way. Cf. also similar expressions in Claudian with the noun *frenum*: *excipe magnanimum pectus, quo frena reguntur/ imperii, cuius libratur sensibus orbis*, *Stil.* 3.9-10; *rectore sub uno/ conspirat geminus frenis communibus orbis*, *De bello Gildonico* 2-3.

*quietum ... orbem*: in *Apologeticum* 30.4, Tertullian mentions a 'peaceful world' among the things one should be reminded of when praying for the emperor: *precantes sumus semper pro omnibus imperatoribus, vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, ... orbem quietum, quaecumque hominis et Caesaris vota sunt*. Cf. Athenagoras *Legatio* 37, where the author states that the Christians deserve their request to be granted since they are praying for the prosperity of the sovereign, the succession of power to the next generation and the increase of their power, something also advantageous for them who as subjects can have a quiet and tranquil life (ὄπως ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγοιμεν, 37.2); and Galerius' edict of Toleration in 311: Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 34.5: *debebunt (sc. Christiani) Deum suum orare pro salute nostra et rei publicae ac sua, ut undique versum res publica*

*praestetur incolumis et securi vivere in sedibus suis possint* (= Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 8.17.10). On praying for the emperor, see n. 416-425.

*Accingere ergo, quisquis es, nequissime,  
pro principali rite nobiscum deos  
orare vita vel, quod hostem publicum  
pati necesse est, solve poenam sanguine;  
sprevisse templa respuisse est principem.* 421-425

423. *hostem publicum*: Cf. Tertullian *Ad nationes* 1.7 on the Christians in relation to the emperor Nero: *si pius ille princeps, impii Christiani; si iustus, si castus, iniusti et incesti Christiani; si non hostis publicus, nos **publici hostes***. Lactantius informs us that after the persecution was issued the Christians were declared enemies of the state: *Christiani arguebantur velut **hostes publici*** (*Mort. Pers.* 14.2). Even more relevant to the passage under consideration is *Apol.* 35.1, where Tertullian associates this charge with the Christians' denial to offer honours to the emperors: *propterea igitur **publici hostes** Christiani, quia imperatoribus meque vanos neque mentientes neque temerarios honores dicant*. On Christians presented as public enemies, see Cook (2010: 65-68). Datianus underlines that Vincent's crime is both religious and political: *ius hoc deorum et principum/ violare verbis asperis,/ ius et sacratum et **publicum***, *Pe.* 5.43-5.

425. *respuisse*: the same verb used later on when Romanus subverts the judge's claim that rejecting the temples, i.e. pagan gods, equals rejecting the emperor, arguing that the emperor (and his cohorts) should cast off the idols: *ut idolorum **respuant caliginem*** (431).

*Tunc ille: 'numquam pro salute et maximis  
fortissimisque principis cohortibus  
aliter precabor quam fidele ut militent*

*Christique lymphis ut renascantur Patri,  
capiant et ipsum caelitus Paraclitum,* 426-430

426-445: Romanus describes how an emperor should act according to him. He starts off by subverting Asclepiades' arguments on the emperor's military triumphs (417-19). He chooses victories in spiritual battles for him and his cohorts rather than actual ones (thus alluding to the *militia Christi* topos; see n. 428 s.v. *ut militent*) and prefers to pray for them to be baptised, in other words, convert to Christianity (426-30). In the two following stanzas, the martyr uses the light/darkness imagery symbolising Christianity and paganism respectively (431-40). Romanus' emperor should be willing to choose light over darkness (441-45). The martyr has already expressed his aversion to the kings and customs of 'pagan' Rome: *Miseret tuorum me sacrorum et principum/ morumque, Roma, ...* (166-67). Although praying for the emperor's wellbeing (who is thought of as one of God's creations himself) was desirable according to Christian authors (see n. 416-25), Prudentius differentiates himself and lays emphasis on the fact that the emperor and his soldiers should be Christian and cast off pagan religion. Such an emperor is the one prophesised by Laurence in *Pe.* 2.473-84, who will stop sacrifice and shut the temples. For references to emperors in the *Peristephanon*, and the date of *Pe.* 10, based on the passage under consideration, see Introduction liii and iv.

428. *fidele*: see n. 365.

*ut militent*: the subject is both *princeps* and *cohortes*. Romanus uses the *militia Christi* topos, transferring military imagery from the actual battles that the emperor and his soldiers have to fight to the spiritual ones fought by the defenders of Christ. Cf. *Pe.* 1.31-33: *nec rudem crudi laboris ante vitam duxerant* (sc. *Emeterius et Chelidonium*)/ *milites quos ad perenne cingulum Christus vocat/ sueta virtus bello et armis militat sacrariis* (Bergman following A prints *nunc fidei militat* instead of *militat sacrariis*); *miles Dei* (*Pe.* 5.117); and *miles invictissime* (*Pe.* 5.293) referring to Vincent. On the *militia Christi* theme in early Christian literature, see Harnack (1981) and Petruccione (1985: 25-30).

429. *renascantur*: the same verb in the context of baptism is also used in *Apoth.* 925, where Prudentius explains that the baptism is a second birth (*secunda generatio*, 924) washing away sin. Here, the martyr claims that the emperor and his cohorts will be reborn through the baptism. In *CS* 2.656-57, personified Rome admits that she has been reborn through the emperor: *principis invicti* (sc. *Theodosii*), *sub quo senium omne renascens/ deposui ...*

*lymphis*: the waters of baptism. Baptism imagery is recurrent in Prudentius' works: see McConnell (2005: 27-34). The word *lympa* is also used in the context of baptism in *Cath.* 9.86-87. Other words referring to baptism in Prudentius are *lavacrum* and *baptisma*.

430. *caelitus*: The Holy Spirit was sent from heaven to inspire Cyprian (*Pe.* 13.9-10: *Spiritus ille Dei, .../fontibus eloquii te caelitus actus inrigavit*).

*Paracliti*: 'Comforter' referring to the Holy Spirit (John 14.16, 24; 15.25; 16.7). The word is also used in *Cath.* 5.160. For the prosody of the word *Paraclitus*, see pp. 88-89.

*ut idolorum respuant caliginem,  
cernant ut illud lumen aeternae spei  
non succulentis influens obtutibus  
nec corporales per fenestras emicans,  
puris sed intus quod relucet mentibus.* 431-435

431-440: Prudentius draws a distinction between the corporeal eyes which can only perceive things destined to perish, and the soul/ spiritual eyes, which can penetrate into the spiritual sphere. The same distinction is drawn in *Ham.* 863-930. In the latter passage, the vision of the corporeal eyes is blocked by the darkness, whereas the soul's vision can see beyond the darkness and the obstacles of the mortal world. In

the *Hamartigenia*, darkness is associated with the things that human eyes can perceive, whereas in *Pe.* 10, it is associated with paganism. Furthermore, in our passage, the light of eternal hope (*lumen aeternae spei*, 432) that Romanus wishes that the emperor and his soldiers would gaze at is not seen neither by flowing into the eyes (432) nor by shining through them (433), but rather as shining from within them (*sed intus*, 435). Analogous ideas are expressed in Cicero's *Tusculanae Disputationes* (1.20.46), where he argues that we do not see through the ears and eyes acting as windows of the soul (cf. *corporales per fenestras*, *Pe.* 10.434), but it is the soul that actually sees: *oculis et auribus nec videmus nec audimus, ut facile intellegi possit animum et videre at audire, non eas partes quae quasi fenestrae sint animi, quibus tamen sentire nihil queat mens, nisi id agat et adsit*. As Gosserez (2001: 49-57) suggests, among Prudentius' sources for his ideas on vision was Lactantius' *De opificio* 8, where the mind is also described as seeing through the eyes, which act as windows: *verius et manifestius est mentem esse quae per oculos ea quae sunt opposita transpiciat quasi per fenestras perlucente vitro aut speculari lapide obductas*. Cf. also Lactantius *De Opificio* 9. On vision in Prudentius' aforementioned passages and its relationship to Cicero and Lactantius, see Gosserez (2001: 49-57). In *Serm.* 126.3, Augustine describes how reason inhabits the inner eyes which have to be 'activated' in order for someone to see through them: *dedit tibi deus oculos in corpore, rationem in corde. excita rationem cordis, erige interiorum habitorem interiorum oculorum tuorum, assumat fenestras suas, inspiciat creaturam dei. est enim aliquis intus qui per oculos videat. nam quando alicunde nimie cogitas averso interiorum habitore, quae sunt ante oculos tuos non vides. fenestrae enim frustra patent, quando qui per eas attendit absens est. non ergo oculi vident, sed quidam per oculos videt. erige illum, excita illum. non enim denegatus est tibi*. Later on, in refuting the arguments of the Arian heresy, he invites the supporters of this sect to look into their heart, the centre of reason, to be able to gaze at divine realities: *repone oculos carnis post te, erige si aliquid habes in corde, divina intueri*. Cf. also n. 434 s.v. *corporales per fenestras*. A similar rationale, in which being interested in earthly or spiritual matters is represented by looking towards the earth or the sky respectively, is discussed in lines 366-80. A discussion on the distinction between the soul, which is eternal, and the body, which is perishable, is picked up



later on in the poem (468-80), where Romanus repeats verbatim a phrase from the passage discussed in this note referring to the decay of the body: see n. 437.

431. *respuant*: see n. 425.

432. An association between the light and the emperor is also found in *Apoth.* 444-45, where Prudentius presents Christ as shedding light on the emperors of Rome: *ipsa suis Christum Capitolia Romula maerent/ principibus lucere Deum, ...*

*lumen aeternae spei*: this light can be identified with the soul – see Gosserez (2001: 53-57) –, but also with God himself who here (*ferventissimae/ divinitatis vim coruscantem*, 439-40) as well as in other passages is described as light (see e.g. 318-23). Luminous is identified with spiritual and it is exactly because of this spiritual/ luminous nature of the soul that it is able to perceive the light of God. Cf. n. 441.

433. *suculentis*: ‘juicy’. Cf. *Apoth.* 21: *umentique acie*. *Suculentus* is a mainly post-classical word, found for the first time in Apuleius (*Met.* 2.2, 10.15). After that, the adjective is not found until we reach Prudentius’ era, where there are three instances: Jerome *Ep.* 52.11, Augustine *De diversis quaestionibus octaginta tribus* 73 and, Paulinus of Nola *Carm.* 24.631. In all three passages *suculentus* qualifies or refers to *corpus* and is related to its propensity for lust. In Prudentius, it also occurs in *Ham. Praef.* 58: *ex quo furores **suculentos** conligit*. In the *Hamartigenia*, Prudentius also refers to the liquid barrier of the eyes: *tegmine ... aquoso* (90), *obducto umore* (870); *denso vegetamine guttae* (871).

*obtutibus*: cf. *Ham.* 907-8: *nil intercurrentis **obtutibus** inpedit ignem/ pervigilis animae*.

434. *corporales per fenestras*: cf. *Ham.* 893: *corporeis oculis*. Earlier on in the *Hamartigenia* Prudentius describes the windows of the human vision as being blocked in opposition to the soul’s eyes: *errat, quisque animas nostrorum fine oculorum/ aestimat, involvit vitreo quos lucida palla/ obice, quis speculum concreta*

*coagula texunt/ inpediuntque vagas obducto umore fenestras* (867-70). Augustine describes how the eyes as windows of the soul can perceive from within: *Enarr. Ps. 41.7: Oculi membra sunt carnis, fenestrae sunt mentis; interior est qui per has videt; quando cognitione aliqua absens est, frustra patent. deus meus qui fecit haec, quae oculis video, non istis oculis est inquirendus. aliquid etiam per seipsum animus ipse conspiciat; utrum sit aliquid quod non per oculos sentiam, quasi colores et lucem*; Augustine goes on describing the rest of the senses. Cf. *Serm. 23D.6, 223A.4*. For more references to the eyes likened to windows, see n. 431-440.

*emicans*: cf. the description of the heavenly fire (*natura superni ignis*) in *Apoth. 87: pura, serena, micans, liquido praelibera motu*, with line 438.

*Pupilla carnis crassa crassum perspicit  
et res caduca quod resolvendum est videt,  
liquidis videndis aptus est animae liquor,  
natura fervens sola ferventissimae  
divinitatis vim coruscantem capit.* 436-440

436. *crassa crassum*: polyptoton. Cf. 439. In *Ham. 89*, Prudentius uses the same adjective for the atmosphere that can block the mind's vision: *sunt animis etiam sunt nubila, crassus et aër*.

437. Cf. 480: *quod resolvendum est, ruat*. The latter passage, wherein Romanus repeats himself referring to the body and its decay, again draws a distinction between the soul as eternal and the body as perishable.

*caduca*: see n. 603.

439. *fervens ... ferventissimae*: polyptoton. For the adjective *fervens* used to describe the soul, see *Cath. 10.11: halitus ... fervens* (this represents one of the two versions of this text transmitted in A; see Introduction n. 42); and *Ham. 850: fervens scintilla*.

In a different context, cf. *Pe.* 6.71, in which Prudentius describes the Christians who burn with love for God (*ferventes animas amore lucis*). For other examples, where Prudentius employs fire imagery to depict the soul, see *Cath.* 3.186: *vigor igneolus* – alluding to Vergil’s *Aen.* 6.730-31: *igneus est ollis* (sc. *cunctis animantibus*) *vigor et caelestis origo/ seminibus* –; *Cath.* 10.29 *generis ... ignis*; and *Ham.* 907-8: *ignem/ pervigilis animae*. The fiery nature of God is well attested in the Bible (e.g. Exodus 3.2, Deuteronomy 4.24, etc.). Prudentius also represents God as fire or fiery (e.g. *Apoth.* 72: *Deus ignis*; *Ti.* 29: *Deus igneus*) and unsurprisingly souls, which are his creations, are made of the same substance (*Deus, ignee fons animarum*: *Cath.* 10.1). The superlative reflects the superiority of God over men (*ferventissimae ~ fervens*). For the fiery nature of the soul, see also n. 368-369.

*Hoc, opto, lumen imperator noverit  
tuus meusque, si velit fieri meus;  
nam si resistit Christiano nomini,  
meus ille talis imperator non erit;  
scelus iubenti, crede, numquam serviam.* 441-445

441. *Hoc ... lumen*: i.e. *lumen aeternae spei* mentioned in line 432.

443. *Christiano nomini*: *nomen* is often identified with the ‘essence’, thus here *nomen Christianum* is synonymous with ‘being Christian’. Early Christians were charged for the name alone, which constituted a crime. See e.g. Justin *Apol.* 1.4, Tertullian *Ad nationes* 1.3. On early Christians being persecuted merely for the name, see de Ste. Croix (2006: 110-11). For further references to *nomen Christianum* in Prudentius, see *Pe.* 5.377-78, where Datianus, the judge of Vincent, is characterised as the ‘enemy of the Christian name’ (*Christiani nominis/ hostem*); and in a different context to the present text, cf. *Pe.* 2.430, in which Laurence prophesises that the Roman Empire will be united under the *ius Christiani nominis*.

444. *imperator non erit*: the sound of this combination of words reminds us of *imperator noverit* three lines above (441).

445. *numquam*: the martyr's response ends as it started: *numquam pro salute et maximis* (426).

*'Statis, ministri?' clamitans iudex ait,  
 'statis manusque continetis vindices?  
 non rupta sulcis dissecatis viscera,  
 animam nec intus abditam rimamini,  
 erumpit unde vox profana in principem?'* 446-450

446-447: *Statis .../ statis*: anaphora.

447. *manusque ... vindices*: *vindex* qualifies *manus* also in Seneca's *Phaedra* 261: *Proin castitatis vindicem armemus manum*. In Prudentius, it is taken with a word that means 'hand' also in *CS* 1.484 (*dextera vindex*) referring to the hand of Constantine, who having just defeated the usurper Maximus carries the standard bearing Christ's monogram.

448. *sulcis*: 'scratches, wounds', literally means 'furrows'. Prudentius very often uses this word to refer to the wounds of the martyr: *Pe.* 4.119, 5.338, 9.77, 10.550, 1127. According to Ross (1995: 337): 'The repeated use by Prudentius of the word *sulcus* to refer to the wounds on the martyrs' bodies clearly brings out the idea that they are fertile fields whose lines or furrows of writing are opened up so that something can be implanted by God, the result of which will be the yielding of a marvellous fruit, the fruit of salvation'. Such implications are particularly felt in lines 1126-7: *omnis notata est sanguinis dimensio,/ ut quamque plagam sulcus exaraverit*. Ploughing imagery appears in martyrological literature – see Ross (1995: 337 n. 40) – and it was also used as a metaphor for writing – see Thraede (1965: 79-113). In 548-50, the judge orders the executioner to transfer the sharp cuts (*sulcosque acutos*)

he has been inflicting on the martyr's body to his jaw. In the next stanza, we come across the verb *sulco*: ***sulcant*** *per artus longa tractim vulnera* (453). Cf. *Pe.* 5.141-44: *Praesicca rursus ulcera,/ dum se cicatrix colligit,/ refrigerati sanguinis,/ manus **resulcans** diruet.* Cf. also the two-forked claws (*bisulcis unguis*, 73), the blows of which Romanus must have already received.

450. *vox profana*: Asclepiades orders his soldiers to kill Romanus, something that will eventually silence his 'impious voice'. This request anticipates the judge's command to have the martyr's tongue cut out. Cf. 548-50.

*in principem*: The punishment is a response to Romanus' refusal to sacrifice to the emperor and thus show his respect to him (416-25).

*Scindunt utrumque milites taeterrimi  
mucrone hiulco pensilis latus viri,  
sulcant per artus longa tractim vulnera,  
obliqua rectis, recta transversis secant,  
et iam resectis pectus albet ossibus.* 450-455

452. *mucrone hiulco*: cf. *Pe.* 5.113: *hiulcis ictibus* with n. 455 s.v. *resectis ... ossibus* for another striking similarity between the two stanzas. Cf. also 484-85, where *mucro* is used in the sense of the sharpness/ extremity of the pain.

*pensilis*: 'hanging' (genitive). In *Pe.* 10.108-10, Asclepiades orders that Romanus be hung up on the *eculeus* (see n. *ad loc.*). However, the torture device is removed immediately after the judge's order once he is informed that Romanus belongs to the nobility (111-15). Nevertheless, the adjective *pensilis* and the description of Romanus' torture here and in lines 491-93 indicate that the martyr is hung up on the *eculeus* again. The order that Romanus be tied to the *eculeus* must have been implied in Asclepiades' command earlier on (446-50), although there was no clear mention of it. Henke (1985: 142-44) discusses this gap in the context of the influence of

Seneca's aposiopesis technique on the poem, a technique that can be traced back to Vergil and Homer. He argues that Prudentius compresses the action parts and lays emphasis on the speeches, which are the key passages of the poem. In its relatively rare occurrences, *pensilis* refers to hanging fruits (Horace *Sat.* 2.2.121, Varro *Rust.* 1.68, etc.) or objects and arching buildings (baths: Pliny *NH* 9.168, Macrobius *Saturnalia* 3.15.3, gardens: Pliny *NH* 19.49, Lactantius *Inst.* 3.14.1, etc.). We have only two references to a person hanging in Plautus, in one of which the person is likened to a fruit (*Poenulus* 312: *siquidem tu es mecum futurus pro uva passa pensilis*; *Pseudolus* 89: *Qui me faciam pensilem*). In addition, *pensilis* features rarely in poetry (Plautus *op. cit.*, Horace *op. cit.*, *Priapea* 52.7, Juvenal 1.159) and there are no occurrences in Christian authors (aside from Lactantius *op. cit.*). Cf. 491-92: *Miserum putatis, quod retortis pendeo/ extentus ulnis*.

453. *sulcant*: see n. 448.

454. *obliqua ... transversis*: the criss-cross cuts are stylistically reflected in the chiasmic structure of the wording.

455. *albet ossibus*: this and similar phrases (for example, with the adjective *albus* or the participle *albentis* instead of the verb) appear mainly in Classical poetry. Cf. Vergil *Aen.* 12.36: ... *campique ingentes ossibus albent*, referring to fields having been whitened by the bodies of men who fought in the war between the armies of Aeneas and Turnus. The phrase was taken up to describe another civil battle, that of Philippi: *Philippi/ et quorum sparsis ossibus albet humus*, Ovid *Fast.* 3.707-8; *albos ossibus Italis Philippos*, Statius *Silv.* 2.7.65, as well as to describe the Roman loss in the Teutoburg forest: *medio campi albetia ossa*, Tacitus *Ann.* 1.61.2. It is also used in relation to the bodily remains of a monster's victims: Vergil *Aen.* 5.864-65: *scopulos Sirenum .../ ... multorumque ossibus albos* (Sirens' rocks); *squalidaque humanis ossibus albet humus*, Ovid *Fast.* 1.558 (Cacus' cave); ... *et albentis ossibus sparsis solum*, Seneca *Oedipus* 94 (Sphinx's ground). Prudentius utilises battlefield imagery, transferring it from the collective to the individual, from the actual battles of the Roman army to the spiritual battles of a saint. At the same time, by pointing to

the victims of monstrous creatures, he intensifies the bestialised image of the judge and his minions. For another allusion that Prudentius might have had in mind here, see the note below. This ‘whitened bones’ imagery found its way into the texts of Prudentius’ contemporaries. Ammianus uses it to describe the unburied bodies that lie on the ground after the battle of *ad Salices* (*nunc usque albentes ossibus campi*, 31.7.16). For allusions to earlier authors as well as political implications in the latter passage, see Kelly (2008: 13-30). Finally, Claudian deploys the ‘white bones’ imagery to describe the remains of the serpents killed by Jupiter during the Gigantomachy (*inmaniaque ossa/ serpentum passim cumulis exanguibus albent*, *DRP* 3.341-42).

*resectis ... ossibus*: a possible allusion to Lucan 9.768: *ossa resectit*, referring to the wound caused to the soldier Sabellus by a snake. As Wick (2004: 328) notes this rare ‘anatomic’ use of *retere* in Lucan is found again in Prudentius: *Pe.* 10.455 and *Pe.* 5.116: *iecur resectum palpitet*. In the latter passage, where Datianus gives instructions to Vincent’s torturers, the piercing blows (113: *hiulcis ictibus*, cf. *Pe.* 10.452: *mucrone hiulco*) aim at laying bare the martyr’s ribs so that the organs will be exposed throbbing. In *Pe.* 10, the wounds will expose the white breast-bone.

*Nitendo anhelant, diffluunt sudoribus,  
cum sit quietus heros in quem saeviunt.  
haec inter addit sponte Romanus loqui:  
‘si quaeris, o praefecte, verum noscere,  
hoc omne, quidquid lancinamur, non dolet.* 456-460

457. *quietus*: despite the harsh torture, Romanus remains in a state of tranquillity. This is one of the offerings that God relishes: *pacis quietem* (357). Vincent, while being tortured, tells Datianus that no matter how hard they punish his body, there is an inner self that is *liber, quietus, integer* (159). For *quietus* in a different sense, that of free from troubles, see 420: *ductor quietum frenet orbem legibus*.

*heros*: see n. 52.

*saeviunt*: cf. 481: *ignis et fidiculae saeviant*; 498: *laniena quanto saevit Hippocratica*. Petruccione (1985: 136) holds that *saevus* and its cognates indicate the animalistic nature of the persecutors: ‘Like Damasus and Lactantius, he makes use of *saevus* and *saevire*, terms that implicitly draw a comparison to the ferocity of untamed animals’. For references to Damasus and Lactantius, see Petruccione (1985: 22). For examples of these words characterising the persecutors in the *Peristephanon*, see *Pe.* 2.58, 10.968, 14.17. Cf. also *CS* 2.671 (referring to Nero). Supporting this bestial representation through *saevus* and *saevire* is their use in similes where the persecutors are compared to snakes: *saevire inermem crederes/ fractis draconem dentibus* (*Pe.* 5.381-82, for Datianus); *sic vulneratus anguis .../ ... et dolore saevior* (*Pe.* 10.26-27, for Asclepiades).

458. *addit ... loqui*: in this type of circumlocution, the verb *addere* repeats or reinforces the idea of the infinitive. For a close parallel, see Augustine *Ep.* 205.3: *ille non addidit dicere*. For further examples, see *TLL* 1.0.587.38-45.

459. Cf. 410: *Vis summa rerum nosse?*; *CS* 1.369: *si verum quaeris*.

*Dolet quod error pectori insedit tuo,  
populos quod istos perditus tecum trahis.  
currunt frequentes undique ad spectaculum,  
gentile vulgus, heu, gemenda corpora  
crudumque nostrae sortis exemplum tremunt.*

461-465

461-465: This stanza might appear as a response to Asclepiades’ words in 86-90. In both passages, the martyr’s trial is characterised as *spectaculum*. *Perditus* which was used for Romanus, now describes Asclepiades (see n. 462) and the martyr’s death is again presented as an exemplary punishment for the spectators.



461. *Dolet*: picks up from *non dolet* (460).

462-465. We are informed of the advent of an audience, obviously different from the one that Romanus has been instructing to stand firm against Asclepiades' fury (51-98), as it consists of pagans (*gentile vulgus*, 464). Later on, the same audience which now trembles with fear for Romanus' sufferings, sympathises with what befalls the child martyr (706-10), something that makes them resemble a tragedy chorus: see Introduction 9ii.

462. *perditus*: there are three variants: i) *perditus*, which would refer to *tu*, the subject of *trahis*, i.e. Asclepiades ('It pains me ... that doomed yourself you are dragging these multitudes with you'); ii) *perditos* (in some manuscripts with an unmetrical change in the order of the second half of the verse: *tecum trahis perditos*, *tecum perditos trahis*), which would refer to *populos* ('It pains me ... that you are dragging these lost multitudes/ multitudes you have destroyed with you'); and iii) the supine *perditum* ('It pains me ... that you are dragging these people with you to destroy them'). *Perditos* is printed by Bergman and Thomson. Cunningham prints *perditum*, which is also adopted by Fux (2013: 349) as *lectio difficilior*. The use of the supine, common in early Latin, is gradually in decline in the history of Latin (with the exception of expressions such as *ire cacatum* or *cubitum*). However, later authors occasionally picked it up from early texts. See e.g. Hofmann & Szantyr (1972: 380-82). The only time that Prudentius clearly uses the supine in the accusative is in *Pe.* 11.189: *salutatam concurritur*. Although I did not manage to find any example of *trahere* construed with the supine, verbs with the same or similar meaning ('to drag') such as *abducere* and *ducere* construed with an object and supine are found in early Latin: see Bennett (1910: 453-54). Even though there is no serious objection in principle against *perditum*, I argue for *perditus* mainly for two reasons. The first is that it is transmitted in B, the earliest manuscript that transmits *Pe.* 10 (see Introduction 3). Furthermore, given that this stanza can be taken as a response to lines 86-90 (see n. 461-465), and *perditus* was there used by the judge to characterise Romanus, it is attractive to think that here Romanus, reversing the characterisation, is using *perditus* to refer to Asclepiades.

463. *ad spectaculum*: see pp. 71-72 and n. 86.

*Audite cuncti, clamo longe ac praedico,*

*emitto vocem de catasta celsior:*

*Christus paternae gloriae splendor, Deus,*

*rerum creator, noster idem particeps*

*spondet salutem perpetem credentibus,*

466-470

466-480: Some striking words (*perpes*: 470, 476; *Tartarus*: 475) used in this passage, along with the image of Christ requiting everyone according to what they deserve, sending them to heaven or hell accordingly, recall a stanza from *Cath. 11*: *insignis ipse et praeminens/ meritis repondet congrua,/ his lucis usum perpetis,/ illis Gehennam et Tartarum* (109-12).

466. *Audite cuncti*: On one level it is addressed to the people who have assembled to watch the martyr's trial, on another to the readers of Prudentius' text: see pp. 71-72.

467. *emitto vocem*: a fixed phrase used throughout Classical and late antique literature. Often refers to the articulation of non-vocal sounds (Lucretius 5.1088, Lactantius *De opificio* 11.12, Arnobius 2.23, etc.). Ironically, although Asclepiades' aim was to silence the martyr's voice (*vox profana*) through the torture he ordered (448-50), Romanus not only continued defending the Christian doctrine but the scaffold also served him as a rostrum from which he could preach more effectively. The martyr rationalises the torture he has to undergo and argues that it is actually in his favour. Cf. the rationalistic stance adopted by Romanus later on, when he talks about the damage to the body caused by his torturers or disease (481-510).

*catasta*: 'platform, scaffold'. *Catasta*, originally the platform on which slaves were exhibited for sale (Tibullus 2.3.60, Persius 6.77, etc.), eventually came to mean in the martyrological literature the scaffold where the martyrs were tried, tortured and

executed (*Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 6, *Passio SS. Mariani et Iacobi* 6). In some poems of the *Peristephanon*, the term is related to burning or paired with the iron bed (gridiron), a seat on which the martyr is roasted to death (*Pe.* 1.56: *post catastas igneas*; *Pe.* 2.397-400: *postquam vapor diutinus/ decoxit exustum latus,/ ultro e catasta iudicem/ compellat adfatu brevi*, cf. also 353-54: *conscende constratum rogam/ decumbe digno lectulo*; and *grabatus* in *Pe.* 5.207). It could also be paired with the *eculeus*, ‘little horse’, as can be inferred from Salvian *De gubernatione Dei* 2.6.22: *qui (sc. Christiani) ad caelestis regiae ianuam gradibus poenarum suarum ascendentes scalas sibi quodammodo de eculeis catastisque fecerunt*. That might be the case in *Pe.* 10, where, as we are allowed to infer, Romanus is tied to the *eculeus* (see n. 452 s.v. *pensilis*). Protingheuer (2008: 270 n. 725) notes that here Prudentius combines the worldly meaning of the word, that of a platform on which the martyr is tortured, with its transcendent aspect, that the martyr bears witness to Christ before humans. Another reference to the scaffold/ torture device is *Pe.* 6.33: *fratres tergeminos tremunt catastae*.

468. *Splendor paternae gloriae* is the first verse of a hymn attributed to Ambrose (*Hymn* 2) evoking Hebr. 1.3: *splendor gloriae et figura substantiae eius*. Allusions to the ‘brightness of the paternal glory’ in Ambrose include *Exameron* 1.5.19, 6.7.42, *De Fide* 4.9, and *Ep.* 5.22.11.

469. *rerum creator*: cf. *Cath.* 11.50 and *Pe.* 13.55: *creator orbis*. *Creator rerum* assigned to the Christian God is found for the first time in Tertullian’s *Adversus Marcionem* 3. Romanus gives a list of God’s creations in lines 326-35.

*noster idem particeps*: for God as partaker of human nature, see *Apoth.* 158-163: *ut socianda caro Dominoque inplenda perenni/ .../ cernere consortem terreni adsuesceret oris,/ participemque suum visu velut obside nosse,/ et consanguineo paulatim accedere Christo*. God has become sharer in human mortality through Christ’s incarnation, which consequently made men partakers of his divinity. For references to the same topic, see for example Augustine *Enarr. Ps.* 119.79, 139.1-2, *Trin.* 4.4, 24.

470. *salutem perpetem*: see n. 471.

*perpetem*: ‘eternal’. cf. 477: *perpetis substantiae*. A word used mainly in Plautine comedy and which then disappeared (excluding Apuleius *passim*) until it was picked up by Christian authors (starting with Tertullian *passim*) who still preferred *perpetuus* to *perpes*. In our passage *perpetuus* would be one syllable longer than *perpetem*. In Prudentius, *perpes* occurs five times (*Cath.* 1.26, 9.42, 11.111, *Pe.* 10.470, 477), exactly the same number as *perpetuus*.

*animae salutem, sola quae non occidit,  
sed iuge durans dispares casus subit;  
aut luce fulget aut tenebris mergitur,  
Christum secuta Patris intrat gloriam,  
disiuncta Christo mancipatur Tartaro.*

471-475

471. *animae salutem*: picked up from *salutem perpetem* (470). Romanus emphasises the *salus* in the Christian sense (salvation) which, contrary to the ‘earthly’ *salus* (wellbeing) for which the judge has asked the martyr to pray concerning the emperor and his cohorts, is eternal (*perpes*, 470) and only God can provide it.

472. *iuge*: ‘eternally, forever’ (adv.). The adjective *iugis* apart from a very few occurrences in the works of Classical authors (*TLL* 7.2.629.69-71 and *passim*) is mainly used by late antique writers. As an adverb, it is used from Prudentius’ time onwards. Cf. *Pe.* 4.143.

473-475. *antithesis* between *luce fulget* and *tenebris mergitur* which correspond to *Patris gloriam* and *Tartaro* respectively. The contrast between heaven and hell reflects the contrast between soul and body (470-72, 476-80) as the attachment to one or the other leads to paradise or Tartarus accordingly. Note also the chiasmic

structure: *secuta/ disiuncta + Christum/ Christo* (474-75). For the luminous nature of the soul, see n. 432 s.v. *lumen aeternae spei*.

475. *Tartaro*: The word for the Underworld used mainly in Classical poetry (e.g. *Aen.* 4.243, Ovid *Met.* 1.113, Seneca *Ag.* 2, etc). Cf. the Greek word Ἅδης (Hades, equivalent to the Hebrew *sheol*) in the Septuagint (*passim*). In the Vulgate, *Tartarus* occurs only once: *si enim Deus angelis peccantibus non pepercit sed rudentibus inferni detractos in tartarum tradidit in iudicium cruciatos reservari* (2 Peter 2.4). In Prudentius, aside from this passage it is used in the masculine in *Cath.* 1.70, 9.18 (in relation to the mortal body), 71, 11.112; in the neuter: *Cath.* 5.133, 12.92, *Apoth.* 638, *Ham.* 824, 882, *Psych.* 90, 521, *CS* 1.26, 531, *Pe.* 2.288, 5.200; and the adjective *tartareus* in *Ham.* 958, *CS* 1.357, 370, *Pe.* 13.51. Although, *Tartarus* was also used by other Christian authors of Prudentius' era, it shows his preference for Classical vocabulary. Cf. Solmsen's (1965b: 245) similar observation about names of places in the Underworld in the *Hamartigenia*.

*Curanda mercis qualitas, quaenam mihi  
contingat olim perpetis substantiae;  
nam membra parvi pendo quo pacto cadant,  
casura certe lege naturae suae.  
instat ruina; quod resolvendum est, ruat.* 476-480

476. *perpetis*: see n. 470 s.v. *perpetem*.

478. *membra ... cadant*: this combination of words occurs only in Classical poetry, cf. *LLT* (Lucretius 3.596, 4.951-52; Ovid *Her.* 21.156; Lucan 7.623; *Laus Pisonis* 76; Silius Italicus 2.130), chiefly in the sense of the members of the body growing weak or paralysed. It is possible that Prudentius draws on passages that express analogous ideas. In Lucretius we are told about the *anima* which is on the verge of leaving the body (3.596, when death approaches) or that part of the *anima* has already left (4.951-52, explaining the process of sleep) resulting in the members drooping.

Prudentius uses the same combination of words to describe the perishable body after the *anima* (soul), which unlike in Lucretius is eternal, has left it.

*parvi pendo*: cf. a similar expression in *Pe.* 4.166: *parvi facit*.

480. Cf. 437: *et res caduca quod resolvendum est videt*. In both passages, the phrase *quod resolvendum est* occupies the place in the verse starting after the second *anceps*. For instances of the use of *solvo* and its cognates referring to the dissolving of the body, see *Cath.* 10.149: *resolubile corpus*; *Pe.* 5.163: *vas est solutum ac fictile*; *Pe.* 5.303: *quod dissipatum solvitur*, *Pe.* 10.507: *solubilis*.

*Nec distat, ignis et fidiculae saeviant,  
an corpus aegrum languor asper torqueat,  
cum saepe morbos maior armet saevitas.  
non unguarum tanta vis latus fodit,  
mucrone quanto dira pulsat pleurisis,*

481-485

481-505. Romanus, putting his sufferings into perspective, argues that the pain and bodily damage caused by disease and doctors can be equally or even more intense than that caused by the tortures of his executioners. This argument reflects ideas seen in earlier texts. Cicero, commenting on Trebonius' torture by Dolabella, argues that some people have suffered more severely from disease: *Multi ex morbi gravitate maiores, quos tamen non miseros, sed laboriosos solemus dicere ... Nec vero graviora sunt carnificum cruciamenta quam interdum tormenta morborum* (*Phil.* 11.8). In a similar vein, Seneca the Younger points out that the pain caused by torture is not less intense than the pain caused by disease (*Ep.* 14.6, 24.14). Note that in both passages, this conclusion comes after an enumeration of methods of torture. Cf. 481: *nec distat, ignis et fidiculae saeviant*. Martial, to console Condylus for being a slave for so long, compares his life with that of his owner Gaius. One of his arguments is that Gaius would prefer the torturer's lashes that Condylus is afraid of to the pains he suffers caused by gout both in the hands and in the feet (*tortorem metuis? podagra*

*cheragraque secatur/ Gaius et mallet verbera mille pati: 9.92.9-10, cf. n. 495 s.v. podagra et artrisis*). The martyr Apollonius avers that ‘Often men die because of dysentery (δυσεντερία) or a fever (πυρετός): so too I shall imagine that I am being carried off by something like this’ (*Acta Apollonii* 28, tr. Musurillo). For a brief discussion and further references, see Weyman (1975: 76-78). In our text, as Herzog points out (1966: 16), the comparison in the first three stanzas (481-95) concerns the effectiveness of each disease in comparison to means of torture that can have the same or an even more serious impact on one’s body. In the next two stanzas, the executioner is compared with the doctor as people who act (‘handelnde Personen’). See also Herzog (1966: 15-17). On the theme of attacking doctors and presenting them as butchers or murderers, see n. 496-505. In *Pe.* 2.209-64, Laurence presents the health of the spirit as inversely proportional to that of the body, and declares that he gladly prefers disease of the body to that of the soul. To prove that the inner self of the poor people that have assembled is actually firmer than that of the supposedly ‘healthy’ pagans, the martyr exemplifies diseases as sins that corrupt and enfeeble their spirit. On the disease terminology in *Pe.* 2, see Kudlien (1962). In the passage under consideration, the diseases and tortures compared in each case can be described as follows:

- v. 481 (torture: fire and cords) compared with vv. 482-83 (disease: weakness)
- v. 484 (torture: iron claws) with v. 485 (disease: lung-disease)
- vv. 486, 490 (torture: hot stripes of iron) with vv. 487-89 (disease: fever)
- vv. 491-93 (torture: being hung with his limbs stretched out) with vv. 494-95 (disease: gout or arthritis)
- v. 496 (torturer) with vv. 497-500 (doctor)

Some of the words used by Prudentius to talk about torture are also used in the discussion of how some disease symptoms or healing methods can be equally or even more painful, thus contributing to the similarity between the two situations: see n. 485 s.v. *mucrone*, 488 s.v. *ignis*; 495 s.v. *torquet*; 498 s.v. *saevit*; 501 s.v. *ferrum*.

481. *fidiculae*: see n. 550 s.v. *fidiculas*.

*saeviant*: see n. 457 s.v. *saeviunt*.

483. *saevitas*: *saevitia* is transmitted in the majority of the MSS and printed by Bergman. However, it is most unlikely that Prudentius would end the verse with a synzesis. Cunningham prints *saevia*, a variant given in Z but otherwise unattested. In support of this variant he cites similar pairs of words: *lascivia/ lascivitas*, *insania/ insanitas*, *ferocia/ ferocitas*. Thomson and Lavarenne write *saevitas*, a rare post-Classical word (four instances in late antique authors: Arnobius 1.40, Augustine *Ep.* 11.11, Cassiodorus *Exp. Psalm. CCL 97 Ps.* 17 line 342, Caesarius of Arles *Serm.* 152.3), possibly transmitted in E. Meyer's argument (1932: 255 n. 16) that the rare word *saevitas* could have easily been glossed as *saevitia* and consequently replaced by it seems valid. Cf. also Thraede (1968: 689) who sides with Meyer's view.

484. *ungularum*: see n. 73.

485. *mucrone ... pulsat*: cf. *Pe.* 5.263-64: *insomne qui subter latus/ mucrone pulsent obvio*, referring to the torture of Vincent, who had to lie on a bed covered with sharp objects. Cf. also n. below.

*mucrone*: Herzog (1966: 16 n. 7) notes that there is fusion between the two situations compared (torture and disease) as here the disease is attacking the afflicted body with the 'sword'. Cf. also Henderson (2002: 150-51) who because of the use of *mucro* finds the effect of the disease description more concrete compared with that of the torture which 'is stated in a rather abstract periphrasis (*ungularum ... vis*) and in terms of digging (*fodit*)'. Nevertheless, it seems that here the word *mucro* is used as a metaphor to indicate the 'sharpness' of the pain rather than an actual sword or sharp point. In a similar way, it is used as a metaphor to denote the sharpness of Cicero's mind with reference to his eloquence (Quintilian *Inst.* 10.5.16: *mucro ingenii*), although it can still be translated as 'sword'. For further examples of the metaphorical use of *mucro*, see *TLL* 8.0.1556.55-70. Prudentius perhaps implies that the pain caused by a sharp point in a torturer's hand and that caused by pleurisy are



so similar that he adopts the word *mucro* that he used earlier to describe an actual sharp point afflicting Romanus' body (*scindunt utrumque milites taeterrimi/ mucrone hiulco pensilis latus viri*, 451-52). Cf. n. above. For other instances in the *Peristephanon*, where *mucro* is used as a means of torture or execution, see *Pe.* 5.263-64 (with n. 485 *op. cit.*) and 14.68.

*pleurisis*: for the prosody, see pp. 88-89. The word with that spelling occurs here for the first time. Some of the MSS transmit the word spelt as *pleuresis*: see Bergman (1926: *ad loc.*). Note that the same word is also spelt as *pleuritis* (Gr. πλευριτις). Cf. 495: *artrisis* (with n. *ad loc.*). Isidorus of Seville (*Etymologiae* 4.6.8) defines pleurisy as '*dolor lateris acutus cum febre et sputo sanguinolento*'.

*nec sic inusta lamminis ardet cutis,  
ut febris atro felle venas exedit  
vel summa pellis ignis obductus coquit  
papulasque fervor aestuosus excitat;  
credas cremari stridulis cauteribus.* 486-490

486. The wording of this line (with *obductus* in 488) resembles the description of a ritual in 1084 (*insignis auri lammina obducit cutem*), in which the eunuchs of the Magna Mater burn their skin with hot needles. After their death and upon being carried to their tomb, plates (*lammina*) are placed on the parts where their skin had been burnt.

*inusta*: cf. 134: *signent inusta ferri et ignis vulnera*, also for the branded wounds of martyrdom.

*lamminis*: hot metal plates, also spelled as *lamina* or *lamna*. Vincent enumerates the possible means of torture among which is *stridensque flammis lammina* (*Pe.* 5.62, cf. 206-8: *extrema omnium/ igni, grabato et lamminis/ exerceatur quaestio*). For other such lists including *lam(m)ina*, see Plautus *Asinaria* 548-49, Lucretius 3.1016-17,

Seneca the Elder *Controversiae Excerpta* 2.5, Ambrose *Exp. Ps. cxviii* 12.30: *ardentibus lamminis*. It is one of the torture methods to which the Maccabean brothers were subjected (*dira aut cremasset lamminarum impressio*, 760). In the context of torture-interrogation of Christians, see Pseudo-Cyprian *De laude martyrii* 15, and Jerome *Vita Pauli* 3.

487-488: cf. 391-93: *dudum coquebat disserente martyre/ Asclepiades intus iram subdolam/ stomachatus alto felle*. Cf. also n. 487.

487. *atro felle*: ‘black bile’, also rendered as *nigrum fel* or *nigra/ atra bilis* (Gr. μέλαινα χολή > μελαγχολία, hence the word melancholy). According to the humoral theory from Hippocrates onward, health depends on the right proportion of the four bodily fluids (blood, phlegm, yellow bile, black bile). Excess of the black bile causes anger, jealousy or insanity (Plautus *Amph.* 727-28, *Capt.* 596, Seneca *Ep.* 94.17 with reference to a madman: *bilis nigra curanda est et ipsa furoris causa removenda*, Pliny *NH* 11.193: *in felle nigro insaniae causa homini*, Vergil *Aen.* 8.219-20: *hic vero Alcidae furiis exarserat atro/ felle dolor*, referring to Hercules’ fury upon realising that some animals of Geryon’s herd were stolen). Cf. 392-94: *Asclepiades intus iram subdolam/ stomachatus alto felle, dum longum silet/ bilemque tectis concipit praecordiis*. The association between the excess of bile and fever occurs in Lucretius 4.664: *quippe ubi cui febris bili superante coorta est*. Further on in Prudentius’ text, the flesh stained by bile takes on dark-coloured spots: *plerumque felle tincta (sc. caro) livores trahit* (510).

488. *ignis ... coquit*: cf. *Ham.* 923-24: *qui (sc. camini) pollutam animam per saecula longa perenni/ igne coquunt*. Cf. also n. 486.

*ignis*: earlier on, *ignis* was taken together with *fidiculae* (481), hence representing a means of torture, whereas here *ignis* (and *febris*, 487) are contrasted to the hot metal plates, hence being conceived as a disease symptom. The use of the same word that can find its place in both situations is probably another way for Prudentius to equate disease and torture.

*obductus*: see n. 486

490. *cauteribus*: *cauter* (nom.), ‘cautery, a branding iron’ (Gr. καυτήρ), according to the *LLT*, rare post-Classical word used less often than its synonymous *cauterium* (Gr. καυτήριον). It was used both in medicine and as a means of torture. It is found in Tertullian (*De Pallio* 5) for the first time used in a metaphorical way as Tertullian claims to prescribe medicines to morals and avers that he will apply it to the ambition of Cicero that led him to buy a very expensive table. In the context of martyrs’ suffering, it is used by Rufinus to translate the words πυρὶ and καυτήρσιν respectively from Eusebius’ Greek text (*HE* 8.12.10). In *Pe.* 5.229-32, it signifies melting fat that then drops on the martyr’s body.

*Miserum putatis quod retortis pendeo  
 extentus ulnis, quod revelluntur pedes,  
 conpago nervis quod sonat crepantibus?  
 sic heulantes ossa clamant dividi,  
 nodosa torquet quos podagra et artrisis.*

491-495

491-493: Romanus’ description of his own torture has many similarities with the order of Datianus to the torturers of Vincent in *Pe.* 5.109-12: *vinctum retortis brachiiis/ sursum ac deorsum extendite/ conpago donec ossuum/ divulsa membratim crepet*. In both cases, the description applies to the use of the *eculeus* (see n. 109 s.v.). The order given by Asclepiades (446-50) does not mention explicitly that Romanus should be tied to the *eculeus* but that is what the adjective *pensilis* and Romanus’ description here indicate. On that, see n. 452 s.v. *pensilis*. In terms of style, we have a triple anaphora. Three causal sentences introduced by *quod* explain why the bystanders consider Romanus to be pitiable (*miserum putatis*).

491. *putatis*: cf. 501: *putate*.

*pendeo*: cf. 452: *pensilis*.

493. *conpago*: collective singular.

495. *torquet*: the same verb used for the weakness of the body earlier on (*an corpus aegrum languor asper torqueat*: 482).

*nodosa ... podagra et artrisis*: in Lucilius (331 M) we find the two derivatives juxtaposed: *senex arthriticus ac podagrosus*. That is the only occurrence in a literary context. The two nouns or adjectives occur together in medical treatises (Gargilius Martialis *Medicinae ex oleribus et pomis* 30; Marcellus *De medicamentis* 35.5) as well as in Pomponius Porphyrio's Commentary on Horace (on *Ep.* 1.15.6). See also Temkin (1991: 16-17). Fux (2013: 355) proposes that Prudentius here imitates Horace's *Ep.* 1.1.31: *nodosa corpus ... prohibere cheragra*. However, Ovid (*Pont.* 1.3.23), discussing the doctor's occasional inability to cure, uses the adjective *nodosus* for *podagra*: *tollere nodosam nescit medicina podagram*. *Podagra* is also mentioned in combination with *chiragra* (Seneca *Ep.* 78.9, Martial 9.92.9).

*artrisis*: for the prosody of the word, see pp. 88-89. Other spellings transmitted in the MSS include *artisis*, *artesis*, *arthesis* and *artresis*. The spelling *arthrisis* is attested, according to *TLL* 2.0.688.40-43, in only two late antique treatises on medicine, and was apparently created by analogy to the more frequent *arthrītis* (cf. Gr. ἀρθριτις). It cannot be argued confidently which spelling Prudentius adopted but it is more likely that the spelling would be analogous to *pleurisis* in 485.

*Horretis omnes hasce carnificum manus.*

*num mitiores sunt manus medentium,*

*laniena quando saevit Hippocratica?*

*vivum secatur viscus et recens cruor*

*scalpella tinguit, dum putredo abraditur.*

496-500

496-505. Romanus' argument in the following two stanzas is that the painful methods the doctors use to heal their patients are not that different from the torturers' torments. In this way, the martyr aims to encourage the bystanders to show contempt for the torments the Christians are subjected to. The (satirical) criticism against doctors, surgeons especially, who were equated with butchers or executioners, is part of a long tradition. Pliny *N.H.* 29.12-13 talks about Archagathus, a wound specialist (*vulnerarius*) who came to Rome from the Peloponnese, and was well received at the beginning, but later because of 'his savage use of the knife and cautery ... was nicknamed "Executioner" (*carnifex*, see with n. 496), and his profession, with all physicians, became objects of loathing'. Martial asserts that Diaulus who was a doctor is now an undertaker, as in Diaulus' and the poet's view it is essentially the same thing (1.30 with n. 501 s.v. *chirurgus*, 1.47). The epigrammatist revisits a similar theme in 8.74. Fulgentius equates doctors with executioners, see n. 498 *op. cit.* Tertullian (*De anima* 10) criticises doctors practising vivisection (cf. 499: *vivum secatur*). In a similar vein, see Celsus *Proem* 42-3 (Spencer) with n. 499 s.v. *viscus op. cit.*, Ambrosiaster in Rom. 9.17, Augustine *Civ.* 22.24, *De anima et eius origine* 4.2.3.

496. *carnificum manus*: chiastic antithesis with *manus medentium* (497). *Manus carnificum* or *carnificis* is an expression found both in Classical (esp. declamatory) and Christian texts. *Carnifex* is a characterisation Pliny applied to Archagathus (*NH* 29.13): see with n. 496-505. It is a term used very often to characterise the torturers or the examining magistrates in the *Pe.* (1.91, 3.14, 131, 5.148, 216, 6.17, 9.68, 10.548, 831, 861, 11.49, 13.94, 14.17), Asclepiades included (516).

497. *manus medentium*: cf. n. 496. The expression is also used in Pliny *Ep.* 5.16.11 and Pseudo-Quintilian *Decl.* 8.18, 21. With the participle qualifying the noun it is found in Apuleius *De dog. Plat.* 2.18 (*medentes manus*). A similar expression is *medicae manus* (not necessarily applied to doctors' hands, e.g. *Geo.* 3.455, *Aen.* 12.402, Statius *Silv.* 5.5.42, etc). For further similar expressions, see *manus medici* (Tertullian *Scorp.* 5, in a context similar to Prudentius', Macrobius *Saturnalia* 7.9.13, Ecclesiasticus 38.15, and often in Augustine) or *manus medicorum* (Seneca *De*

*beneficiis* 2.18.8, *Consolatio ad Helviam matrem* 3.1: *et manus medicorum magis quam ferrum horrent*, Augustine *Enarr. Ps.* 102.5, *Civ.* 22.8).

498. *laniena*: according to the *LLT* and *TLL*, rare word that in earlier texts means the ‘butchering stall’ but since the second century AD (excluding one instance in Tertullian *De anima* 33) and especially in the context of martyrdom denotes ‘butchery, the act of mangling’. Cf. *Passio Isaacis and Maximini* 7 (Maier): *lanienam ... unguarum*, Cyprian *Ep.* 10.2. Cf. also the negative opinion on surgeons in Fulgentius (*Myth.* p. 9 Helm) who holds that in the narrow streets of Alexandria there are more butcher shops of surgeons-executioners than houses (*cirurgicae carnificinae laniola pluriora habitaculis numerentur*). Prudentius uses the verb *laniare* in relation to the martyrs’ torments: *aut laniabere membra feris*, *Pe.* 3.117; *laniatur uncis denuo*, *Pe.* 5.174; as well as in the context of animals being ripped apart by lions (*Ham.* 219) or slaughtering a victim for sacrifice (*CS* 1.453-4). Tertullian uses the cognate *lanius* (‘butcher’) for the anatomist Herophilus (*De anima* 10). Cf. n. 496-505.

*saevit*: the martyr uses the same verb for the ‘ferocity’ with which the medical methods used by doctors can hurt one’s body as for the fury with which the means of torture are used (*ignis et fidiculae saeviant*, 481) strengthening the similarity between the two situations. For *saevus* and its cognates, see n. 457 s.v. *saeviunt*.

*Hippocratica*: Hippocrates was a famous Greek physician from Cos (fifth century BC). According to the *LLT*, the adjective *Hippocraticus* occurs only here and in Aulus Gellius 17.11.6: *Dioxippum Hippocraticum* (in the sense of ‘the pupil of Hippocrates’). For the prosody of *Hippocrātica*, see pp. 88-89.

499. *vivum secatur*: for references against doctors practising vivisection, see n. 496-505.

*secatur*: cf. 502: *secat*.

*viscus*: the singular occurs much more rarely than the plural (*viscera*), according to the *LLT*. Prudentius uses it again in his description of Cassian's students inflicting their iron pricks on his body: *hinc foditur Christi confessor et inde secatur,/ pars viscus intrat molle, pars scindit cutem, Pe. 9.55-56*. Another intertext worth mentioning is Celsus' Proem 42-43 (Spencer), in which *viscus* is used in the singular when describing a person who dies once the doctor (characterised as murderer) cuts through their *sectum*: *quod membrana quaedam quae superiores partes ab inferioribus diducit (διάφραγμα Graeci vocant), hominem animam protinus amittere: ita mortui demum praecordia et viscus omne in conspectum latrocinantis medici dari utique necesse est tale, quale mortui sit, non quale vivi fuit.*

500. Cf. Augustine *In Iohannis epistulam ad Parthos tractatus* 9.4: *timor dei sic vulnerat quomodo medici ferramentum; putredinem tollit et quasi videtur vulnus augere.*

*putredo*: 'rotteness', post-Classical word, according to evidence from the *LLT*. Excluding two instances in Apuleius where the word is found for the first time (*Flor.* 15, *Met.* 9.13), it appears exclusively in texts of Christian authors. The same word recurs in Christ's command for the cure of the leper in *Cath.* 9.31-32: '*membra morbis ulcerosa, viscerum putredines/ mando ut abluantur*'. *Putredo* often occurs in association with corrupted flesh and/ or flesh that dissolves. See e.g. Lactantius *Mort. Pers.* 33.8: *in putredinem corpus cum intolerandis doloribus solvitur* (for the death of Galerius); Augustine *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 8.2: *corruptibilis est enim omnis caro, in putredines defluit, nisi quodam condimento animae teneatur*. Cf. 505-6: *Quis nescit autem quanta corruptela sit/ contaminatae carnis ac solubilis?*

*Putate ferrum triste chirurgos meis  
inferre costis, quod secat salubriter.  
non est amarum quo reformatur salus.  
videntur isti carpere artus tabidos,  
sed dant medellam rebus intus vividis.*

501-505

501-505. Romanus invites his audience to visualise that he is being subjected to an operation by surgeons and not to torments by Asclepiades' officers.

501. *Putate*: cf. 491: *putatis*.

*ferrum*: it can refer both to some metallic instrument of torture, possibly a knife, a sword or the iron claws (as it does further on in the text, see 798, 877) or a surgeons' knife (see e.g. Ambrose *Expl. Ps. xii* 37.7.1, Augustine *Confessions* 9.8). Note that *ferrum* or *ferramentum* as well as *cauter* or *cauterium* (cf. with n. 490) would render into Latin the word cautery (Gr. σίδηρος, σιδήριον): see Bliquez (2014: 158). Romanus' language retains an ambiguity as to whether it refers to torture or medical equipment.

*chirurgos*: a Greek word (Gr. χειρουργός), rarely found in Latin, see *LLT*. It appears in Celsus for the first time and frequently in Scribonius Largus' prescriptions (*Compositiones*). Other than scientific texts, it occurs twice in broadly satirical writings, *Priapea* 37.4 (for a discussion about other variants, see Callebat (2012: 185-86)) and Martial 1.30.1 (note that in Martial's text *chirurgus* occurs in the context of criticism against doctors, see with n. 495-505) and once in Augustine (*Civ.* 22.8). The word *chirurgus* which encloses the word χεῖρ (hand) and in Greek literally means 'the one who works with their hands' might recall *manus medentium* (497) and *manus carnificum* (496) from the previous stanza.

502. *secat*: cf. 499: *secatur*.

*salubriter*: Herzog (1966: 16) discerns a linguistic ambiguity in this word (as well as that in the cognate *salus* in the following line) as it can be conceived as a term of medicine or faith. Cf. n. 505.

503. *salus*: cf. n. 502 s.v *salubriter*.



505. By using the expression *rebus intus vividis* as opposed to *artus tabidi*, and not the word ‘soul’ explicitly, Prudentius, according to Herzog (1966: 16), preserves the ambiguity between medical and theological vocabulary. The same can be argued for the term *carnis*, see n. 507 s.v. *carnis*.

*Quis nescit autem quanta corruptela sit  
contaminatae carnis ac solubilis?  
sordet, tumescit, liquitur, faetet, dolet,  
inflatur ira, solvitur libidine,  
plerumque felle tincta livores trahit.* 506-510

507. *solubilis*: ‘dissoluble, perishable’, a rare post-classical word, see *LLT*. It appears in Minucius Felix (34.4) for the first time to describe the universe. Prudentius uses the word in the *Apoth.* 514 and *Ham.* 505. Earlier on in the text, Romanus draws the distinction between the soul which is eternal and the body which is destined to perish: *quod resolvendum est* (437, 480). For other cognates of *solvere* to describe the perishable body in Prudentius, see n. 480. Cf. also 509: *solvitur libidine*.

*carnis*: as Herzog (1966: 16) points out, the word *caro* here retains a linguistic ambiguity as it can be both a medical and a theological term. The same applies to the words *salubriter* (502) and *salus* (503): see with nn. *ad locc.*

508. Asyndeton.

*tumescit*: before Prudentius’ era, *tumescere* mainly appeared in poetry, see *LLT*. The poet uses *tumere* and *detumescere* in the sense of swelling up with pride or rage: see nn. 145 and 171.

509. *inflatur*: see nn. 149-150 and 150.

510. *felle*: see n. 487 s.v. *atro felle*.

*felle ... livores*: Prudentius might have in mind the *alphos* (skin disease), where according to Galen (*On Diseases and Symptoms* 4.1) ‘the flesh itself is not, in fact, affected throughout. Rather the *alphi* affix certain scales, as it were, to the superficial part of the skin, which are white from phlegmatic humour, or black from melancholic humour’ (tr. Johnston). Cf. also Cassius Felix *De medicina* 9: *Maculas nigras Graeci alphas melaenas vocant... Ex melancholico humore efficiuntur, id est ex nigri fellis redundantia.*

*Aurum regestum nonne carni acquiritur?*

*inlusa vestis, gemma, bombyx, purpura*

*in carnis usum mille quaeruntur dolis,*

*luxus vorandi carnis arvinam fovet,*

*carnis voluptas omne per nefas ruit.*

511-515

511-515. Repetition and polyptoton (*carni*, 511 in the dative, *carnis*, 513, 514, 515 in the genitive). After having talked about the physical deficiencies of the human flesh (506-10), the martyr describes periphrastically vices associated with it: desire for wealth/ avarice (511), luxury (512) and gluttony (514). There are some similarities with a passage from *Pe.* 14 in which after the spirit of Agnes has ascended into heaven, she beholds people’s vices: see n. 511 s.v. *aurum*, 512 s.v. *inlusa vestis* and 515.

511. *Aurum*: for the desire for gold in combination with other verbal similarities in the hymn to Agnes, see *Pe.* 14.102-3 and 105.

*acquiritur*: cf. 513: *quaeruntur*.

512. Asyndeton (collective singulars). Cf. the allusion to Juvenal in 143-45, where the martyr provides a list of symbols of high office.

*inlusa vestis*: ‘playfully embroidered garment’. Cf. Vergil considering the farmers lucky since among the things they have not gazed at are draperies tricked with gold (*inlusasque auro vestes*, *Geo.* 2.464, cf. Avienius *orb. terr.* 1259: *illudunt auro vestes*). Among the things Agnes is looking down upon (literally and metaphorically) after her ascension to heaven are the *inlusa pictae vestis inania*, *Pe.* 14.105. In his epithalamium for the marriage of Julian (later bishop at Eclanum) and Titia, written between 400 and 406, Paulinus of Nola admonishes the bride to scorn lavishly embroidered cloths (including ‘garments tricked with gold or purple’), jewellery and silk: *horreat inlusas auro vel murice vestes;/ aurea vestis huic gratia pura dei est./ respuat et variis distincta monilia gemmis;/ nobilis ut domino gemma sit ipsa deo/ .../ non cupiat lapidum pretium neque vellera Serum/ in cassum reditus dilapidare suos* (*Carm.* 25.43-46, 51-52). Closer to his Vergilian model in line 25.43, Paulinus includes the type of clothes or adornment which are sneered at in Prudentius’ text. The combination of such items as symbols *par excellence* of luxury occurs in other texts (e.g. Cyprian *De lapsis* 30: *tu licet indumenta peregrina et vestes sericas induas, nuda es; auro te licet et margaritis gemmisque condecoras, sine Christi decore deformis es*, Ambrose *De paenitentia* 2.10: *at vero illa mulier quae, ... et veste purpurea atque coccinea operiebatur, et auro se multo et pretiosis lapidibus ornabat*), thus not necessarily suggesting that Paulinus alludes to Prudentius.

*bombyx*: ‘silkworm’ (Gr. βόμβυξ) and metonymically ‘silk’. Cf. a gloss on this line printed in Burnam (1900: 297): *bombix id est vermis, ex quo sericum textitur*. A rare word esp. in Christian authors: Tertullian *Adversus Marcionem* 1; *De pallio* 3, both referring to the worm; Jerome *Ep.* 107.10: *spernat bombycum telas*, referring to Jerome’s advice to Laeta on how to raise her daughter Paula.

*purpura*: for similar attacks against purple clothes in other apologists, see n. 141-145.

514. Alliteration of ‘r’ and ‘v’.

*arvinam*: ‘fatness’, a rare word (cf. *LLT*), used three times in Prudentius. *Arvina* is sometimes associated with luxury (Ambrose *Expl. Ps. xii* 38.34.4, Jerome *Ep.* 147.2).

Cf. 511-13; *Cath.* 7.9-10 (on the benefit of fasting through which one of the vices that can be subdued is *luxus*): *arvina putrem ne resudans crapulam/ obstrangulatae mentis ingenium premat./ Hinc subiugatur luxus et turpis gula.* In *Pe.* 5.229 *arvina* is used in the sense of ‘fat’.

515. *omne per nefas ruit*: cf. Horace *Carm.* 1.3.25-26: *audax omnia perpeti/ gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas*; Lucan (5.312-13, censoring Caesar): *ipse per omne/ fasque nefasque rues?*; *Octavia* 786-87 (on the people who have been stirred up in support of Octavia): *agmina/ et efferata per nefas ingens ruunt.* A similar expression is the combination of *ruere* with *vetitum*. Claudian (*In Eutropium* 52) uses it, associating the rush into the forbidden with (carnal) pleasure (cf. 515: *carnis voluptas*): *et ruit in vetitum damni secura libido.* Cf. also Orientius *Commonitorium* 2.49 *nunc magis in vetitum ruimus cupimusque negata.* For other similar expressions in Prudentius’ works, see *Cath.* 11.93: *Quid prona per scelus ruis* (cf. Horace *Epod.* 7.1: *Quo, quo scelesti ruitis?*); *Pe.* 14.102-3, in which the poet declares that the thirst for silver and gold is sought *per varium nefas* (cf. Claudius Marius Victorius *Alethia* 3.22-23: *quamvis ruituras/ per varium facinus*).

*Medere, quaeso, carnifex, tantis malis,  
concide, carpe fomitem peccaminum,  
fac ut resecto debilis carnis situ  
dolore ab omni mens supersit libera  
nec gestet ultra quod tyrannus amputet.*

516-520

516-520. Earlier on (496-500), Romanus argued that the healing methods used by doctors can cause the same pain as the torments of his torturers. Then, he invited the bystanders to visualise that he was being cut by surgeons, a process that aims to restore health to his wasting limbs (501-5). Human flesh is subjected to disease and decay (506-10) and associated with all sorts of vices (511-15). Therefore, Romanus asks his executioner to release him from all these ills that emanate from the flesh, namely the flesh itself.

516. *Medere ... carnifex*: recalls the comparison that Romanus made earlier between surgeons and torturers (496-500) and more specifically the ‘equation’ between *carnificum manus* (496) and *manus medentium* (497). On *carnifex*, see n. 496.

517. *concide ... fomitem peccaminum*: cf. *Apoth.* 941: *conciderent steriles peccati fomite nullo*.

*peccaminum*: *peccamen* (nom.= ‘sin’), Late Latin neologism, see *LLT*. Apart from Prudentius (*Cath.* 9.96, *Apoth.* 73, 911, 929, *Ham.* 619, *CS* 2.1043, *Ti.* 89), it is also found in other authors of his era: Hilary (*Tractatus super Psalmos* 2.9, 133.2, 134.16, *Commentarius in Matthaëum* 18.10, 25.5), Gaudentius of Brescia (*Tractatus XXI* 10.7, 13.15, 19.11), Orosius (*Apol.* 24.2), and Pseudo-Paulinus of Nola *Carmen de nomine Iesu* 18.

518. *situ*: ‘filthiness’.

519. *mens ... libera*: the soul will be set free from the body once the latter perishes implying that the body should be conceived as a prison for the soul. The idea that the body is the prison of the soul is part of a long tradition dating back to Plato (*Phaedo* 62b, *Cratylus* 400c). For an overview, see Courcelle (1965). For Prudentius specifically, see Roberts (1993: 88-91) and Lardelli (2015: 221-22). Prudentius often refers to this idea: *si mors habenda eiusmodi est/ quae corporali ergastulo/ mentem resolvit liberam*, *Pe.* 5.357-59; *Cath.* 10.21-22, *Psych.* 904-7, *Pe.* 2.485-88, 5.301-4, 13.63-64. The Christian author might have hinted at the same notion earlier on when Asclepiades orders his minions to kill the martyr (*non rupta sulcis dissecatis viscera,/ animam nec intus abditam rimamini*, 448-49) and certainly does after Romanus dies in prison (*anima absoluta vinculis caelum petit*, 1110).

520. *tyrannus*: see n. 76 s.v. *tyrannus*.

*tyrannus ... amputet*: alludes to the amputation of the tongue one of the Maccabean brothers (*linguam tyrannus amputari iusserat*, 766) and that of Romanus (*cuius amputaveras/ linguam*, 959-60).

*Nec terrearis turba circumstantium.*

*hoc perdo solum quod peribit omnibus,*

*regi, clienti pauperique et diviti.*

*sic vernularum, sic senatorum caro*

*tabescit, imo cum sepulcro condita est.*

521-525

522-525. Similar ideas are found in the passions on Romanus: Del. G. 6: τίς γὰρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων οὐκ οἶδεν ὅτι ἐκάστου ἀνθρώπου ἡ ζωὴ αὕτη πρόσκαιρός ἐστὶν καὶ βασιλέων καὶ ἀρχόντων καὶ πλουσίων καὶ πτωχῶν καὶ ἐλευθέρων; Del. L. 2: *Nullus enim ignorant quoniam omnium temporalis est mors. Hoc est regum et principum, pauperum et divitum, scriba ita loquente: Unus introitus ad vitam omnibus et unus egressus.* Mom. 447.56-58/ 448.1. Earlier on, Romanus, when asked whether he belongs to the nobility, renounced traditional concepts of nobility based on family pedigree and holding high offices, and acknowledged the spiritual nobility which is conferred on faithful Christians (116-40). The impartiality of death is a *locus communis* in Classical literature. See e.g. Horace *Carm.* 1.4.13-14: *pallida mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas/ regumque turris*, Propertius 3.8.21-22: *sed tamen huc omnes, huc primus et ultimus ordo: est mala, sed cunctis ista terenda via est.* For further references, see Nisbet & Hubbard (1970: 68, 329).

522. The first clause stylistically reflects the second: *hoc ~ quod, perdo ~ peribit* (homoioarcton), *solum ~ omnibus* (antithesis). Cf. the anaphora connecting two antithetical parts in 524. *Perdere* and *perire* are taken up in the two following stanzas (527: *si, quo carendum est, perdere extimescimus*; 532: *illa* (sc. *forma praemiorum*) *nempe numquam perit*).

523. Two antithetical pairs of words in chiasmic sequence.

524. *sic ... sic ...*: anaphora.

*vernularum*: ‘a little or young home-born slave’, diminutive of *verna* (used in 146). A relatively rare word (around 35 occurrences on *LLT-A* up to Prudentius’ time) found for the first time in Seneca the Elder’s *Controversiae* (7.6.12, 10.4.16). *Vernula* is also used twice in the *Praefatio* of *Psychomachia* (22, 56).

*senatorum*: given Prudentius’ Romanised version of Romanus’ martyrdom (see pp. 39-40), it is ambiguous whether *senator* here refers to members of the senate in Rome or members of the *curia* in Antioch or both: see n. 124 s.v. *lex curiae*.

524-525. *caro/ tabescit*: cf. Job 33.21: *tabescet caro eius*, Zechariah 14.12. Romanus talked about the decay of flesh earlier on (437, 478-80).

525. Cf. *Pe.* 5.518: *imamque ad aram condita* (sc. *ossa*); 14.3.

*sepulcro condita*: *sepulcro* (ablative of place) + *condere* forms a fixed expression attested from the very beginnings of Latin literature (Ennius *Annales* 2.139 Vahlen: *Heu quam crudeli condebat membra sepulcro*, Vergil *Aen.* 3.67-68, 6.152). For further references, see *TLL* 4.0.150.83-87.

*Iactura vilis mordet et damnum leve*

*si, quo carendum est, perdere extimescimus.*

*cur quod necesse est non voluntas occupat?*

*natura cur non vertit in rem gloriae?*

*legale damnum deputemus praemiis.*

526-530

526-530. In the previous stanza, Romanus advised the bystanders not to fear losing their body as it is something that all people, regardless of social status, are destined to lose in any case. Now, he expands on the idea and explains why losing the body is

a cheap price to pay, which is proven by the fact that neither will (*voluntas*) prevents from being deprived of it nor nature (*natura*) turns it into something noble.

526. Two almost synonymous expressions side by side.

*damnum leve*: cf. 530: *legale damnum*.

527. *extimescimus*: cf. 521: *nec terrearis*.

528-529: anaphora (*cur non*).

529. For a discussion about nobility and the human body, see n. 126-130.

530. *legale damnum*: the body, as stated both in the previous stanza and earlier on in the poem, is subjected to decay (see n. 524-525). Thus, on the one hand, *legale*, as Fux (2013: 353) points out, refers to the natural law according to which the body is destined to perish. Cf. 478-79: *nam membra parvi pendo quo pacto cadant/ caesura certe lege naturae suae*. On the other hand, it also hints at the emperor's law (31-35: *Galerius .../ edicta late mundum in omnem miserat: Christum negaret quisque mallet vivere*), which Romanus failed to abide by when Asclepiades asked him to (422-23: *pro principali rite nobiscum deos/ orare vita*). Cf. Ballengee (2009: 115).

*deputemus*: 'consider, esteem', with dative is a Late Latin construction: see *TLL* 5.1.622.34-46.

*praemiis*: in the next stanza, Romanus explains what the prize is.

*Sed praemiorum forma quae sit fortibus  
videamus, illa nempe quae numquam perit.  
caelo refusus subvolabit spiritus,  
Dei parentis perfruetur lumine*



*regnante Christo stans in arce regia.*

531-535

531. *praemiorum*: cf. 529: *praemiis*. Romanus here explains that the *praemium* mentioned in the previous stanza is salvation which in his case will be attained through martyrdom.

532. *numquam perit*: in contrast with the body which is destined to perish (522: *quod peribit omnibus*), taking care of one's soul/ spirit, which is immortal, will help one gain eternal life.

533. For other examples of the spirit ascending to Heaven, see *Pe.* 6.98; 7.88; 8.7, 9-10. In the latter examples, the verb *scandere* and its cognates are used. Cf. also 4.73-76. In *Pe.* 10, once the martyr is killed, his soul follows the same path: *anima absoluta vinculis caelum petit* (1110). For the language of ascent in the *Peristephanon*, see Roberts (1993: 72-74).

535. *arce regia*: the picture of a heavenly citadel recurs in Prudentius' poems (*Pe.* 2.269-72: *cum carne corruptissima/ tandem soluti* (sc. the poor that Laurence presents to the examining magistrate) *ac liberi/ pulcherrimo vitae statu/ in arce lucebunt Patris*; 2.555: *aeternae in arce curiae*; 14.125: *caelestis arcis nobilis incola*) as well as in other Christian texts: see Marcovich (1989: 113). In the texts mentioned above the image of God's citadel is coupled with that of the senate. As Pollmann (2011: 194 n. 48) points out, 'this (sc. the use of Roman political terminology in eschatological context) does not imply a divinization of Roman institutions, but rather their radical discontinuity with the ultimate Christian reality, as in the *eschaton* these institutions will be completely revalorised'. This city of God with its institutions (*Roma caelestis*, 2.559) is the place of salvation where every Christian aims to end up. Note that in the works of the Classical authors, the *arx caeli* is the abode or citadel of heroes and gods (Vergil *Aen.* 1.250, Ovid *Fast.* 5.41, Seneca *Oedipus* 48).

*quandoque caelum ceu liber plicabitur,  
 cadet rotati solis in terram globus,  
 spheram ruina menstruaem destruet,  
 Deus superstes solus et iusti simul  
 cum sempiternis permanebunt angelis.*

536-540

536-540 alludes to the apocalyptic picture of heaven being folded like a book (= papyrus roll) found in Revelation 6.13-14 (*et stellae caeli ceciderunt super terram sicut ficus mittit grossos suos cum vento magno movetur et caelum recessit sicut liber involutus et omnis mons et insulae de locis suis motae sunt*) and Isaiah 34.4 (*et tabescet omnis militia caelorum et complicabuntur sicut liber caeli et omnis militia eorum defluet sicut defluit folium de vinea et de ficu*). Cf. Augustine *Confessions* 13.15: ***caelum enim plicabitur ut liber***, *In Ps.* 8.7, 93.6, 103.1, *De natura et origine animae* 4.21.34. The stars (*stellae*) from the Revelation passage have been replaced by the sun (537) and the moon (538). For similar changes in biblical sources, see the catalogue of God's creations drawing on Genesis 1 in 326-35. The image of the book in combination with the angels' presence recalls the book of Heaven in which all the details and sufferings of the martyrs are recorded and will be recited by the angels in due time: *quas* (written forms of martyrs' names) *tenet caeli liber explicandus/ tunc ... recolet .../ angelus coram Patre Filioque, Pe.* 4.171-74; *exceptit adstans angelus coram Deo/ et quae locutus martyr et quae pertulit/ .../ hic in regestis est liber caelestibus,/ monumenta servans laudis indelebilis,/ relegendus olim sempiterno iudici: Pe.* 10.1121-22, 1131-33.

537. *rotati solis ... globus*: the sun (cf. 538: *spheram ... menstruaem*). In the catalogue of God's creations, the sun and the moon are referred to as *globos dierum noctiumque praesides* (327). Cf. also *Cath.* 9.15 ... *sub alto solis et lunae globo*, *CS* 1.312-13: *orbe rotundo/ praecipitem (sc. solem) teretique globo*. *Globus solis* or *lunae* has been used to describe the sun and the moon since Lucretius (5.471-72: *solis lunaeque.../ ... globi*, cf. 5.68-69: *solem/ lunaique globum*). For other instances, see Apuleius *De dog. Plat.* 1.10, *De mundo* 21, Novatian *De spectaculis* 9, *De Trinitate* 1, Ambrose *Exameron* 1.8.28, 2.2.6, etc. Prudentius uses the noun *rota*

(*Cath.* 12.5, *Apoth.* 626, *Ham.* 76) or the verb *rotare* (*Cath.* 8.9) for the circular movement of the sun. On that movement, see also n. 573-574 and 575. Asclepiades swears by the sun further on in the text, referring to its circular orbit (573-75).

538. *spheram ... menstrualem*: ‘the sphere that governs the months’, i.e. the moon. For the adjective *menstrualis* with reference to the moon, see Zeno of Verona *Tractatus* 1.6.2: *luna ... videtur errare curriculo menstruali*; 1.16.8: *menstrualis ignis [sc. lunae] ... germine accenso*; Hilarian *Pasch.* 6. On the adjective *menstrualis*, see below. Prudentius uses the adjective *menstruus* in *Cath.* 12.10: *lunam menstruam*. Cf. Vergil *Geo.* 1.353, and Propertius 3.5.28. *Sphera* (Gr. σφαῖρα) is the Greek equivalent of *globus* (cf. 537: *rotati solis ... globus*).

*menstrualem*: ‘monthly’, rare word. Apart from very few occurrences in Classical authors (Plautus *Capt.* 483 in the same sense as in Prudentius, Pliny *NH* 7.63, 19.176) the word reappears in late antique texts: see *TLL* s.v.

*contemne praesens utile, o prudens homo,  
quod terminandum, quod relinquendum est tibi;  
omitte corpus, rem sepulcri et funeris,  
tende ad futuram gloriam, perge ad Deum;  
agnosce qui sis, vince mundum et saeculum.*’

541-545

541-545. A series of second person singular imperatives (*contemne*: 541, *omitte*: 543, *tende*, *perge*: 544, *agnosce*: 545).

541. *o prudens homo*: Romanus addresses the judge in an ironic way which probably recalls his earlier statement that Asclepiades and his like, though purportedly well educated, do not know anything about the divine power that created and sustains the world (306-8: *vos eruditos miror et doctos viros,/ perpensa vitae quos gubernat regula/ nescire vel divina vel mortalia*). However, as Romanus points out further on in the text, drawing on biblical sayings, God’s criteria of wisdom are different to the

ones used in the secular world: *stultum putatis hoc, sophistae saeculi;/ sed stulta mundi summus elegit Pater,/ ut stultus esset saeculi prudens Dei* (608-10). Cf. n. 545. Hence, *prudens homo* in Asclepiades' eyes stands in contrast with *prudens Dei* (610).

542-543. Cf. 1081-82: *Functum deinde cum reliquit spiritus/ et ad sepulcrum pompa fertur funeris* (on the death of the self-mutilated priests of Cybele).

542. Double anaphora (*quod*) and homoioteleuton (*-ndum*).

543. *corpus, rem sepulcri*: the body is destined to perish, cf. 437, 478-80, 507, 524-25: *caro/ tabescit imo cum sepulcro condita est*.

545. *mundum et saeculum*: both words mean 'world' (and have been used to translate the Greek word κόσμος) and here more specifically denote the earthly world associated with sin. For the negative, secular connotations of *saeculum* in Christian Latin authors, see Verheijen (1967), Orbán (1970), and Lettieri (1986). Both *mundus* and *saeculum* are being alternated when Prudentius alludes to 1 Corinthians 1.18-28 in 608-10, possibly reflecting an analogous use in the biblical text. Cf. n. 541. Cf. also 386: *iudex, saeculi* (for Asclepiades with n. *ad loc.*), and 608: *sophistae saeculi*.

*Vixdum elocutus martyr hanc peregerat*

*orationem, cum furens interserit*

*Asclepiades: 'vertat ictum carnifex*

*in os loquentis inque maxillas manum*

*sulcosque acutos et fidiculas transferat.*

546-550

546. *elocutus*: cf. 549: *os loquentis*.

*martyr*: see n. 121.

547. *furens*: see n. 111 s.v. *furenti*.

548-550. Respective descriptions in the prose passions on Romanus' martyrdom: *in maxillas eum torquete ut diversis cruciatibus agitatus loqui non possit*, Del. L. 9; *In maxillas eum torquete ut per tormenta loqui non possit*, Mom. 448.20-21 (Mombritius corrected *maxillas* from *maxilla*); Ὁ δὲ Ἀσκληπιάδης ἐκέλευσεν τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ τύπτεσθαι εὐτόνως λέγων αὐτῷ; ... Ἀσκληπιάδης χολέσας εἶπεν 'Ἐέσατε αὐτοῦ τὰς παρεΐας ἵνα μὴ δυνηθῆ ἔκ τῶν βασάνων φθέξασθαι', Del. G. 7.

548. *carnifex*: see n. 92 s.v. *carnifex*.

549-550: *sulcosque ... et*: polysyndeton.

549. Cf. Asclepiades' earlier admonition for the martyr's mouth to be silenced: *erumpit unde vox profana in principem?* (450); and the judge's elaboration on the same topic in the next stanza. These commands anticipate Asclepiades' order to have the martyr's tongue cut out.

*os loquentis*: cf. 555: *loquentis verba*.

550. *sulcosque*: for *sulcus* used to describe the martyr's wound in the *Peristephanon* and the agricultural imagery associated with it, see n. 448.

*fidiculas*: 'lyre-string', 'cord', diminutive of *fides* (= lyre). It is mentioned earlier on in 481. It is an instrument of torture often mentioned next to the *eculeus* (Seneca *De Ira* 3.3.6: *eculei et fidiculae*, 3.19.1: *fidiculis, talaribus, eculeo*) or used along with it (Ammianus 29.1.23), although its nature is not clear. It is likely that the term refers to cords tied to the victim's extremities while on the *eculeus* aiming at dislocating their limbs. Cf. Valerius Maximus 3.3 ext. 5: *rupit enim verbera, fidiculas laxavit, solvit eculeum, lamminas extinxit*; Martial 5.51.6: *fidiculae licet cogant (sc. eum)*; Suetonius *Tiberius* 62.2, Pseudo-Quintilian *Decl.* 19.12. Cf. also a gloss on line 481 reproduced in Burnam (1910: 213): *FIDICULAE id est parve cordae quibus martyr*

*ligabatur*. Isidore of Seville (*Etymol.* 5.27.20) and some glosses indicate that *fidiculae* are synonymous with the *ungulae* and *unci* (= hooks, claws). See Lactantius (Luctatius?) Placidus *Glosses* ed. Deuerling p. 47: *fidiculae sunt unguulae quibus torquentur in eculeo adpensi*. It is more likely that the latter meaning applies to the text as i) there was no earlier mention of *fidiculae* being applied to Romanus, ii) as cords they would probably have no or little effect on the martyr's mouth, in any case much less than the hooks, and iii) Prudentius describes further how *ungulae* were applied to Romanus' cheeks in response to the judge's order (556-60).

*Verbositatis ipse rumpatur locus,  
scaturrientes perdat ut loquacitas  
sermonis auras perforatis follibus,  
quibus sonandi nulla lex ponit modum;  
ipsa et loquentis verba torqueri volo.* 551-555

551. *Verbositatis*: post-Classical word. According to *LLT-A* and *B*, after the first occurrence in Firmicus Maternus *Mathesis* 6.31.37, it appears in Prudentius' contemporaries (Symmachus, Augustine, Jerome, Rufinus' Latin translations of Origen and Clement).

552. *scaturrientes*: participle of the rare verb *scaturrire* ('to gush, to bubble over'). 18 instances on the *LLT-A* up to Prudentius' era. Here *scaturrire* is used metaphorically for Romanus' voice. In 907, it is used literally for the martyr's blood, while the doctor is cutting out his tongue: *dum sanguis extra defluit scaturriens*.

*loquacitas*: by analogy to *verbositas* both in terms of meaning and form.

553. *perforatis follibus*: the bellows used by the blacksmith (*folles*) compared to the lung is a known metaphor existing already in Aristotle (*On Respiration* 480a21-24). For instances in Prudentius' contemporaries, see e.g. Augustine *Civ.* 14.24 and *Contra Julianum* 4.14.68. *Folles* have served as a metaphor for literary and rhetorical

windiness in Persius 5.10-11, Horace *Sat.* 1.4.19-21, and Juvenal 7.111. Fux (2013: 365) suggests that *follibus* here refers to the martyr's cheeks. This interpretation would agree with the description of Romanus' torture in the next stanza (557-58: *charaxat ambas ungulis scribentibus/ genas*). However, Prudentius visualises the voice stemming from the lung (cf. 930-31: *vis vocis expressa intimo/ pulmone*), so it is more likely that Prudentius perceives *folles* here as the pipes (*fistulae*) or passages (*meatus*) through which the air goes to finally exit through the mouth. Cf. Tertullian *De anima* 10: *Ita et spirari cur non putes sine pulmonum follibus et sine fistulis arteriarum*. In that case, *perforatis follibus* can be compared to a similar expression in the proem pointing to the hindering of the passage of speech: *recisis ... meatibus* (10). The word *folles* is used to describe both the blacksmith's bellows and a musical instrument's pipe (Augustine *Civ.* 14.24: *pulmones ... sicut folles fabrorum vel organorum ... serviunt, In Ps.* 56.16, 150.7). In the *Hymn to Romanus*, the passage of the human throat is paralleled to the blacksmith's bellows here and the pipes of a musical instrument further on (936-8). Prudentius uses *folles* in the sense of the blacksmith's bellows in *Pe.* 5.69-70: *excisa (sc. numina) fabrili manu/ cavis recocta et follibus*.

555. *loquentis verba*: Asclepiades transfers his attack from the martyr's mouth (*os loquentis*, 549) to the content of his speech (*loquentis verba*).

*Inplet iubentis dicta lictor inpius;  
charaxat ambas ungulis scribentibus  
genas cruentis et secat faciem notis,  
hirsuta barbibus solvitur carptim cutis,  
et mentum adusque vultus omnis scinditur.* 556-560

557-560. Cf. the order given in 548-550.

557. *charaxat*: *c(h)araxare* 'to inscribe' (Gr. *χαράσσω*) is a rare late antique word borrowed from Greek (Apicius *De re coquinaria* 6.8.1, Gregory of Tours *Historia*

*Francorum* 7.36, 8.29, 9.5), see *TLL* and *LLT*. Ross (1995: 332-33) argues that here the verb denotes a ‘divine kind of writing’, pointing out that the only relevant contemporary to use *c(h)araxare* is the Pseudo-Augustinian *Altercatio ecclesiae et sinagogae* PL 42 p. 30 (*cum primum Moyses in monte Sina caraxatas decalogo duplices tabulas accepisse*) referring to the inscribing of the Decalogue by God. For Ross’s argument, see n. below s.v. *scribentibus*. *C(h)araxare* also points to the monumental character of the writing which is meant to last forever as Romanus’ martyrdom which will be recorded in every detail in the heavenly book (*inscripta Christo pagina immortalis est*, 1119; *Hic in registis est liber caelestibus,/ monumenta servans laudis indelebilis*, 1131-32).

*ungulis*: see n. 73.

*scribentibus*: *scribere* (as well as *notae* in the next line) signify that the martyr’s body is ‘textualised’, is perceived as a text on which their wounds, the ‘bloody letters’, are inscribed. According to Ross (1995), this is a form of ‘dynamic writing’ which can serve as a means to gain salvation. Cf. an analogous argument for *Pe.* 11 in Fielding (2014), who, analysing both material and generic characteristics that the poem shares with the elegy, concludes that ‘the truth about Hippolytus’ martyrdom ... is contained in neither the inscription nor the painting, ... Rather, it is the martyr’s body – which Prudentius identifies with his own martyr text – that is the ultimate medium for conveying his divine power.’ *Scribere* is used for Eulalia’s ‘textualised’ body on which the name of God is written: *scriberis ecce mihi, Domine*, 136. The following lines (137-40) are of the same spirit. Another example is Cassian’s body ‘written’ upon by his students (*aratis cera sulcis scribitur, Pe.* 9.52).

558. *genas*: the cuts on the cheeks that are drawn – ‘written’ with the claws are meticulously recorded by the angel in the heavenly register (*sed ipsa pingens vulnera expressit stilo/ laterum, genarum pectorisque et faucium*, 1124-25).

*notis*: cf. 550: *sulcos acutos*. Apart from the ‘cuts’, *notae* signifies the ‘bloody letters’ inscribed on Romanus’ body – ‘text’. On the ‘textualisation’ of the martyr’s



body, see n. 557 s.v. *scribentibus*. Cf. the names of Emeterius and Chelidonium written in golden letters in the sky and characters of blood in the earth: *aureis quae Christus illic adnotavit litteris,/ sanguinis notis eadem scripta terris tradidit*, *Pe.* 1.2-3. The representation of Eulalia's body as a text (see n. above *op. cit.*) is preceded by the counting of the cuts: *ad ossa secat* (same verb in line 558)/ *Eulalia numerante notas* (134-35). Cf. the bloody marks that Prudentius sees in the pictorial representation of Hippolytus' martyrdom after the martyr is torn apart by the horses: *vidi, optime papa,/ purpureasque notas vepribus inpositas* (*Pe.* 11.127-28).

560. *vultus omnis scinditur*: cf. 558: *secat faciem notis*.

*Martyr fluentem fatur inter sanguinem:*

*'grates tibi, o praefecte, magnas debeo,*

*quod multa pandens ora iam Christum loquor,*

*artabat ampli nominis praeconium*

*meatus unus, inpar ad laudes Dei.*

561-565

561. *Martyr*: see n. 121.

*fluentem ... inter sanguinem*: cf. Hilary in *De Trinitate* 10.28, who relates a scene from the New Testament in which Peter cuts off the ear of the servant of the high priest to be restored immediately afterwards by Christ: *Vnde inter fluentem sanguinem et post ipsa descendens gladii vestigia et in ipsa trunci corporis calumnia, exiit quod non est, et sequitur quod non extat, et rependitur quod caretur?*

*fatur*: cf. 563: *loquor*.

562. *grates ... debeo*: *gratias ago* is the common way to say 'thank you' in Latin. *Grates* (pl.) is rarer and more archaic compared to *gratia*. There are many instances of *grates agere*. Prudentius uses the expression in *Pe.* 13.95, and *grates reddere* in *Cath.* 4.75 and *Psych.* 888-89. Here, we also have *debere* instead of the more

common *agere*. There are no examples of *grates debere* before Prudentius' time and only one in Augustine from around his era (*Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 5.15).

*praefecte*: see n. 41-42.

563. *multa pandens ora*: cf. 566: *rimas patentēs*, 567: **multisque fusa rictibus reddit** (*sc. vox*) *sonos*, 570: *tot ecce laudant ora quot sunt vulnera*. In a similar vein, the blood coming out of Eulalia's wounds speaks the holy name of God: *nomen et ipsa sacrum loquitur/ purpura sanguinis eliciti*, *Pe.* 3.139-40. Cf. also the Sibyl's statement that she could not enumerate the various tortures in the Underworld: *non, mihi si linguae centum sint oraque centum* (*Geo.* 2.43). The body of the martyr is described as a text (with the cuts forming the bloody letters, see n. 557 s.v. *scribentibus*), so it is logical that it communicates a message.

565. *meatus*: see n. 10 and n. 553.

*inpar ad laudes Dei*: *inpar* with *ad* plus accusative (*ad laudandum Deum*) instead of the dative of purpose as it would be normally construed in Classical Latin. The replacement of the dative of purpose by the construction *ad* + accusative was freer in Late Latin. See e.g. Hofmann & Szantyr (1972: 220) with bibliography. For further examples from Prudentius' era, see Ambrose *De virginibus* 2.1.2: *Sed quoniam nos infirmi ad monendum sumus et impares ad docendum*, Augustine *Contra litteras Petiliani* 2.83.184: *et quia vel ipsas leges vel invidiam formidatis vel ad resistendum impares estis*.

*ad laudes Dei*: cf. 570: *tot ecce laudant ora*.

*Rimas patentēs invenit vox edita  
multisque fusa rictibus reddit sonos  
hinc inde plures et profatur undique  
Christi Patrisque sempiternam gloriam;*

*tot ecce laudant ora quot sunt vulnera.*'

566-570

566. *Rimas patentes*: cf. 563: *multa pandens ora*. Cf. also 1127-28: *plagam .../ ... patentem*.

568. *hinc inde*: ~ *undique*.

570. Cf. analogous expressions indicating that there are as many rewards as there are wounds/ ways of suffering: Jerome *Tractatus lix in Psalmos* Ps. 93 line 168: *quot patimur vulnera, tot meremur et coronas*, Peter Chrysologus *Sermo* 134.3: *quia internis oculis tot cernebat bravia quot vulnera, quot tormenta tot praemia, quot victimas tot coronas*. Peter Chrysologus (*Sermo* 121.7) elaborating on Luke 16.19-23, where a beggar called Lazarus desires the crumbs falling from a rich man's table gives a picture similar to the one of Prudentius here. As the beggar's cry issuing from his single mouth would not reach the rich man, 'God opened the whole body of the poor man with wounds in order to open the rich man's heart, so that the poor man would have as many mouths to admonish the rich man as he had wounds' (tr. Palardy): *Itemque deus, quia obduratis auribus unius oris nil erat vox clamantis, ad aperiendum cor divitis totum corpus pauperis vulneribus aperit, ut in admonendo divite tot essent pauperis ora quot vulnera*. Cf. also *Sermo* 123.10. This equation between organs of speech and wounds in Peter Chrysologus is, according to Hoffmann (2005: 312), taken from Prudentius.

*Tali repressus cognitor constantia*

*cessare poenam praecipit, tunc sic ait:*

*'per Solis ignes iuro, qui nostros dies*

*reciprocatis administrat circulis,*

*cuius recursu lux et annus ducitur,*

571-575

571. *cognitor*: this word is used for the judge by Prudentius only in *Pe.* 10 (205, 793). In Classical Latin it appears to mean 'advocate' or 'defender' (*TLL*

3.0.1488.44-68). In Late Latin it acquired the significance of the ‘judge’ (*TLL* 3.0.1487.70-1488.23).

573. *per Solis ignes iuro*: swearing by the sun is part of the tradition of Romanus’ martyrdom, attested in all versions of his passion: *μὰ τὸν ἥλιον τὸν βασιλεύοντα, εὐτόνωσ σε βασανίσας εἰς πῦρ παραδίδωμι, εἰς ἐπίδειξιν πάντων τῶν ὑπὸ σοῦ ἀναπεισθέντων*, Del. G. 2; *μὰ τὸν ἥλιον τὸν βασιλέα, πυρὶ σε σφενδονισθῆναι προστάσσω, καὶ ἴδωμεν, εἰ βοηθεῖ σοι ὃν ὁμολογεῖς · ἐγὼ γὰρ σταυρωθέντα ἄνθρωπον ἐπαισχύνομαι ὄνομαστὶ ὀνομάσαι*, Del. G. 10; *Νῆ τὸν μέγιστον καὶ φαιδρότατον ἥλιον, τὸν χρυσαυγῆ καὶ παγκόσμιον, εἰ μή γε τῶν ἀπατηλῶν σου τουτ<ων>ὶ ῥημάτων ἀφέμενος αὐτῷ τε καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐθελήσεις θῦσαι θεοῖς, ποικίλαις σου πρότερον καὶ παντοδαπαῖς ἀναλώσας τὸ σῶμα βασάνοις, οὕτω σε καὶ πυρὶ παραδώσω ...*, Halkin 5; *Per solem regem, quia hodie te gravioribus tormentis afficio in illorum exemplum quibus ut istud facerent imperasti*, Del. L. 2; *Per solem, quia fortioribus te tormentis afficiam. Igni te tradam in exemplum illorum, quibus persuasisti, ut mihi resisterent*, Mom. 447.1-3; Unlike all other Latin sources for Romanus, Prudentius uses the metonymy *per ignes Solis* instead of *per solem* drawing a parallel between the *ignes Solis* and the *ignes tristis rogi* (576) the judge orders to be prepared for the martyr’s execution. The ‘sun’s fires’ are suggestive of the rays of the sun, the oath to which can be traced back to Homer *Il.* 3.277. Cf. also Clymene’s oath to her son, Phaethon (Ovid *Met.* 1.768-71). In *Aen.* 2.154-55, Sinon swears by the ‘fires’ which in all probability mean the Sun and the Moon: *vos, aeterni ignes, et non violabile vestrum/ testor numen*: see Horsfall (2008: 155-56). As Henke points out (1986: 62-63), the parallel text from the Greek passion (Del. G. 2.10, see above) indicates that Prudentius refers to the Sun god; hence the first letter should be capitalised. More specifically in the Late Empire the cult of *Sol invictus* was particularly promoted by the emperor Aurelian and references to it do not cease up until Prudentius’ time: see Berrens (2004) and Hijmans (2009). For Prudentius’ views against the Sun god, see *CS* 1.309-53. However, Asclepiades might invoke the sun as a natural element. Cf. e.g. *Aen.* 6.458: *per sidera iuro*, 3.599: *per sidera testor*, 12.197: *haec eadem, Aenea, terram mare sidera iuro*, Ovid *Met.* 3.638, *Tr.* 2.53, Statius *Theb.* 10.360, 12.393.

573. *qui nostros ...* / 574. *circulis*: cf. 575: *recursu*. The judge refers to the rotation (*reciprocatis ... circulis*) and the control (*administrat*) of the sun over the days. Two descriptions of the sun earlier on in the text refer to these aspects respectively (327: *globos dierum noctiumque praesides*, 537: *rotati solis ... globus*). Cf also CS 1.341-42: *ista* (sc. the free will) ***ministranti*** *regimen sollemne dierum/ haudquaquam soli datur a factore potestas*; and n. 537.

575. Cf. *Cath.* 7.38-39: *decem recursibus/ quater volutis sol peragrans sidera*, *Pe.* 11.195: *Iam cum se renovat decursis mensibus annus*, 12.21-22: *Ut teres orbis iter flexi rota percucurrit anni/ diemque eundem sol reduxit ortus*. Prudentius in the *Praefatio* describes his age in terms of the circular movement of the year and the sun: *septimus insuper/ annum cardo rotat, dum fruimur sole volubili*, 2-3. On the sun returning to his initial position at night, see *Cath.* 11.1-2: *Quid est quod artum circum/ sol iam recurrens deserit?*; and CS 1.330: *latet aut sub nocte recurrens*. Cf. also n. 537.

*ignes parandos iam tibi tristis rogi,  
qui fine digno corpus istud devorent,  
quod perseverans tam resistit nequiter  
sacris vetustis, nec dolorum spiculis  
victum fatiscit fitque poenis fortius.*

576-580

576-577. Asclepiades orders that a fire be prepared to consume Romanus. The martyr responding to the judge's disdainful reference to Christ will elaborate on the nature of God which is to be followed by the episode with the child martyr (661-845). So, Asclepiades' command will not be fulfilled until lines 846-52. As in Prudentius, the command for the martyr to be sent to the fire is preceded by the oath to the sun in the prose passions: see n. 573 (Del. G. 2, 10, Halkin 4, Del. L. 2, Mom. 447.1-3).

576. *ignes*: hyperbaton, see pp. 85-86. It evokes the fires of the sun that Asclepiades invoked in that line. Cf. n. 573.

577. *devorent*: in relation to the burning of the body, cf. 814-15: *ignibus vorabere/damnatus*, *Pe.* 11.68: *sit pyra, quae multos devoret una reos*.

579. *sacris vetustis*: Asclepiades argued not only that pagan religion predates the Christian doctrine but also that it is part and parcel of the foundation of Rome, its history and institutions (401-16: see n. 401-415). *Sacris vetustis* contrasts with *novelli dogmatis* in the following stanza referring to how recent Christianity is.

579. *nec dolorum spiculis ...* / 580. *vinci*: cf. *Pe.* 13.74: *nec dolore vinci* (Cyprian's teaching to the people of Antioch).

*Quis hunc rigorem pectori iniecit stupor?  
mens obstinata est, corpus omne obcalluit,  
tantus novelli dogmatis regnat furor:  
hic nempe vester Christus haud olim fuit,  
quem tu fateris ipse suffixum cruci.* 581-585

582. The verse is divided into two parts, each pertaining to the spirit and body respectively. Both parts indicate the implacability of spirit and body, hence both the metaphorical and literal obstinacy of the martyr, while stylistically the similarity is reflected by the homoioarcton (*obstinata ... obcalluit*).

*obcalluit*: *obcallesco* (= 'to become hardened/ insensible'), rare verb. According to *LLT-A* and *B*, it occurs 12 times in total by Prudentius' time (Plautus *Asinaria* 419, Cicero *Epistulae ad Atticum* 2.18.4, Ovid *Met.* 14.282, Seneca *De ira* 3.41, Columela *Res Rustica* 8.16, Celsus 4.31 x 2, 6.18, 7.18, Pliny *Ep.* 2.15.2, Augustine *Serm.* 339.4, Jerome *Ep.* 24.5).

583. *novelli dogmatis...*/ 584. ... *haud olim fuit*: Asclepiades repeats his argument that the Christian doctrine is recent compared to the Roman religion, the beginnings of which can be traced back to before the foundation of Rome, as far back as Deucalion's flood: *quidquid novellum surgit, olim non fuit*, 409. Cf. 404: *error ... novus*. For Christian authors' response to such arguments, see n. 401-415. Similar phraseology and argument in *Pe.* 6.37-40: '*tu, qui doctor,*' ait '*seris novellum/ commenti genus, ut leves puellae/ lucos destituant, Iovem relinquunt,/ damnes, si sapias, anile dogma*' (the judge Aemilianus to the martyr Fructuosus). Romanus in his counter-argument, a typological reading of people and events, uses the adjective *novellus* stressing that what he contends comes as a reply to the judge's statement: *si res novellas respuis, nil tam recens*, 613; *crux ista Christi, quam novellam dicitis*, 621. Christianity did not exist once (*haud olim fuit*) but, as Romanus argues, the same goes for many kingdoms before the foundation of Rome, which have now ceased to exist, as will Rome at some point (*sed illa non sunt, haec et olim non erunt*, 620).

585. *suffixum cruci*: reference to Christ's crucifixion occurs after the oath to the sun (cf. 573) in one of the Greek prose passions on Romanus: *μὰ τὸν ἥλιον τὸν βασιλέα, πυρί σε σφενδονισθῆναι προστάσσω, καὶ ἴδωμεν, εἰ βοηθεῖ σοι ὄν ὁμολογεῖς · ἐγὼ γὰρ σταυρωθέντα ἄνθρωπον ἐπαισχύνομαι ὀνομαστὶ ὀνομάσαι*, Del. G. 10. The reference to Christ's crucifixion will lead to a long response on behalf of Romanus (586-650) before the episode with the child martyr. *Cruci* is taken up by Romanus and it is repeated throughout his response: see n. 586.

*'Haec illa crux est omnium nostrum salus,'*  
*Romanus inquit, 'hominis haec redemptio est.*  
*scio incapacem te sacramenti, inpie,*  
*non posse caecis sensibus mysterium*  
*haurire nostrum. Nil diurnum nox capit.*

586-590

586-595. In the following two stanzas, Romanus revisits the topic of the capacity to understand Christian doctrine, a topic he treated in lines 431-40. In the earlier lines, as in the present passage, Romanus employed the light versus darkness as well as the healthy/ spiritual sight imagery. Cf. Matthew 13.11-15 incorporating Isaiah 6.9-10 (Christ's answer about why he uses parables in his preaching): *quia vobis datum est nosse mysteria regni caelorum illis autem non est datum ... ideo in parabolis loquor eis quia videntes non vident et audientes non audiunt neque intellegunt et adimpletur eis prophetia Esariae dicens auditu audietis et non intellegitis et videntes videbitis et non videbitis incrassatum est enim cor populi huius et auribus graviter audierunt et oculos suos cluserunt nequando oculis videant et auribus audiant et corde intellegant et convertantur et sanem eos*. Cf. also the equivalent passages in Mark 4.11-12 and Luke 8.10. Christ's answer about those who see and hear without actually understanding until they are healed by him is part of the parable of the sower (Matthew 13.3-23), the versification of which in *Apoth. Praef.* 2.37-42 follows a passage that has similarities with the one under consideration: *dum plura temptat caecus incerto gradu,/ incurrit id quod obvium est./ fax sola fidei est praeferanda gressibus,/ ut recta sint vestigia./ quis in tenebris hostis errantes tamen/ pulsat trahitque et proterit*. Spiritual blindness will be dispersed by the torch of faith.

586. *crux*: taken from the last line of the previous stanza (*suffixum cruci*, 585) and often repeated in the course of Romanus' answer (621, 629 twice, 630, 638, 641).

588. *incapacem*: late antique word. First occurrence (excluding the anonymous *De Trinitate* CPL 105, the date of which is uncertain) in fourth-century authors. In Prudentius, it also occurs in 348 (*solvi incapacem posse*).

589. *caecis sensibus*: for blindness as a metaphor for lack of faith or paganism, see n. 371. Blindness of the senses ties in with night (*nox*, 590) and darkness (*tenebris*, 591) in the following lines as well as the metaphor with the (spiritually) healthy and unhealthy eyes (591-94).



589. *mysterium* / 590. *haurire*: for the way the word *mysterium* is used in Prudentius, see n. 168 s.v. *mysteria*. Unlike Romanus, who is able to explain the pagan mysteries to the judge, Asclepiades cannot grasp Christian doctrine. *Haurire* here is used metaphorically (*TLL* 6.3.2569.61-76). It is likely that the expression is borrowed from Ambrose, the only Christian author who uses the same combination of words before or around Prudentius' time. Cf. *De spiritu sancto* 1 Prol. 15: *Sed non hoc omnes haurire poterant mysterium* (on the mystery of humility), *De paenitentia* 2.11: *nam si Moysi propius accedere gestienti, ut cognitionem mysterii caelestis hauriret.*

590. *Nil diurnum nox capit*: combined with the following line, a possible allusion to John 1.5: *et lux in tenebris lucet et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt.*

*Tamen in tenebris proferam claram facem,*

*sanus videbit, lippus oculos obteget.*

*“removete lumen” dicet insanabilis,*

*“iniuriosa est nil videnti claritas.”*

*audi, profane, quod gravatus oderis.*

591-595

591. *facem*: Romanus, who tried to dissuade the people (of Antioch) from following the imperial laws and encouraged them to strengthen their faith, is portrayed as *fax omnium* (67). Cf. n. 586-595.

592-594. *Sanus* in contrast with the *lippus* and the *insanabilis* who cannot stand the light of faith. In the works of Augustine where the word *lippus* mainly occurs (see n. 592), it is often in contrast with the word *sanus* (or its derivatives), the spiritually healthy: *Serm.* 53.6: *ut enim secundum carnem loquar, quid desideras ortum solis cum oculis lippis? sani sint oculi, et erit lux illa gaudium: non sint oculi sani, erit lux illa tormentum, Enarr. Ps. 72.7: sed quemadmodum sol, oculos puros, sanos, vegetos fortes habenti, tranquillus apparet, in oculos autem lippos quasi tela aspera iaculatur; intuentem illum vegetat, hunc excruciat.* In Prudentius' passage, the

bleary-eyed cover their eyes to avoid the light that hurts them (*iniuriosa*). In Augustine's above cited passages, there is mention of the excruciating effect that light has on the purblind. Cf. also Augustine's *Serm.* 357, where the *lippi* who cannot tolerate light is used as a metaphor for the heretics.

592. *lippus*: 'bleary-eyed', a relatively rare word (according to the *LLT-A*, it is used slightly less than 50 times by Prudentius' time). In Prudentius, it is also found in *Pe.* 2.284 (*lipposque palfebra putri*) referring to how the great men of the secular world will look in the afterlife. In Christian authors, it occurs only in Arnobius (once), in Jerome's translation of the Bible (twice), in Augustine (repeatedly in *Serm.* 357) and in Cassian (once).

593. *insanabilis*: see n. 592 s.v. *sanus videbit*.

594. *claritas*: cf. 591: *claram facem*.

595. *audi*: cf. 466: *audite*.

*Regem perennem rex perennis protulit  
in se manentem nec minorem tempore,  
quia tempus illum non tenet; nam fons retro  
exordiorum est et dierum et temporum  
ex Patre Christus. Hoc Pater quod Filius.*

596-600

596-600. The description of God in terms of time (everlasting and a-temporal, see n. 311 s.v. *perennis*) appears as a counter-argument to what Asclepiades asserted about the ancient origin of Rome and pagan religion, and the relatively recent descent of Christianity (395-416, see also 409 s.v. *novellum*). Romanus will attack this belief in the following stanzas (611-35). Cf. his description earlier on in 316-17: *Intemporalis, ante quam primus dies,/ esse et fuisse semper unus obtinet*.

596. *Regem perennem rex perennis*: polyptoton indicating that the essence (here the divinity) is the same. See n. 311 s.v. *perennis*. Cf. also 603: *aeternus Deus*.

597. *nec minorem tempore*: litotes. Cf. *Apoth. Hymnus de Trinitate 4: tempore nec senior Pater est nec numine maior*, 255: *nec enim minor aut Pater dispar*, *Ham. 44: numeroque et tempore liber*.

597-600. Prudentius describes the relationship between God and Christ with the *adynaton* of the water that flows back to its source, also known as ἄνω ποταμῶν (Euripides *Medea* 410: ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί). Prudentius uses the same *adynaton* literally referring to the river Jordan in *Pe. 7.69-70 (ad fontem refluis retro/ confugisse meatibus)* and *Ti. 57 (In fontem refluo Iordanis gurgite fertur)*. For parallel texts containing the same *adynaton* in Classical and Christian authors, see Galeani (2014: 162). In the same vein, cf. *Apoth. Hymnus de Trinitate 5: nam sapiens retro semper Deus edidit ex se*, and *Apoth. 271: conperpetuum retro Patris et Patre natum*.

*fons*: God is also appropriately called *fons* by the mother of the child martyr as she encourages him to overcome his thirst and endure his suffering (727). Cf. also *Apoth. 885: de fonte perenni*. For God as a source of time, see *Ham. 32-34: fons unicus orbis,/ ... generisque et originis auctor,/ ex quo cuncta fluunt, et lux et tempora et anni*.

*Hic se videndum praestitit mortalibus,  
mortale corpus sumpsit immortalitas,  
ut, dum caducum portat aeternus Deus,  
transire nostrum posset ad caelestia.  
homo est peremptus et resurrexit Deus.*

601-605

601-606. Cf. a passage carrying both verbal and thematic similarities but written much more densely: *adsumptum gestare hominem, reparare peremptum*, *Apoth. Hymnus de Trinitate* 8.

601. No one has ever seen God, as John records in 1.18 (*Deum nemo vidit umquam*), a passage to which Prudentius alludes in *Apoth.* 9-10 mentioning the apostle by name: *Ioannis magni celebris sententia praesto est,/ haud umquam testata Deum potuisse videri*. For allusions to the same passage, see *Cath.* 6.1-2: *Pater supreme/ quem nemo vidit umquam*, and *Apoth.* 77. The impossibility of seeing God has already been underlined in the previous passage in which the martyr was concerned with Christological issues (312: *non videndo clauditur*, 314: *nec comprehendi visibus nostris valet*). Romanus here stresses the opposite point of view, that unlike God the Father, Christ was actually seen. Immediately after the passage cited above, John the apostle states that Christ declared God the Father (*unigenitus Filius qui est in sinu Patris ipse enarravit*) with *enarravit* possibly corresponding to *praestitit* here. *Praestitit* is used to describe Christ's 'visibility' in *Apoth.* 24: *quod de Patre micans (sc. Filius) se praestitit inspiciendum*, and 81: *Deus qui visibilem se praestitit olim*. For expressions carrying similarities with our text, cf. *Apoth.* 128: *quem si perspicuum mortalibus infitiaris*, 71: *ergo nihil visum nisi quod sub carne videndum*. For Christ's 'visibility', see also *Apoth.* 18-9, 22-25, 78-81, 114, 123-24. For a discussion, see Padovese (1980: 42-45).

601-602. Etymological game with cognates of *mortalis* placed in nodal points of the text. The substantive adjective *mortalibus* (end of the first verse) is followed by the adjective *mortale*, the first word of the following line which is to be ended with the noun *immortalitas*. This way the abstract *immortalitas*, used for Christ, regardless of the etymological affinity, appears in opposition both with the other end of the same line and the word directly above it. Cf. 607: *immortalibus*.

602-605. Reference to Christ's Incarnation (602-3) follows on from what Romanus said in the previous line. In order for Christ to be visible, a form is required and that is given through a mortal body. The incarnation and the subsequent resurrection of

Christ (on which Romanus will elaborate further on in 635-640) aimed to save humankind. Christ was the first to rise from the dead (Acts 26.23, Colossians 1.18, Revelation 1.5, etc.) and his resurrection served as a paradigm for faithful Christians. Just as incarnate Christ was resurrected, so will his followers be (John 11.25, Romans 6.4, 8.11, 10.9, 1 Corinthians 15.20-22, 1 Thessalonians 4.14). God's plan is famously described in the Nicene Creed: *Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis. Et incarnatus est ... : Crucifixus etiam pro nobis ... et sepultus est: et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas: et ascendit in caelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris.* Cf. *Apoth.* 1047: *solvor morte mea, Christi virtute resurgo*, 1080-81: *pellite corde metum, mea membra, et credite vosmet/ cum Christo reditura Deo.* In lines 635-40, which appear to pick up again or continue the discussion started in this stanza, Romanus details that a man's body once dead does not perish; instead it is like Christ's resurrected body which died on the cross and found its way to heaven, thereby opening the way for the rest of his flock. For further discussion and parallel texts from Prudentius, see n. 636-640.

602. *sumpsit*: *sumere* is often used by Prudentius to describe Christ's incarnation. Cf. *Apoth.* 50: *sumpsit virgineo fragilem de corpore formam*, 54: *sumpturus corpus*. Cf. also the cognate in *CS* 2.268: *iamque hominem adsumptum summus Deus*. For other verbs used for the incarnation in Prudentius, see Padovese (1980: 122-24).

603. *caducum*: 'perishable, destined to die'. It is used as an adjective, usually qualifying *corpus*, or as a substantive adjective for the mortal body (*Cath.* 6.21-22, 10.21, *Apoth.* 17, 890, *Ham. Praef.* 51, *Pe.* 5.301, 6.119-20), and consequently the body that Christ took up (*Cath.* 7.177: *caducis cum gravatus artubus*, 9. 15-6, *Apoth.* 1043-4). Cf. 437: *et res caduca quod resolvendum est videt.*

604. For Christ's body, which serves as a paradigm, see 638-39: *quia Christus in se mortuum corpus cruci/ secum excitatum vexit ad solium Patris*. Cf. also *Cath.* 3.205 (for Prudentius' body): *ignea Christus ad astra vocat (sc. mea membra)*, *Cath.* 10.91-92: *via panditur ardua iustis,/ et ad astra doloribus itur.*

605. *est peremptus* is in opposition with *resurrexit*; the two aspects of Christ's nature (*homo* and *Deus*) bracket the line. The basic elements of 605 are repeated in 642: *nobis peremptus Christus et nobis Deus*, with the following three lines of the stanza elaborating on the dual nature of Christ (*natura duplex*, 644).

*Congressa mors est membra gestanti Deo;  
dum nostra temptat, cessit immortalibus.  
stultum putatis hoc, sophistae saeculi,  
sed stulta mundi summus elegit Pater,  
ut stultus esset saeculi prudens Dei.* 606-610

606. *membra gestanti*: cf. 602: *mortale corpus sumpsit*, 603: *caducum portat*. The same expression in a different context referring to the body members of Romanus that the judge wants to have cut out: *quot membra gestat, tot modis pereat volo*, 880. For Christ's incarnation, see *Apoth. De Trinitate* 8: *gestare hominem*, 775: *mortalia gestet*, 933: *innocui gestator corporis*. The same word combination (*membra + gestare*) is also found in Augustine: *De libero arbitrio* 3.20: *quae cum introeunt (sc. animae) in hanc vitam subeuntque gestanda membra mortalia*, *Serm.* 280.4, *Ench. de fide, spe et caritate* 23 twice).

607. *immortalibus*: used in the second line of the stanza in the same position as *immortalitas* (602), it recalls the etymological game of the previous stanza: see n. 601-602.

608-610. Wisdom and foolishness according to secular criteria are different in the eyes of God. Christian doctrine sees what wise pagans deem foolishness wisdom according to God and what secular men consider wise, God regards as foolish. In this passage, Prudentius alludes to 1 Corinthians 1.18-28, and especially paragraph 27 adopting a phraseology very close to the biblical text: *sed quae stulta sunt mundi elegit Deus ut confundat sapientes* (27). In the two following sentences the phrase *elegit Deus* is applied to *infirmum mundi* and *ignobilia mundi* respectively (27-28).

Prudentius alludes to the same passage in *Apoth. Praef.* 29-32: *idcirco mundi stulta delegit Deus/ ut concidat sophistica/ deque inbecillis subiugavit fortia/ simplex ut esset credere*. Cf. also 1 Corinthians 3.18-19, Matthew 11.25 and n. 610. For this and other biblical allusions in the poem, see Introduction 8i.

608. *sophistae saeculi*: in contrast with *prudens Dei* (610). For the word *sophista* and its meaning in Christian literature, see 404 s.v. *sophistas*. In 404, Asclepiades refers to the Christians as *sophistae*.

609. See 1 Corinthians 1.27 in n. 608-610 *op. cit.*

610. *prudens Dei*: in the biblical passage to which Prudentius alludes, the ‘wise’ are rendered with the words ‘*prudens*’ (once, 1 Corinthians 1.19: *et prudentiam prudentium reprobabo*) and ‘*sapiens*’. Apart from *stultus saeculi* and *sophistae saeculi* (608), *prudens Dei* is also in contrast with *prudens homo*: see n. 541.

*Antiquitatem Romuli et Mavortiam*

*lupam renarras, primum et omen vulturum.*

*si res novellas respuis, nil tam recens;*

*vix mille fastis inplet hanc aetatulam*

*cursus dierum conditore ab augure.*

611-615

611-635. In these lines, Prudentius responds to Asclepiades’ argument from lines 401-415 (see n. *ad loc.*). His aim is twofold: i) he will demonstrate that the antiquity to which the judge appeals is actually very recent (611-20); and ii) he will prove the temporal priority of Christianity as shown by the ever-presence of the cross, her symbol (621-35).

611-620. Romanus counter-attacks Asclepiades’ appeal to the story of the foundation of Rome, which was achieved with the aid of pagan gods (412-15). However, some parts of the story mentioned here such as the she-wolf (*lupam renarras*, 612) and the

omen of the vultures (*primum et omen vulturum*, 612) are not found in Asclepiades' description. As usual, Romanus picks up and sneers at the most ridiculous points of a story relating to paganism.

611. *Antiquitatem*: According to Romanus, the ancient times during which the foundation of Rome took place are essentially very recent (*nil tam recens*: 614). On the contrary, the times during which the prophets predicted the advent of Christ were genuinely ancient: *tandem relictis vocibus propheticis/ aetate nostra conprobata antiquitas*, 631-32. Romanus' counter-attack to the judge's argument is enclosed with references to the respective pagan and Christian ways of interpreting *antiquitas*.

*Mavortiam*: on the adjective *Mavortius*, see n. 412 s.v. Cf. also 619: *Martis pater*.

613. *novellas*: the same word used in 409 and 583 by Asclepiades (see with n. 409) to refer to Christianity as a very recent doctrine. See also 621: *quam novellam dicitis*, and 404: *error ... novus*.

614-615. Cf. 407-8: *post evolutos mille demum consules/ ab urbe Roma*.

614. *aetatulam*: diminutive used again in 677 (*innocenti aetatulae*) to describe the age of the child-martyr.

*Sescenta possum regna pridem condita  
proferre toto in orbe, si sit otium,  
multo ante clara, quam capellam Gnosiam  
suxisse fertur Iuppiter, Martis pater.  
sed illa non sunt, haec et olim non erunt.*

616-620

618-619. Cf. Theophilus 3.23: 'Since the scriptures of the divine law given us through Moses actually antedate not only the reign of Zeus in Crete but also the Trojan war'. For the arguments of Christian writers that Christian tradition and



writers such as Moses antedate Greek tradition and writers such as Homer, see n. 401-415. For Theophilus specifically, see Droge (1989: 102-23), Young (1997: 54-56) and Garstad (2001: 208). Jupiter here reminds us of Jupiter Stator whose help was of decisive importance for the foundation and later prosperity of Rome: *quod Roma pollet auspicato condita,/ Iovi Statori debet et dis ceteris*, 414-15. Here Prudentius via Romanus chooses a degrading moment from Jupiter's life, his being suckled by a she-goat in Crete where he was put after his birth to be protected from his father Saturn (Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.1.7, Callimachus *Hymn to Zeus* 49-50). According to another tradition Amaltheia, Jupiter's nurse, was not a she-goat but a nymph and there are also authors who transmit both traditions (Ovid *Fast.* 5.113-128, Lactantius *Inst.* 1.21.38-39, 1.22.19, Hyginus *Astronomica* 2.13).

618. *capellam Gnosiam*: *Gnosia* is a metonymy for 'Cretan'. The irony is obvious since Prudentius uses the mainly poetic adjective *Gnosius* for a she-goat. The adjective is also used in *Cath.* 5.51-52: *ille volantia/ praefigit calamis spicula Gnosiis*. On Jupiter's association with Crete, see also CS 2.492.

619. *Martis pater*: cf. *Mavortiam* (611). Romanus attacks the boast of Asclepiades that Jupiter and Mars were a significant part of the foundation and history of Rome (412-15). By referring to a humiliating incident that Jupiter suffered he also disgraces his son, Mars, and consequently his grandson, Romulus.

*Crux ista Christi, quam novellam dicitis,  
nascente mundo factus ut primum est homo,  
expressa signis, expedita est litteris,  
adventus eius mille per miracula  
praenuntiatus ore vatum consono.* 621-625

621-635. Romanus addresses the charge that the Christian religion is more recent than paganism by offering a typological interpretation of the cross. Since Justin Martyr various events in the Old Testament had been interpreted by Christian

exegetes as prefiguring the cross: see pp. 52-53. A characteristic example is Noah's ark, which in Christian exegesis since Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 138) is taken as a symbol prefiguring the cross (Cyril of Jerusalem *Catech.* 17.10, Ambrose *Myst.* 3.10, Augustine *Civ.* 15.26): see Reijners (1965: 45-46). In Numbers 21.4-9 (cf. John 3.14), God instructs Moses to have a snake made of bronze and put it on a pole. The bronze snake cures people who have been bitten by poisonous snakes. Justin (*Apol.* 1.60, *Dial.* 94) saw the snake on the pole as forming the symbol of the cross. Tertullian's (*Adv. Iud.* 10) interpretation of the same passage is along the same lines. For another incident in Moses' life that was seen as prefiguring the cross, see n. 625. On the various prefigurations of the cross in the Old Testament, see Reijners (1965). In addition to the typological interpretation of the cross, Prudentius here also reflects relevant exegetical arguments found in many Christian writers, who without referring directly to the Bible, testify to the pervasive presence of the cross: the cross is depicted through various aspects of human life – such as the mast of a ship, the yoke with which the earth is ploughed, the symbols on military banners – and is inherent in nature – e.g. the symbol of the cross is formed when one stands with outstretched hands. Without knowing, the pagans worship the cross which is part of the symbols and statues of the gods (Justin *Apol.* 1.55, Tertullian *Apol.* 16.6-8, *Ad nationes* 1.12, Minucius Felix 29.6-8). On Christian authors of the era addressing the charge of Christianity's 'newness', see n. 401-415.

623. *expressa signis*: cf. 1124: *sed ipsa pingens vulnera expressit stilo* with line 627: *virtute, bellis, cultibus, sacris, stilo*. Cf. also Minucius Felix 29.7: (cross as part of the military banners) *Nam et signa ipsa et cantelabra et vexilla castrorum quid aliud quam inauratae cruces sunt et ornatae?*

*litteris*: the holy Scriptures. Cf. 627: *stilo*. See *Apoth.* 594-99, where Prudentius is crying over and kissing the letters (*apices*) of Isaiah's text.

624. *mille per miracula*: from the Christian point of view, emphasis is not laid on the number of years (since the foundation of Rome, cf. 406-7, 614-15) but on the number of miracles through which the cross and consequently Christ have been predicted.

625. *vatum*: the prophets that talked about the cross, cf. 626: *prophetae*, 631: *vocibus propheticis*. On their discussions on the same matter, Cyprian (*Testim.* 2.21) and Firmicus Maternus (*Err.* 21.4-6) mention Habacuc 3.3-5 (where they interpret the horns mentioned in Habacuc's prayer as referring to the cross) and Isaiah 9.6 (where they see the prophet's words as an allusion to Christ carrying the cross); and they interpret an incident from Exodus 17.9-12 where Moses held a rod horizontally with his hands outstretched as a gesture prefiguring the cross. For prefigurations of the cross in the Old Testament, see pp. 52-53 and n. 621-635.

*Reges, prophetae, iudicesque et principes  
virtute, bellis, cultibus, sacris, stilo  
non destiterunt pingere formam crucis,  
crux praenotata, crux adumbrata est prius,  
crucem vetusta conbiberunt saecula.*

626-630

626. *Reges ... principes*: referring to kings and leaders from the Old Testament such as David and Moses. See the descriptions of David: *rex sacerdos* (*Cath.* 9.4); *rex utpote summus/ atque Dei vates* (*Ham.* 574-75). Cf. also the princes mentioned when Prudentius attacks the Manicheans in *Apoth.* 1011-13: *äerios proceres, Levi, Iudam, Simeonem,/ äerium David, magnorum corpora regum/ äeria*; and *Apoth.* 28: *hoc vidit princeps generosi seminis Abram*. In the light of what other apologists have argued about the cross as ubiquitous symbol throughout history (n. 621-635), it is not impossible that *reges* and *principes* also refers to Roman princes, as Mastrangelo (2008: 56) suggests independently of the apologists. However, Romanus' argument that the foundation of Rome is very recent compared to Christianity suggests that he is instead talking about a remote past, as earlier Christian authors have defined the time when the incidents recounted in the Old Testament took place (see n. 401-405) and, in any case, events prior to the foundation of Rome, since his point is to undermine the *antiquitas* of that foundation.

*prophetae*: see n. 625.

*iudicesque*: in the Old Testament the term ‘judge’ is not necessarily or solely connected to rendering judicial power but signifies the ‘leader’ or ‘governor’: see McCann (2002: 3-5) and Niditch (2008: 1-3).

627. Asyndeton going from the abstract to the more specific.

*virtute*: taking into account the *bellis* that follows, one might be more inclined to see *virtus* as braveness in fighting against the unfaithful, although it can also point to the Christian principles that defined one’s life and through which the cross, i.e. Christian faith, has been revealed.

*stilo*: synecdoche for the Scriptures, cf. 623: *litteris*. For other passages where *stilus* is used to refer to the Old and New Testament, see *Apoth.* 379: *Hebraeus pangit stilus*, *CS 1 Praef.* 1.1-2: *Paulus, praeco Dei, qui fera gentium/ primus corda sacro perdomuit stilo*. In *Pe.* 9 (13, 43), the students have utilised it as means of torture to inflict wounds on their teacher, the martyr Cassian. In *Pe.* 10.1124, the angel uses the *stilus* to draw the wounds of Romanus in a heavenly register.

628-630. The polyptoton – *crucis* (628), *crux* (twice 629), *crucem* (630) – intensifies the impression that the cross existed in various forms.

629. *praenotata*: ‘predicted beforehand’. In *Psych. Praef.* 50-51 the same participle is also used to refer back to the Old Testament – when Abraham entertained three angels disguised as mortal men and Sarah was surprised to find herself pregnant at a late age (Genesis 13.1-5) – and to show how the events narrated there prefigured contemporary Christian beliefs: *Haec ad figuram praenotata est linea/ quam nostra recto vita resculpat pede*. See also Mastrangelo (2008: 63-64).

630. *conbiberunt*: ‘to absorb’. For a similar metaphoric use of *conbibere*, see *Cath.* 4.18: *postquam conbiberint* (sc. *pectora pudica*) *Deum medullis*. On *conbibere* and its use here, see Mastrangelo (2008: 62-63).

*Tandem relectis vocibus propheticis  
aetate nostra conprobata antiquitas  
coram refulsit ore conspicabili,  
ne fluctuaret veritas dubia fide,  
si non pateret teste visu comminus.* 631-635

631. *vocibus propheticis*: this expression and the variant *vocibus prophetarum* were frequently used in late antique Christian literature. See e.g. Ambrose *De excessu fratris Satyri* 2.6, Augustine *Civ.* 11.4, *Contra Faustum* 13.15, etc. Cf. also 625: *ore vatam consono*, 626: *prophetae*.

632. *antiquitas*: see n. 611.

633. *conspicabili*: ‘visible’, a word first attested in fourth-century Christian literature: see *TLL* s.v.

635. *teste visu*: in combination with *veritas* (634) points to the witness at court and consequently the original significance of the word ‘martyr’: see n. 9 and 121. *Visu* more specifically alludes to witnessing with the eyes and Romanus’ arguments on Christ who, unlike God the Father, was visible by the people: see n. 601.

*Hinc nos et ipsum non perire credimus  
corpus, sepulcro quod vorandum traditur,  
quia Christus in se mortuum corpus cruci  
secum excitatum vexit ad solium Patris,  
viamque cunctis ad resurgendum dedit.* 636-640

636-640. Christ's resurrection opened the way for faithful Christians to follow his example. Romanus referred to that in 601-5. Here, he talks about the mortal body which will be resurrected and, as in the example of Christ, will find its way to heaven. For references to biblical passages, see n. 602-605. The issue in this is how Prudentius' writing here about the body not perishing and consequently being restored following the example of Christ can be reconciled with what he said earlier about the fundamental distinction between the soul, which is immortal, and the body, which is perishable (468-80, 506-7, 522-35). This leads to the question of the exact nature of resurrection, and more specifically what the resurrected body will look like, a question raised by pagans and Christians alike in the first Christian centuries: see Bynum (1995: 1-114) with references. Tertullian advocates a fleshly resurrected body. Origen holds that the human body, though subjected to continuous change, retains some sort of 'distinctive form' (*eidōs*) which is consistent. Thus, the resurrected body will have the same *eidōs* as the material body but will undergo a change to become appropriate to its new environment in heaven. The debate on the nature of the resurrected body escalated in the fourth century. Some of the central figures who contributed to it include Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine. Gregory of Nyssa maintains that the body has some kind of *eidōs* which, after death, recognises its bodily particles and by re-assembling them forms the resurrected body (*De anima et resurrectione* PG 46.76 and *passim*, *De hominis opificio* PG 44.225-29). Augustine in his early works asserts the spiritual nature of the risen body, a view that later in his *Retractationes* (ca. 426-8) he felt the need to amend (*Retr.* 1.17 referring to *De fide et symbolo*, 393; *Retr.* 2.3 on *De agone christiano*, ca. 396-7). Around 400 or even earlier, Augustine shifts from the views of his early writings: suggestive of this turn is *Contra Faustum* 11.3 (ca. 397-400), where he maintains that the buried body is the one that will be resurrected. In the course of the first decade of the fifth century, while Augustine is writing the *De Genesi ad litteram* (401-415), he adopts a more positive evaluation of the body and its relationship with the soul (*Gen. ad litt.* 7.27.38), something signalled clearly at the end of this decade and the first years after it (*Ep.* 137, written in 411; *Ep.* 140, written in 412). This new stance had an impact on Augustine's understanding of the resurrected body. By the time of his mature

writings Augustine's theology regarding the risen body has crystallised. Now he considers the resurrection as resurrection of both body and flesh, in other words as resurrection of *homo totus* (*Civ.* 22 *passim*, *Ench.* 23). On Augustine and the resurrected body, see Miles (1979: 99-125), Rist (1994: 110-12) and Hunter (2012). Here, it should be pointed out that both among different early Christian writers as well as within the same writer, we often find inconsistencies regarding their view on the risen body, largely due to the context or to the fact that their views evolve. In *Cath.* 3.191-95, Prudentius describes the restoration of the body in the tomb after its decease, and further states that bodies live in a way analogous to that of the soul: *corpora vivere more animae* (197), pointing to the *spiritale corpus* of the Pauline text (1 Corinthians 15.44: *seminatur corpus animale surgit corpus spiritale si est corpus animale est et spiritale sic et scriptum est*). The guarantee for faith in bodily resurrection is Christ himself who was raised from the dead in bodily form (*nam modo corporeum memini/ de Phlegethonte gradu facili/ ad superos remeasse Deum*, 198-200): see Buchheit (1986). The use of *nam* in *Cath.* 3 is analogous to that of *quia* in our text, pointing to the resurrection of Christ as the reason why faithful Christians will also be resurrected. The resurrected body is a fleshly one, as indicated in *Cath.* 9.100-2, where the dead limbs of the patriarchs and saints are described as re-assembled 'out of the dry ashes, the cold dust taking veins again and growing warm, the bones and sinews and innermost parts being covered with binding skin'. Cf. similar imagery in *Cath.* 10.37-40, also suggesting a fleshly resurrection. Further on in the same text, Prudentius's view of the resurrected body becomes clearer. Though identical with the former body (*habitacula pristina*: 40, cf. 139-40), the resurrected body will from now on experience no fatigue, age or disease (93-109). The decay of the body after its decease and even its reduction to ashes (141-47) does not entail perishing (145-48: *nec ... hominem periisse licebit*; cf. *Pe.* 10.636-37: *hinc nos et ipsum non perire credimus/ corpus*). Analogous view also in *Apoth.* 1062-84. Thus, the body which cannot perish, as described in our passage, is the resurrected body which is exactly like the body with which the person was 'invested' in their earthly life, but, unlike the earthly body, it is not subject to decay. For a discussion on Prudentius' views on resurrection with focus on *Cath.* 3, see Buchheit (1986), who argues against Thraede (1982). In light of the above, we can also conclude that

Prudentius' views about resurrection reflect the ongoing debate on the resurrected body in his era.

636. *non perire*: a Christian's body does not perish, just as Christ's body did not: *reditque (sc. Christus) in illud quod perire nesciat*, 645. Cf. *Cath.* 10.145-48: *nec ... hominem periisse licebit* with n. 636-640.

*credimus*: the verb *credere* recurs in Prudentius' declarations of the bodily resurrection as a corollary of the resurrection of Christ: *Cath.* 3.196, *Apoth.* 1064, 1080. Cf. Becker (2006: 250), who discussing Vergilian (*Aen.* 4.12) and Pauline (1 Corinthians 15.14, 16ff.) intertexts in *Cath.* 3.196, concludes that Prudentius' affirmation of faith is in essence biblical and cites 1 Thessalonians 4.14 (*si enim credimus quod Iesus mortuus est et resurrexit ...*) along with the above-mentioned passages from Prudentius. The hope of bodily resurrection inaugurated by Christ is also included in the Nicene Creed (see n. 602-605 *op. cit.*), which starts off with the verb *credo* and is a defining feature of Christian doctrine.

638-639. Cf. *Apoth.* 1062: *Nosco meum in Christo corpus consurgere*.

639. *ad solium Patris*: God's throne imagery is known from the Bible (e.g. Isaiah 66.1, Hebrews 8.1, Revelation 1.4, 3.21). However, here Prudentius also points to the language of epic and the *Iovis ad solium* in *Aen.* 12.849, a formula recurring in subsequent poetry (Valerius Flaccus 1.690, 3.385, *CCP* 26). In the *Peristephanon* the same expression is combined with the image of the martyr's ascent to heaven (*tendere se Patris ad solium*, 3.17; *ascensumque negarier/ aeterni ad solium Patris*, 7.54-55). For further references to the *solium Patris* in Prudentius, see *Cath.* 3.189, *Apoth.* 3.585, and *Ti.* 98. For *solium* and Prudentius' language of ascent, see Roberts (1993: 70-72).

640. *viamque*: the 'path' imagery referring to the route Christ opened for his followers through his resurrection is recurrent in Prudentius' discussions of this topic. See *Cath.* 10.17-20: *Hanc, tu Deus optime, mortem/ famulis abolere paratus/*



*iter inviolabile monstras/ quo perdita membra resurgent, 10.157-62: Sequimur tua dicta, Redemptor, quibus atra e morte triumphans/ tua per vestigia mandas/ socium crucis ire latronem./ patet ecce fidelibus ampli/ via lucida iam paradisi, Apoth. 1062-64: Nosco meum in Christo corpus consurgere./ ... veniam quibus ille revenit/ calcata de morte viis: quod credimus, hoc est. Cf. also Cath. 10.91: via panditur ... iustis, and n. 636-640.*

*Crux illa nostra est, nos patibulum ascendimus,  
nobis peremptus Christus et nobis Deus  
Christus reversus, ipse qui moriens homo est;  
natura duplex: moritur et mortem domat  
reditque in illud quod perire nesciat. 641-645*

641-642. Emphasis on the fact that Christ sacrificed himself for humanity by the repetition of cognate words and anaphora: *nostra ... nos/ nobis ... nobis*.

641. *Crux illa nostra est*: cf. 586: *haec illa crux est omnium nostrum salus*. *Nostra* applies to all Christians who follow Christ's commands and, if needs be, his example to sacrifice themselves: see Smith (1976: 174-75). Cf. also n. below.

*patibulum ascendimus*: the same combination of words also in Ambrose *Exp. Ps. cxviii* 8.23 and Jerome *Commentarii In Isaiam CCL 73A* 14.53.8, both with reference to Christ. As indicated in the n. above, the cross and Christ's sacrifice on it apply to all faithful Christians. Nevertheless, here Romanus' situation invites a comparison with Christ, as he is also suffering at an elevated level: see n. 109 s.v. *eculeo* and 467: *emitto vocem de catasta celsior*.

*patibulum*: originally a 'wooden beam where one's hands were tied at either end' or 'a fork-shaped yoke' used as an instrument of punishment, loosely equivalent to the *crux* and the *furca*. The exact nature of this is not entirely clear. *Patibulum*

eventually came to be or sometimes was used as synonymous with the cross. Cf. n. above. For a survey of the use of *patibulum* in various texts, see Samuelsson (2011).

642. Cf. *Apoth.* 1046: *mihi solvitur (sc. Christus) et mihi surgit.*

644. *natura duplex: homo and Deus.*

*moritur et mortem domat*: the Christian topos of Christ killing or subduing death by dying. Cf. Paulinus of Nola *Carm.* 31.177 (Christ speaks): *mortem moriendo subegi*, Augustine *Contra Felicem* 2.11: *quomodo ergo suscipiendo mortem interfecit mortem*, *Serm.* 377: *mortem moriendo superavit*, *Serm.* 311.1: *qui morte mortem destruxit*. Cf. also the Byzantine *Paschal Troparion*: θανάτω θάνατον πατήσας (*morte mortem calcavit*). In Prudentius, we have analogous imagery in *Pe.* 2.19: *nam morte mortem diruit* (sc. *Fides*). Cf. also *Pe.* 1.27: *morte et hostem* (sc. *persecutorem*) *vincere*, referring to a martyr's sacrifice.

645. Cf. 636-37: *ipsum non perire credimus/ corpus.*

*Dixisse pauca sit satis de mysticis  
nostrae salutis deque processu spei.  
iam iam silebo. margaritas spargere  
Christi vetamur inter inmundos sues,  
lutulenta sanctum ne terant animalia.*

646-650

646-647. Romanus ends his speech (excluding the two following stanzas which introduce the episode with the child martyr) with a reference to the Christian doctrine and its mysteries, thus creating a kind of circular composition. At the start of his speech, Romanus defines the cross with the following words: *Haec illa crux est omnium nostrum salus* (586). As the martyr illustrates earlier on, the cross symbolises the Christian dogma that Christ's sacrifice on the cross becomes a means of salvation for men. The mystery of this is something that Asclepiades is unable to

grasp (*mysterium*, 589). Here, Romanus acknowledges that he has talked enough about the mysteries of this doctrine which leads to salvation (*de mysticis/ nostrae salutis*).

648. *iam iam silebo*: *iam iam* ('at any time now') is used when something is about to happen (*OLD* 5). Romanus is not going to stop his speech immediately, but does so two stanzas further on after having suggested that a child be brought and interrogated about who is the real God. *Iam iam silebo* ('I am about to keep silent') foreshadows the *iam silebo* ('now I will keep silent', 1093) in the last stanza where we get to hear Romanus. That is the time when the martyr knows that the end is close (*finis instat debitus*, 1096), as he knows he is not destined to die by fire: see n. 576-577.

648. *margaritas spargere/ 650. ... terant animalia*: allusion to Matthew 7.6: *nolite dare sanctum canibus neque mittatis margaritas vestras ante porcos ne forte conculcent eas pedibus suis et conversi dirumpant vos*. In the context of this passage, rendering the sermon of Jesus on the mountain, we are told of the hypocrite who does not see the beam in their own eye but only the mote in their brother's eye, and that everyone should judge as they expect to be judged by others. Hence, it has been observed that Matthew 7.6 does not fit in with its immediate context, and thus it has been interpreted in various ways. For an overview, see Keener (1999: 242-44). Dogs and swine can be identified with pagans. Augustine (*De Sermone Domini in monte* 2.68-69) takes this as referring to people who are not ready to accept the word of God and who might attack it or resist it. In a similar vein, Prudentius transfers the imagery of the biblical passage onto the unfaithful who are not worthy of the secrets of the Christian doctrine. Prudentius here is selective in that, unlike in the gospel passage, he does not make any mention of dogs: see n. 649. For biblical allusions in *Pe.* 10, see Introduction 8i.

*margaritas*: 'pearl' (also in the neuter, *margaritum*, -i). The word also occurs in *Psych.* 873 (*margaritum ingens*) alluding to Matthew 13.45-46 (comparing the kingdom of Heaven with a precious pearl). The attested variant *margarita* is printed

by Arevalo and Fux (2013). I prefer *margaritas* as it is the form in the biblical passage to which Prudentius alludes both in the Vulgate and the *Vetus Latina*.

649. *inmundos sues*: cf. Vergil *Geo.* 1.399-400: *non ore solutos/ **immundi** meminere **sues** iactare maniplos*. The context does not propel us to identify any further affinity between the two texts or talk about a meaningful allusion. The adjective *inmundus* is often used to qualify *spiritus* and in Mark 5.13 the expression describes the demons who entered the herd of swine (*et exeuntes spiritus **immundi** introierunt in porcos*). Cf. also Jerome *Ep.* 21.12 and Augustine *Ep.* 130.14. Prudentius quotes the exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac in lines 37-40; allusions to the same episode are also found in other works of his: see n. 37-40. Thus, it is likely that this is where Prudentius' *immundi sues* originates, although very often Prudentius amalgamates biblical and Classical elements. Lactantius describes pigs as *est enim **lutulentum** hoc animal et **inmundum*** (*Inst.* 4.17.19, cf. 650: *lutulenta ... animalia*), and explains that God's ban on pork is an advice to abstain from the sin that pork symbolises. The same phrase alluding to the same passage is used for Jerome's critics in *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* 1: *si contra me parvum homunculum **immundi sues** grunniant et pedibus margaritas conculcent*. Cf. also 650: *lutulenta ... animalia*. In *De paenitentia* 2.9, Ambrose, after quoting Matthew 7.6, uses the adjective *inmundus* to describe those who putting off their guilt, lay it on the priest: *hoc est: **immundis** impuritatibus sacrae communionis non inertienda consortia*.

650. *lutulenta ... animalia*: swine are considered unclean animals (2 Peter 2.22). *Lutulentus* (< *lutum* = mud) is very suitable for describing swine. Cf. n. 649.

## Appendix I

### List of Prudentius' works

<i>Praefatio</i>	Metre
	stanza of 3 lines: glyconic + lesser asclepiad + greater asclepiad

<i>Liber Cathemerinon</i>	Metre
<i>Cath. 1</i>	iambic dimeter (stanza of 4)
<i>Cath. 2</i>	iambic dimeter (stanza of 4)
<i>Cath. 3</i>	dactylic trimeter hypercatalectic (stanza of 5)
<i>Cath. 4</i>	hendecasyllabics = Phalaecei (stanza of 3)
<i>Cath. 5</i>	lesser asclepiad (stanza of 4)
<i>Cath. 6</i>	iambic dimeter catalectic (stanza of 4)
<i>Cath. 7</i>	iambic trimeter (stanza of 5)
<i>Cath. 8</i>	Sapphic stanza (stanza of 4)
<i>Cath. 9</i>	trochaic tetrameter catalectic (stanza of 3)
<i>Cath. 10</i>	anapaestic dimeter catalectic (stanza of 4)
<i>Cath. 11</i>	iambic dimeter (stanza of 4)
<i>Cath. 12</i>	iambic dimeter (stanza of 4)

<i>Apotheosis</i>	Metre
<i>Hymnus de Trinitate</i>	dactylic hexameter
<i>Praefatio</i>	distich: iambic dimeter + iambic trimeter
Text proper	dactylic hexameter

<i>Hamartigenia</i>	Metre
<i>Praefatio</i>	iambic trimeter
Text proper	dactylic hexameter

<i>Psychomachia</i>	Metre
<i>Praefatio</i>	iambic trimeter
Text proper	dactylic hexameter

<i>Contra Orationem Symmachi (CS)</i>	Metre
<i>CS 1 Praefatio</i>	lesser asclepiad
<i>CS 1</i>	dactylic hexameter
<i>CS 2 Praefatio</i>	Glyconics
<i>CS 2</i>	dactylic hexameter

<i>Peristephanon Liber</i>	Metre
<i>Pe. 1</i>	trochaic tetrameter catalectic (stanza of 3)
<i>Pe. 2</i>	iambic dimeter (stanza of 4)
<i>Pe. 3</i>	dactylic trimeter hypercatalectic (stanza of 5)
<i>Pe. 4</i>	Sapphic stanza (stanza of 4)
<i>Pe. 5</i>	iambic dimeter (stanza of 4)
<i>Pe. 6</i>	hendecasyllabics = Phalaecei (stanza of 3)
<i>Pe. 7</i>	glyconics (stanza of 5)
<i>Pe. 8</i>	elegiac distich (stanza of 5)
<i>Pe. 9</i>	distich: dactylic hexameter + iambic trimeter
<i>Pe. 10</i>	iambic trimeter
<i>Pe. 11</i>	elegiac distich
<i>Pe. 12</i>	distich: archilochian + iambic trimeter

	catalectic
<i>Pe. 13</i>	Archilochian
<i>Pe. 14</i>	alcaic hendecasyllable

<i>Dittochaeon or Tituli Historiarum</i>	Metre
	dactylic hexameter

<i>Epilogus</i>	Metre
	distich: trochaic dimeter + iambic trimeter catalectic

## Appendix II

### Verbal similarities between Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* and the prose passions

References to Delehaye's Latin passion correspond to the sections in which the text is divided. The two numbers in the references to Mombritius' text are referring to the number of the page and the line respectively.

	<i>Pe.</i> 10	Latin passion (Delehaye)	Latin passion (Mombritius)	Greek passion (Delehaye)
1. Romanus encourages the Christians of Antioch to withstand the imperial edicts	55: <i>stent ut parati neve cedant turbine</i>	1: <i>et iustitiae inimicum stemus,</i>	446.41-42: <i>stemus adversum hostem</i>	1: <b>στῶμεν</b> μὴ συγχωροῦντες Ἀσκληπιάδη τῷ ἐπάρχῳ
2. Romanus says that Asclepiades' presence in the church would be polluting	101-3: <i>intrare servis idolorum ac daemonum/ sanctam salutis non licet nostrae domum./ ne polluatur purus orandi locus.</i>	2: <i>Non enim iustum est ut domum Dei praecipitanter introeas et per te facilius polluatur</i>	446.49-50: <i>non enim duco te iustum introire in domum domini nostri Iesu Christi: ne per te polluatur</i>	2: Οὐκ ἔστιν δίκαιον <b>εἰσελθεῖν</b> σε εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὐχ ὅτι διὰ σοῦ <b>ἐμολύνετο ὁ οἶκος</b> τοῦ Θεοῦ
3. God forbids Asclepiades to enter the church	104-5: <i>confido Sancto in Spiritu numquam tibi/ dandum ut beatum limen attingas pede.</i>	2: <i>sed Deus te limina templi sui introire non passus est</i>	447.4-5: <i>sed deus limina domus suae te introire non patitur</i>	
4. People	111-13:	3: <i>ex eo officio</i>	447.6-7: <i>quo</i>	



report to Asclepiades that Romanus is noble	<i>apparitores sed furenti suggerunt/ illum vetusta nobilem prosapia/ meritisque multis esse primum civium</i>	<i>suggesserunt: “Domine, ... , quoniam iste non solum huius civitatis sed totius provinciae primus et nobilis est.”</i>	<i>facto suggessit ei officium: non solum illius civitatis sed et patriae virum esse priorem</i>	
5. The mother of the infant martyr encourages him to endure his torments	726-30: <i>aquam bibendam postulas, cum sit/ tibi fons ille vividus praesto, qui ... aeternitatem largiens potantibus.</i>	7: <i>“Noli fili, iam istam bibere aquam. Vade ad illam aquam vivam, vade ad aeternum fontem.”</i>	448. 37-38: <i>“Noli fili aquam istam iam bibere: vade ad aquam vivam: vade ad aeternum fontem”</i>	
6. Asclepiades’ oath to the sun	10.573: <i>per Solis ignes iuro</i>	2: <i>Per solem regem</i>	447.1-3: <i>Per solem</i>	10: Μὰ τὸν Ἥλιον τὸν βασιλεύοντα

### Appendix III

#### Prudentius' *Hymn to Romanus* and *Contra Symmachum*

Thematic similarities between *Pe.* 10 and *CS* with a particular focus on the anti-pagan invective themes

	<i>Pe.</i> 10	<i>CS</i>
Megalesia	154-60	1.628
Lupercalia	161-65	2.862-63
Attis' castration	196-200	2.52
Saturn	206-8	1.45-48
Jupiter's paramours	221-27, 233-35	1.59-81
Veneration of vegetables	259-62	2.865-67
Liber	279-80	1.858, 2.123-44
Terminalia	302 (?)	2.1010-11
Galli	1066-75	2.51-52, 523

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