

THE PROBLEM OF INTERPOLATION IN THE TEXTUAL TRADITION OF PRUDENTIUS

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The matter of real, apparent, or alleged interpolations in the textual tradition of Prudentius raises a number of problems both on a practical and a theoretical level, which I wish to discuss in some detail since they seem to have application to the general theory of the transmission of Latin texts from antiquity to the earlier middle ages.¹

¹ Familiarity with the following items is assumed throughout this paper. When one of them is cited in my text, page number reference is given when appropriate.

Aurelii Prudentii Clementis Carmina, ed. M. P. Cunningham, Turnholti 1966 (Corpus Christianorum, Series latina, vol. 126); I take advantage of this opportunity to provide in an appendix a list of corrigenda for this volume. M. P. Cunningham, "A Preliminary Recension of the Older Manuscripts of the *Cathemerinon*, *Apotheosis*, and *Hamartigenia* of Prudentius," *Sacris Erudiri* 13 (1962) 5-59. The earlier standard text of Prudentius is that of J. Bergman, Vienna 1926 (CSEL 61).

On the definition of deliberate interpolation, see Paul Maas, *Textkritik*³ (Leipzig 1957) 12.

On alleged interpolations in Prudentius, see Paul Antin, (review of my edition) *Révue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 45 (1967) 990. Christian Gnllka, "Zwei Textprobleme bei Prudentius," *Philologus* 109 (1965) 246-58; and his review of R. Herzog, *Die allegorische Dichtkunst* etc., in *Gnomon* 40 (1968) esp. 361-62. Wolfgang Schmid, "Die Darstellung der Menschheitsstufen bei Prudentius und das Problem seiner doppelten Redaktion," *Vigiliae Christianae* 7 (1953) 171-86.

Dr. Gnllka and I have attempted to clarify by correspondence matters on which we disagree. (I quote below from his letter of October 10, 1968). He understood me to say (1) that the existence of interpolations dating from earlier than the medieval period had not been demonstrated ("dass Ihres Erachtens antike Interpolamente im Prudentius-text nicht nachgewiesen seien"); and (2) that I regard "malice aforethought" (*dolus malus*) as the motive for the origin of an interpolation ("dolus malus ist also in Ihren Augen das Motiv für die Entstehung einer Interpolation"). The first point is disproved by my note on *Cath.* 5.161-64. As for the second, I distinguish between interpolations which are the result of human frailty and those which are deliberate. The latter I define as "dolo malo factas." Even so, I do not say that none occur in the tradition, but only that I do not believe I have found any in the primary manuscripts.

Another major source of disagreement is that Gnllka gives more allegiance to Jachmann's theories than I am prepared to.

In my edition of Prudentius (p. xxii) I said that in general in classical texts some intrusive elements occur as the result of human frailty, others are deliberate attempts by someone to foist upon readers words other than those of an author as the author's own. I use the word "deliberate" here in the sense of the legal term "with malice aforethought" (*dolo malo*). I say that I do not recall an instance of this second kind of interpolation in the primary manuscripts of Prudentius. This statement has not gone unchallenged. Dom Paul Antin cites Gnilka's paper of 1965 on *S.* 2.423-27 and *Ham.* 887-91. Gnilka also, in a review of Herzog's monograph, objects to and deplores my sterile approach.

In this paper I address myself particularly to Dr. Gnilka and those whom he has persuaded, in order to try to convince them that his position is not well founded in fact. I do not deny that, from time to time, one finds in manuscripts of Prudentius lines which do not belong there or do not belong where we find them. But I believe that their presence can be accounted for by simpler hypotheses than that of deliberate interpolation. The commonest source of intrusive elements of a line or more in length I take to be parallel passages written in the margin, that is, quotations of some other line or lines of verse which seemed in some way to the person who put them there in the first place to illustrate or exemplify a point raised by the text. Some possibilities are: a line which illustrates either similar or contrasting prosody, possible imitations where Prudentius may be imitator or imitated, a passage illustrating similar or contrasting treatment of a topic, and so on. I presume that we are all familiar with this sort of thing. A slightly different sort of addition is the line added at the end of the *Apotheosis* in A by a medieval hand in pseudo-rustic capitals:

superna regna monstrando nos illuc cupit adire.

This line is also found in CD and Einsiedeln 312. In those manuscripts one might call it an interpolation; but it is just a "tag line." I do not think it was intended to deceive anyone.

Let us now examine in detail the passages which are said by Gnilka to be deliberate interpolations.

CONTRA SYMMACHUM 2.423-27

Displicet hic subito status et bis quina creantur
 summorum procerum fastigia, quos duodeni
 circumstant fasces simul et sua quemque securis.
 Rursus se geminis reddit ductoribus omnis
 publica res et consulibus dat condere fastos.

This passage occurs in the section of the poem in which Prudentius discusses Symmachus' (*Rel.* 3.8) statement: "ut animae nascentibus ita populis fatales genii diuiduntur." Prudentius first objects that the concept of *genius* is vague, and in any case it does not support Symmachus' parallel between men and peoples or cities. Granting that there was such a *genius*, when did it first enter the body of Rome (393-94)? He invites us (403) to laugh at some of the answers. Then, taking the notion more seriously for the moment, he asks why can it not act like a man with free will in the matter of religion and be capable of conversion. Rome made a number of changes in her form of government until she finally achieved the best form in the empire: why should she not accept the true religion now that she knows at last what the true religion is (436-40)?

The specific passage Gnillka discusses occurs in Prudentius' development of the topic that Rome's *geniusue animusue publicus* drifted along for about 700 years without quite knowing what form of government it really wanted. It may come as a shock to us to learn that Prudentius assumes that the empire is the natural and right form of government for his world, but there is no doubt that he says that it is (430-31):

tandem deprendere rectum
 doctus iter caput augustum diademate cinxit . . .

Previous to that time Rome's *genius* was constantly in doubt about what would be the best form of government for it (414 *semper dubitans*). The Romans demonstrated this doubt by changing the form. First (416 *exortam*) came the kings, who ruled with the cooperation of the senate. Next (418 *mox*) came the rule of nobles (*proceres*) of the senatorial class. Then (419 *inde*) the *plebs* achieved a mixed constitution, and this lasted for a long time (*diu*). The strength of the nobles lay in the consul (422); the *plebs* placed their trust in the tribune. Suddenly (423 *subito*) they abolished the mixed constitution for the

decemvirate. And then (426 *rursus*) they went back to consuls. Finally (428 *ultima*) came the triumvirs.² Only after all these vicissitudes did Rome achieve the natural stability of the imperial office.

Gnilka takes the passage as a whole about as I do, though he says little about Prudentius' stress on Rome's vacillation about her proper form of government. But he wishes to exclude lines 423-27 on the decemvirate as an interpolation, inserted by someone who wished to expand the argument.

His reasons for regarding the passage as an interpolation fall under three heads. First, he believes that it has already been established that there is a good deal of interpolation of this sort in the text of Prudentius. Second, he believes that there is manuscript evidence for some tampering at this spot. And, third, he tries to show that the lines in question are so out of place in relation to their context that it is impossible to believe that Prudentius himself is responsible for them. So far as language goes, the lines are thoroughly Prudentian, but that only demonstrates the skill of the interpolator (Gnilka 246, note 3).

Each of these points requires careful study and consideration, for allegations of interpolation usually rest upon more than one of them. If an answer is given in terms of one point only, recourse will be had to one of the others. One might remark incidentally that the matter of language is used unfairly. If the lines appeared in any way un-Prudentian, that would be used as an argument against them. But the fact that they do sound like Prudentius cannot also be used as evidence that they are spurious.

Let us take up the matter of context first. A good test of any suggestion that lines in a tradition are intrusive (for any reason) is to assume that the suggested reading is in fact traditional and to see how it fits.

According to Gnilka, then, Prudentius says (404), "Let us assume the existence of something through which the Roman *res publica* got its destiny (*fatum*) and existence (*animetur*). . . . For 700 years it was in constant doubt about the proper form of government." Then (416) we would have a detailed illustration of this topic sentence, listing

² One should note also that the reference in 428 *triumvir* is solely to what we now call the second triumvirate of young Caesar, Antonius, and Lepidus.

monarchy, aristocracy, mixed constitution, triumvirate, and empire. Does this orderly sequence really bear out the topic announced in the words *semper dubitans* and the rest of 413-15? I do not believe that it does. Prudentius' topic is not orderly progression but doubt and vacillation. Surely, Prudentius would have strengthened his case by some reference to the consular tribunes or to the decemvirate as modifications of the republican form. The institution of consular tribunes, however, is regularly regarded as involving only a modification of the consulate, not of the mixed constitution itself. But Livy (3.33) describes the decemvirate as a major constitutional change:

anno trecentensimo altero quam condita Roma erat, iterum mutatur forma ciuitatis, ab consulibus ad decemuiros, quem ad modum ab regibus ante ad consules uenerat, translato imperio. minus insignis quia non diuturna mutatio fuit.

The same ideas are found in the received text of Prudentius. The terms *subito* and *rursus* reinforce the idea of *semper dubitans*. *Displicet* in 423 picks up *placeret* in 414. *Diu* in 421 may be an echo of Livy's *diuturna*.

Gnilka agrees that lines 423-27 are based on Livy, but he denies that Prudentius could have written them. The key word for him in this passage is (421) *diu*. On it he says every attempt to reconcile the various statements of the received text must founder (p. 249, "An dem Wörtchen *diu* muss jeder Harmonisierungsversuch endgültig scheitern"). With the received text he claims that the mixed constitution is restricted to the period from the introduction of the tribunate to the decemvirate and that Prudentius knew too much Roman history to use the word *diu* of this period, especially since he presently mentions the long period from the decemvirate to the triumvirate. To support this view he must take (p. 250, note 2) 423 *displicet* as marking an item in Prudentius' list on a par with 418 *mox*, 419 *inde*, and 428 *ultima*. One would like a parallel for the verbal pattern involved; the *Thesaurus* lists no examples of anything comparable under *inde* or *mox*. His is not the most natural way of understanding the word nor the passage in question, which says practically the same thing about the decemvirate that Livy does. It involved a major constitutional change, but, since it did not last, it was in effect a mere temporary interruption of the republican form or mixed constitution.

Gnilka does have a difficulty, and it lies in the word *diu*. But he seems to ask the wrong question. The real question, which remains even after his deletion, is: What do the word *diu* and its meaning have to do with Prudentius' thesis? This is the only constitutional development for which Prudentius furnishes an indication of a time span. Why? Does *diu* support Prudentius' thesis? No. In part, it may form an objection to that thesis if a single earlier constitutional form lasted for over four centuries. Thus, the train of thought goes something like this: "Although the mixed constitution lasted for a long time, it too was not without interruption."

Nor does leaving out lines 423-27 solve the problem which the word *diu* poses. The mixed constitution lasted for a long time and Prudentius says it did. However, his thesis is not that there was an orderly progression in Rome's constitutional history, but rather that things drifted along from one thing to another and sometimes back again until Rome finally learned to take the right course and achieved her proper form of government. In the repetition of *errauit* (413 and 430) together with the extended nautical metaphor one may see a sort of subliminal allusion to the wanderings of Aeneas. Prudentius' thesis, expressed succinctly in the words *semper dubitans*, is strongly supported by lines 423-27, which are admittedly Prudentian in their form of expression. Gnilka's argument neglects to give proper consideration to the first sentence of this section (413-15):

Sic septingentis errauit circiter annis
lubricaue et semper dubitans quae forma placeret
imperii, quae regnandi foret aequa potestas.

One should note the words *errauit*, *lubrica*, and *semper dubitans*. The same theme is stressed once more in the conclusion of this section (436-40):

Quod si tot rerum gradibus totiens uariatis
consiliis. . .

One can go further. Because of the necessary implications of the word *diu* in 421, if lines 423-27 were by some chance missing from the tradition, we ought to be able to recognize a lacuna between either 421 or 422 and 428. Far from supporting Gnilka's thesis, internal evidence in fact confirms the received text.

By way of summary I offer a rough translation of S. 2.413-40:

Just so Rome's ghost or soul drifted about for roughly 700 years, slipping around and constantly in doubt about what was her proper form of government, what type of rule was most fitting. Monarchy controlled the city at its beginning although elders also shared governmental functions. Next, we see that nobles of the senatorial class managed the helm of policy. After that, the plebeians were united with the patricians on a basis of equality and both ruled together for a long time in managing affairs in war and peace. The nobility was strong through the consulship; the *plebs* depended upon the tribunate. This arrangement was suddenly voted out, and ten chief magistrates were elected from the nobility, each with a full set of twelve *fascēs* and accompanying axe; but the whole community turned back to two magistrates and let consuls function again. At the end, bloody triumvirs threw the world into turmoil. Once upon a time, the Roman people's fate or genius or spirit drifted as these waves carried it. Finally, it learned to set its right course, circled its imperial head with a diadem, calling him *Pater Patriae*, helmsman of people and senate, determined that he should be its leader in war, and likewise its chief magistrate, good censor, master of morals, guardian of wealth, punisher of crimes, and dispenser of honors.

But, if only after so many constitutional steps, so many changes of mind, did it with difficulty finally arrive at a system that it could approve and which the people's respect by a solemn undertaking could preserve, why does it hesitate to acknowledge divine rights it did not know before but which have at last been revealed?

Gnilka also claims that the assumption of an interpolation is supported by external evidence in the manuscript tradition. He cites Bergman's note that line 422 is found after 427 in CPEO and that 423-27 are omitted by the first hand in D, where they are supplied by a second hand with an indication that 422 is to follow 427. Gnilka stresses this omission in D, which he believes is a major witness to an independent textual tradition with the authority and prestige of the Puteanus (A) behind it (p. 248). But there is no such textual tradition in the *Contra Symmachum*. There is no evidence that the Puteanus ever contained that work, and there is some positive evidence that it did not at the time that the tradition represented by C and D was accessible to readings of A.

Among Bergman's manuscripts, C, D, and P belong to the tradition I call Δ, which is now represented in its purest form by E. At some

time, presumably in the early ninth century, and probably in Northern France, readings deriving directly or indirectly from A are introduced into the E tradition. In E itself this process occurs most frequently in the form of a marginal note "alii libri habent" or "alii habent," followed by the reading of A. The same thing happens in C, D, and P, except that in them the A reading sometimes appears in the text; the E reading then becomes the marginal variant. In E this phenomenon continues to occur down to *Pe.* 5.99–100. A breaks off at *Pe.* 5.142, and, unless I have made a mistake, there are no instances of *alii libri habent* or the like in E except in those portions of the work of Prudentius which are now extant in A. The same holds true so far as I have checked the matter in the case of other manuscripts of this group (C, D, P, G, F, q, and a).

Gnilka is obviously influenced by Klingner's³ attempt to better Bergman's interpretation of his manuscripts in terms of Bergman's own apparatus. I hope that my treatment of the manuscripts of the *Cathemerinon*, *Apotheosis*, and *Hamartigenia* will now appear more acceptable, since it is based upon fuller evidence. Although I have not published a separate discussion of the recension of the manuscripts in the other works, I believe that sufficient information for our purpose is presented in my edition. The evidence shows that A influences C and consequently D in *Peristephanon* I to 5.142. After that point, where A breaks off, CD present a text which combines elements of the tradition of E with that of the tradition of S and its fellows, with no indication of a third independent line. The same combination of these two traditions is found in CD in the *Contra Symmachum*. Though D is considerably later than C in this section,⁴ they belong together. The following readings are illustrative.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| S. 1 ante 42 | CD share the <i>inscriptiones</i> here and elsewhere with S |
| S. 1.350 | cernuaque S CD |
| S. 1 post 366 | extra verse added in C; added post 367 in S |
| S. 1 post 480 | verse added S CD |
| S. 2.448–49 | om. St D |
| S. 2.386 | membrorum E CD |
| S. 2.814 | sordida sus E CD |

³ F. Klingner, review of Bergman's edition, *Gnomon* 6 (1930) 39–52.

⁴ R. A. B. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts* (Oxford 1939) pp. 26–27.

This should be enough to give one an idea. My study of D specifically has been fairly cursory; it is based upon Bergman's apparatus and his almost complete photographs of the manuscript. I feel safe in saying that D represents a somewhat later stage of the tradition represented by C.

In summary, the omission of S. 2.423-27 in D is easily accounted for by mechanical factors. As Gnilka himself points out, there are other purely mechanical omissions in this part of D (see his p. 248, note 2). The evidence of this manuscript here is of no special importance for the constitution of the text.

Gnilka, however, betrays a point of view in his note on the omissions in D which should not go unnoticed. He says specifically that D omits some lines which are indispensable in their contexts. One must protest that indispensability in this sense is not nearly so common in verse as might be assumed (*Ad Herennium* 2.34 supplies a refreshing corrective).

Granted that the lines in question fit their context and that the manuscript evidence does not help to prove them spurious, a person seeking possible interpolations has a third resource. Relying on a good deal of published work he may claim, as Gnilka does (p. 246), that the textual tradition is an interpolated one and that it has already been established that deliberate interpolations do occur in the textual tradition and that it has even been possible to formulate with some precision the motives for such interpolations. When I said that I did not recall seeing any such interpolations in the major witnesses to the textual tradition of Prudentius, Gnilka seemed shocked and frankly incredulous. Obviously my only hope of convincing him and others who feel as he does is to discuss at least some of the other passages where they are convinced we have to do with deliberate interpolation.

HAMARTIGENIA 887-91

Vna animas semper facies habet et color unus
aëris, ut cuique est meritum summa, sinistri
seu dextri. Alternas nec commutabile tempus
conuertit uariatque uices; longum atque perenne est
quidquid id est, unus uoluit sua saecula cursus.

Ham. 887-91 is the second of the two passages discussed by Gnllka in the paper we have been studying.⁵

The passage occurs in a section devoted to a vivid and imaginative realization of the implications of the scene between Lazarus and the Rich Man in Luke 16:24. After a mention of this scene, Prudentius says:

(863) Do not be surprised that this can happen. Between Heaven and Hell sight operates both as vision, the art of the eye of the one who sees (865 *conspicuos uisus*), and as visibility, i.e. that which makes it possible for the fate which each type of soul has earned to be seen and recognized (*notari*). (867) It is a mistake to judge the powers of the eye of the soul by those of our bodily eyes. The eyes of the soul are free of the inhibiting factors that apply to the eyes of the body. Soul's eyes are keen (874 *uiua acies*) and they can see right through to Hell (882). (883) Bodily eyes can see neither color nor shape at night or on an occasion when illumination is absent (884 *caeco tempore*). (885-86) But do the eyes of the soul free of the body lose the ability to recognize distinguishing marks or do they make mistakes? (887) No; because here we are dealing with a situation where soul sees soul, and at this point each soul has a permanently fixed *facies* and *color*, which for each is the final balance of his moral condition (*ut cuique est meritorum summa*), Left or Right. (889-90) In other words, souls have one *facies* and one *color aeris*, which corresponds to the total of their deserts, that is, it is the *aer* of either Right or Left. Time causes changes; but there is no time here to modify or vary them from one condition to another. Lasting and forever is whatever that condition is. One course carries them along through all its ages, that is, whatever each one gets, lasts.

Then, after illustrating the soul's ability to see by analogies, first from dreams, and then from the vision of the Apocalypse (1:9-10), Prudentius concludes that it is a sure belief that those in Hell are to be seen by those in Heaven, and likewise those in Heaven by those in Hell.

Gnllka objects (p. 258, note 1) that 887-91 apply only to the Blessed seeing the Damned in darkness, since the Blessed are bright and the soul's vision knows no obstacles. But this is niggling. The point of these lines is that both the Blessed and the Damned have permanent recognizable features (*facies* and *color*) by which each can see that the other

⁵ Lavarenne removes these lines from the text here and places them after line 930. See M. Lavarenne, "Note sur un passage de l'*Hamartigénie* de Prudence," *REL* 19 (1941) 76-78.

has his just deserts. This point is made again clearly in the last line of the section (930):

inque uicem meritorum mutua cernunt.

The key point at issue in the interpretation of this passage is, as Gnilka clearly sees (p. 257), lines 885–86:

Numquid et exuti membris ac uiscere perdunt
agnitione notas rerum uel gressibus errant?

He says that these lines can be taken in two senses: (1) *notas rerum non uident*, or (2) *notas rerum ipsi non habent*. The first he says is certainly what Prudentius meant; the second is the way it was understood by the person who added 887–91. But this is not quite right. Gnilka, along with most of the translators, does not seem to give any proper force to the word *agnitione* (886).

To understand this word and its context better we should review the passage as a whole in terms of the theory of vision Prudentius is using. That theory recognizes two elements in the process of vision: (1) the active power of the seeing organ, and (2) the visibility of the object seen (865). I believe that Gnilka leaves this second point out entirely in his discussion of the context. As for the active power, it is a mistake to think that the power of sight in the soul is restricted by internal or external obstacles as that of the body is (877–82). But there is another point (883 *nempe*); the visibility of the very objects of bodily vision, color and shape (883 *colores*, 884 *formae*), are subject to vicissitudes of light and darkness. They perish (883 *pereunt*) at times. Do those persons also who are free of limbs and the flesh (*exuti* etc.) in the matter of recognition (*agnitione*) lose the ability to perceive the distinguishing marks of things (*numquid . . . perdunt . . . notas rerum?*) or are they subject to uncertainty (*uel gressibus errant?*)? For the next two lines, containing Prudentius' answer to these questions, I am quite in agreement with Gnilka on how to take the Latin. He paraphrases: "animae una sunt semper facie, uno colore," and adds "*Facies und color bezeichnen Qualitäten der Seele selbst!*" But, instead of regarding this as irrelevant, I regard it as an answer to Prudentius' own question. He implies a negative answer by explaining why. In fact, if the text broke off at 886 and the next thing we heard was 892, that is, if 887–91 were absent from the tradition, surely one would mark a lacuna here.

The whole train of thought demands something very like what we do in fact have here. Souls can be seen because they possess the qualities essential for visibility (887), *facies* (cf. 884 *formae*) and *color* (cf. 883 *colores*), and these qualities remain constant depending only upon *meritorum summa*. Left or Right, Damned or Blessed. There is no variation (889-91) and thus no margin for error; this latter part is in answer to the question: *uel gressibus errant?* The question that remains to be answered at the end of 886 is not one about the ability of the eye of the soul to see, but one about the visibility of the objects to be seen: the objects of its vision, souls in the other place. Lines 883-84 deal with the fact that objects are sometimes not visible to our ordinary eyes, because the very objects of vision, shapes and colors, are lost (*pereunt*). The next two lines ask a similar question about the eyes of the soul; in the matter of recognition do they lose *notas rerum*? The answer, like the question, deals not with the vision of the seeing soul but with the visibility of the one to be seen. That is the sense in which Prudentius answers it. If he did not do so, there would be no proper foundation laid for the conclusion in lines 922-30, where one should note especially that he says that the furnaces of Hell and the rewards of Heaven are both visible from the other place (925 *expositos* and 927 *ostendi*).

From our review of *Ham.* 887-91 and their context I believe we can conclude that Gnilka's thesis is not well founded. It fails the first test; for he must somehow show that the lines are out of place in their context. But they are far from being out of place; in fact, without them the topic announced in the word *notari* in 867 would remain undeveloped until it is repeated in the concluding lines of this section (922-25): "caminos . . . oculis longum per inane remoti / pauperis expositos," and (925-27): "aurea dona . . . eminus ostendi poenarum carcere mersis."

CONTRA SYMMACHUM 2.325-26 AND 325-27

In his discussion of the notion of deliberate interpolation in the text of Prudentius, Gnilka depends heavily on a paper by W. Schmid published in 1953. The thesis of this paper must now receive careful consideration.

The facts are quite simple. In *Contra Symmachum* 2, Prudentius, following a suggestion in Ambrose, *Epist.* 18.27, draws a parallel between the successive stages of a man's life (*uita hominis*) and those of the human race (*genus humanum*). Man passes through infancy, childhood, adolescence, maturity, and old age. Similar stages are found in the life of the race. Corresponding to *infantia repit* (318) is 325-26:

sic hebes inter
primitias mersumque solo ceu quadrupes egit.

This is the reading of all but one group of manuscripts (i.e. of TSQ). In the group represented by E we find 325-27:

sic hebes inter
primitias mersumque solo titubauit et instar
quadrupedis pueri lactantia uiscera traxit.
(quadrupedis E^c, -dos E).

If we had had such a simple statement of the facts to begin with, I doubt that anyone would have seen much of a problem here. It seems fairly obvious that in E the unit *titubauit . . . traxit* has replaced the expression *ceu . . . egit*. One notes further that the reading of E is quite out of place in this context. The notion expressed in *lactantia uiscera traxit* has nothing to do with what Prudentius is talking about, and *titubauit* would be pointedly misleading, since he uses this word in 319 above of childhood, not of infancy. What the reading of E does do is to provide a parallel for the use of *quadrupes* of the human child in the crawling stage. I see in it nothing more than a marginal note of a parallel passage which has been taken by a copyist as a correction and copied into the text. We can see a paradigm of the whole process at work in the Bongarsianus, U. (The following information is based upon autopsy.) The second version above is written in the text; then the same scribe, U¹, deletes *titubauit et instar* by putting a dot under each letter; he also puts a symbol in the form of two acute accents close together (") before *titubauit* with a similar symbol in the margin followed by the words of the first version (" *ceu quadrupes egit*). He also places a symbol consisting of a diagonal line and two dots (./.) in the margin right before 327; I take this to be a mark of deletion, since 327 is meaningless when 326 has been corrected.

Professor Schmid in his very learned and interesting article sees in this passage an instance of *Doppelfassung*. He says nothing about the diplomatic evidence for the two variants, presumably believing that both had about equal authority in the tradition. But he sees the second version as a deliberate but misguided attempt to make Prudentius say something other than what he did say.

To answer Schmid properly one must recognize that there are two separate problems here. What needs to be explained? And what is required of an explanation of a textual variation for it to be adequate?

As for the first question, Schmid apparently inferred reasonably enough, as I have said, that the authority for the two readings was about the same. But, now that he knows that we have to do merely with a variant in one line out of the three or four in the tradition, perhaps he will see this variant in much the same light as E's *tantum studium* for *tantus amor* in S. 2.335. *Tantum studium* is excluded from serious consideration by metrics, just as the second version of our lines is excluded by sense. In one instance, the text has been displaced by a gloss, in the other it has been replaced by a marginal parallel. But in both instances the corruption is in essence a purely mechanical one.

The second point has to do with the adequacy of explanations of textual variants. When a simple hypothesis and a complex one compete for our acceptance, surely one should in general prefer the simple one, unless there is some fact which it fails to explain. Hypotheses are not to be multiplied beyond necessity.

Here I think Professor Schmid believed that there was an additional fact to be explained, namely, the occurrence in the text of Prudentius of a fairly large number of doublets with roughly equal authority. We will not really have answered Schmid's argument until we take up at least some of these other instances of textual variation.

CONTRA SYMMACHUM 2.143 AND 142a-b

The very first one of these to demand our attention is a passage which Schmid discusses in this same paper, namely, *Contra Symmachum* 2.143 and 142a-b.

The problem here can be presented most compendiously if I simply copy my text and the relevant part of the apparatus and then give Thomson's Loeb translation of the alternatives. S. 2.141-43:

Atque aeuum statui sub quo generosa probarem
pectora, ne torpens et non exercita uirtus
robur eneruaturn gereret sine laude palaestrae.

post 142 uersu 143 omissio praebet E:

142a eneruare suum corrupta per otia robur

142b posset et in nullo luctamine pigra iaceret.

Hi uersus absunt a TStQ. Locus similis est. Post 142 sua linea praebet t: ignauiam trahere uitam.

Thomson: and I have set a period in which to prove noble hearts, lest their goodness being dormant and unexercised should yield a strength that was nerveless, winning no credit in the training-school.

(142a-b): might unman its strength in degenerate idleness and lie inactive, engaging in no struggle.

Schmid agrees with Bergman that lines 142a-b explain and simplify what is said in line 143. He says nothing of Arévalo's suggestion that someone rewrote 143 so as to preserve the long quantity of the first vowel in *eneruare*.

These are accounts of the facts; but what is the simplest explanation of them? Lines 142a-b stood in the margin of an ancestor of E next to line 143. A copyist took them as a correction of that line and substituted them for it.

This suggestion is not mere guesswork. In fact, what I suggest happened there is comparable to what did happen in U, where (according to my notes taken while looking at the manuscript) 142a-b stand between 142 and 143, but with a mark by the first hand that seems to indicate that they should be deleted. That things do get into the text from the margin is clear from the reading of t (though I hold no brief for its Latinity). Why were 142a-b written in the margin? I do not know. But reasonable conjectures are not hard to make. A reader with access to writing materials observed a similarity of diction and subject matter between Prudentius and a passage of another poet, and he made a note of the fact; or he wanted to cite an example of the more normal prosody of *eneruare*; or he noted a passage which Prudentius adapted or which adapted Prudentius; or perhaps more than one of these factors may have operated simultaneously; and so on. None

of these hypotheses require us to believe that the person responsible in the first instance for the presence of these lines somewhere in some manuscript wished to expunge what Prudentius had written and to substitute something of his own composition or choosing instead. But these are reasonable hypotheses. Consequently, this passage cannot be relied upon as a certain example of a place where someone deliberately substituted other words for those of Prudentius.

The suggestion that this item has something to do with prosody is supported by *S.* 1.367–68:

Cum subnixa sedet solio, Plutonia coniunx
imperitat Furiis et dictat iura Megaerae.

After 367 in *S* we find:

cum rapitur furia est et torui Plutonis uxor.

This line seems to be an illustration of an alternative quantity for the *o* in *Plutonia*. After the line gets into the tradition, one sees that an attempt was made to provide a readable text in *C*, which puts this line before 367. But that is another story. *C* is not a direct witness to one of the main ancient lines of the tradition.

Now I want to glance briefly at some other notorious instances of alleged deliberate interpolation in the text of Prudentius, but at the same time I want also to notice other factors which lead to corruption that may superficially resemble the results of deliberate interpolation.

C. 1.26: est forma mortis perpetis.
mortis imago est perpetis *A*

I explain the reading of *A* as the result of a gloss *imago est* above the line. This gloss then is copied into the text; but something has to give. The full version would have been: *est forma mortis imago est perpetis*, but enough of the first part of the line is omitted to yield something like proper metre: *mortis imago est perpetis*.

In *C.* 3.100, I see a similar process at work. I take it that the text read:

flauit et indidit ore animam.

I assume a gloss *dedit* for *indidit*, and *ex proprio* as a gloss on *ore*. If all this was copied, we would get:

flauit et indidit ore animam dedit ex proprio.

With the same technique of dropping words at the beginning of the line which we observe in *C.* 1.26, we would get the actual reading of *A*:

ore animam dedit ex proprio.

Theology has nothing to do with the variant readings here. The thought of either version is paralleled by *Ham.* 829, "flatu ex proprio."

C. 6.6 seems to be a somewhat similar case. Let us assume that the non-*A* reading stood in a text with a gloss, *potestas*, and a mark to introduce it above *uis*, thus:

.(potestas
VISVNALVMENVNVM

I suggest one possible form of the symbol for gloss which can be misread as *AC*. No easy omission from the first part of the line gives anything even resembling proper metre. It seems likely that apparently superfluous words were in this instance omitted from the end of the line, giving the reading of *A*:

VISACPOTESTASVNA

This line is not metrical either; but at least it has the right number of syllables and it seems possible.

Some of the other passages to which Gnirke refers are not really relevant to the point at issue between us. My statement was that deliberate interpolations do not so far as I recall occur in the primary manuscripts of Prudentius. He cites *Apoth.* 937a, which is absent from *ATES*; *Ham.* pr. 43a, which is also absent from *ATESt*; and *Ham.* 69, which is absent from *ATESt*.

However, it will be helpful to discuss each of these items briefly.

Apoth. 937a, "quid peccatorum prosapia corpore in illo," is not an alternative to anything in the text; it is a parallel to line 938:

Quid Christi in membris peccati saeua satelles
poena ageret?

Ham. pr. 43a, "qui caduci rem laboris offerens" (S²), seems to be a parallel to illustrate the word *caducus* in line 43:

Hic se caduco dedicans mysterio.

The reading of U (*Hic qui*) seems to involve a correction *metri causa*.

Ham. 69, "imperitare uagis mundi per inania formis," seems to be what is left of an illustration or a parallel passage. I suspect that the point was that some other poet said the same thing somewhat differently. We must remember that the works of Prudentius were used as a schoolbook in the ninth century and probably before. We can expect to find here and there in the text or margins of our manuscripts variants that would naturally result from such a use of the books themselves.

To these passages Gnirke has most recently added *Ham.* 858a-f, which is a group of six lines found in some manuscripts after *Ham.* 858. I am not sure quite what point Gnirke attempts to make in connection with them. They do not illustrate interpolation in the primary manuscripts, for they are not found written in the text by the first hand in those manuscripts. Presumably for him they illustrate the process of deliberate interpolation at work. In any case, Gnirke deplores the fact that I classify them under the general heading of a parallel passage. But, beyond remarking that they appear to be hopelessly corrupt, what can one say about them in the absence of any indication of author, date, or original context, except that they seem to be a description of the damned and thus they are on more or less the same subject as *Ham.* 859-62 (or possibly 824-38).

What is really at stake in the problems we are discussing is not merely a few textual problems in a poet whom a great many Latinists do not read anyway. These points are at issue; and they are important. But more important perhaps for us all is the relation between these problems and the underlying theory which has helped to make the problems.

This theory is what I call the "Bad Guys Theory" of textual corruption. Enough errors and other confusions occur not only in manuscripts but in printed books through what I call human frailty that there is no great need to see malevolence and deliberate deceit lurking behind textual variants at every turn. For the moment I resist the temptation to develop this *locus communis*.

But one point must be stressed. The allegation of deliberate interpolation, as the concept is employed by Schmid and Gnllka among others, involves two theses which must both be proved before the allegation can be said to be well founded. First, they must of course prove that the lines they suspect are in fact foreign to their context and impossible to attribute to their author; otherwise they may merely be in the wrong place. But, granted that they prove that lines in one or more manuscripts of an author, for example Prudentius, are out of place and not by him, they must still prove that only deliberate interpolation and no other rational explanation of the occurrence of the lines accounts for their presence. For, if deliberate interpolation is only one of a number of possible or likely explanations, the case for it must surely be regarded as not proven. And frequently the allegation of deliberate interpolation is unnecessary, gratuitous, and irrelevant. If lines are intrusive for whatever reason, the sensible thing to do is to demonstrate the fact, remove them, and to get on with the job of interpreting our author.

At this point I would like to call attention to a different set of facts which the normal seeker after interpolations rather tends to neglect. Let us note rather the number of omissions consisting of a line or more in our primary manuscripts of Prudentius.

As textual traditions go, this is a very good one for a Latin author. Prudentius in fact is the only Latin author for whom we have both a rustic capital manuscript and one in uncials. Both are of the sixth century and probably of the first half. Both contain a very substantial portion of his text. Thus they are to be dated roughly within a century and a half of the first appearance of his works. This would be like having a manuscript of Vergil or Horace from the time of Hadrian. In addition, there are a large number of ninth century manuscripts, from which we can with reasonable confidence reconstruct three other traditions going back to the sixth century.

One plain fact about these traditions is that they all omit passages consisting of a line or more from time to time. For example, I calculate that the sixth century rustic capital manuscript, the Puteanus (A), has an omission of a line or more on the average of once every 440 verses. Total lines omitted average out to one for every 220 verses of text. Many of these omissions are made good by a correcting

hand; but this hand seems definitely to belong to another scriptorium, since its letter-forms are different. From that fact I conclude that A as corrected offers traces of another tradition, but one which we are quite unable to recover fully. The Ambrosianus (B) in uncials has considerably fewer omissions on the average, but it and the other manuscript traditions all have their share of omitted lines. This is not the place to give details. I wish merely to say that in general in a tradition that we know is characterized by omissions, but where additions are rare or doubtful, we might be better advised to worry more about accidental lacunae and less about deliberate interpolation. I mean this suggestion very seriously, because it depends upon using evidence which is clear, uncontrovertible, and plain for all to see.

I am not trying to start a new hunt for lacunae as a substitute for the traditional hunt for interpolations. In fact, in my text I do not mark any lacunae, because I have the impression that we have enough different independent lines of tradition that what is missing through inadvertence in one or more of them is to be found preserved in one or more of the remaining lines.

On the other hand, I feel a deep suspicion of those allegations of deliberate interpolation in Prudentius that I have seen, because they appear to be founded upon a fundamental misconception of the professional standards, competence, and integrity of the scribes who produced the primary manuscripts and those from which the primary manuscripts are derived. And I firmly believe that one must make an independent assessment of the professional standards of book production exhibited in a manuscript tradition before basing conclusions upon guesses about those professional standards.

In summary, the main points I am trying to make are as follows. The following facts are certain. In some manuscripts of Prudentius from time to time there occur apparent additions to the text consisting of one or more complete lines of verse. Diplomatic and other external evidence is sufficient to show that in at least some of these instances the lines in question are truly later additions to Prudentius' text.

Two hypotheses are offered to account for these additions: (1) Since some of these additions are clearly the result of glosses, parallel passages, and the like written in manuscripts outside the text, the simplest explanation of all of them is that they arise from such

sources. None of the additions require any further hypotheses to account for their presence; hence, no further hypotheses are in order.

(2) On the assumption that some of the additions to the text of Prudentius have been demonstrated to be deliberate interpolations, the hypothesis of more such interpolations is to be entertained.

The question then resolves itself into fairly simple terms: Has the existence of deliberate interpolations in the text of Prudentius been established for the main lines of the tradition, *ABΓΔΘ*? I believe that the answer to this question is negative. Thus the first hypothesis above seems adequate, since it is simpler.

Let us recall that the theory of deliberate interpolation assumes the existence of a specific person at a particular time and place with access to some specific manuscript; it assumes a certain set of abilities on the part of that person and a certain set of intentions, and assumes that he carried out those intentions in a particular way. In other words, the theory of deliberate interpolation relies on a fairly large number of assumptions, which can rarely be subject to verification, especially since other activities can give rise to results which are often in and of themselves indistinguishable from the results of deliberate interpolation. Thus, although such deliberate interpolation may from time to time be suspected, it would require some special set of circumstances to permit exclusion of other equally acceptable explanations.

But poor logic is just one of the effects of the hunt for interpolations. Another more important one, as we have seen, is the tendency this activity has to discourage close analysis of the received text to see what it really does mean. The passages discussed in detail above illustrate the evil effect of this tendency. In each of these passages, the attractiveness of "interpolation" as a cure-all for a supposed difficulty led excellent scholars to abandon the analysis of a line of thought too soon.

APPENDIX: CORRIGENDA IN EDITION OF PRUDENTIUS⁶

Some reviewers, notably A. Hudson-Williams (*CR* n.s. 17 [1967] 293-96) and P. Frassinetti (*Paideia* 22 [1967] 175-76) have gently called attention to a number of details in my edition that should be corrected. To their collections I add some items of my own.

⁶ See above, note 1.

In editione mea (1966) haec uitia siue preli siue editoris corrigenda sunt:
In textu:

- p. 125 *Ham.* 254 cumulos (*pro* cumulus)
- p. 171 *Psych.* 599 frustra (*pro* frustra)
- p. 192 *S.* 1.181 celebrarent (*pro* celebarent)
S. 1.193; (*i.e.* Tullus; *pro* Tullus.)
- p. 206 *S.* 1.587 Christe (*pro* Christi)
- p. 281 *Pe.* 3.92 diuide (*pro* diuiide)
- p. 340 *Pe.* 10.305 edentularum (*pro* eduntularum)
- p. 358 *Pe.* 10.820 quod (*pro* quid)
- p. 370 *Pe.* 11.23 peruersi (*pro* preruersi)

In apparatu:

- p. 8, ad *C.* 2.57 *seriore*
- p. 53, ad 9–16, lin. 13 *duos libros*, lin. 23 *priore*
- p. 73, “*De ornamentis . . .*,” lin. 4 “*in E*” . . . *maiore*
- p. 147, ad *Ham.* 931 *maiore*
- p. 170, ad *Psych.* 575–94 *amissae*
- p. 175, ad *Psych.* 726/729, lin. 4: *ix* (*i.e.* saeculi noni) et in 727 (*ibidem*,
lin. 6) *postquam* (*pro* *postquem*), lin. 14: *late in 732* (*pro*: *late in 731*)
- p. 181, ad *Psych.* 907 *seriore*
- p. 195, ad *S.* 1.282 *adde*: *regione B*
- p. 285, ad *Pe.* 3.211–15 *excepto*
- p. 297, ad *Pe.* 5.100, lin. 2 *qui* (*additur*), lin. 4 *marginē*
- p. 329, Subscr. ad *Pe.* 9 *seriore*
- p. 390, Inscr. ad libr. lin. 2 *priore*; De inscriptionibus, lin. 3 *numeri, quos editores*
- p. 429, Index s.v. *similitudo*, lin. 1 *ceu*

In praefatione:

- p. xi (§6) lin. 14 *qui*, 17 *qui*, 19 *Hi*; (§7) lin. 24 *primi*, 25 *qui*; (§8) lin. 31 *primi*, 33 *ceteri*; (§9) lin. 39 *idem*; 43 *esset*.
- p. xii (§10) lin. 5 *careat*, 6 *praebeat*; (§13) lin. 23 *amissi*; (§16) lin. 39 *posteriore . . . priore*, 42 *scribam priorem*, 43 *sciret*, 44 *perrexisse*.
- p. xiii (§18) lin. 4–*S.* 1.336 (337–560); (§22) lin. 19 *diuidices*.
- p. xiv (§26) lin. 6 *maiore*; (§27) lin. 13 *qui*; (§30) lin. 29 *amisso*; (§31) lin. 36 *crassiore*, 37 *priore*.
- p. xv (§36) lin. 22 *Ernest*, 25 *marginē superiore*.
- p. xviii (§50) lin. 10 *dele* *quosdam* (*i.e.* *uersus quos*); (§54) lin. 41 *integro*.
- p. xx (§65) lin. 16 *alii*, *quos*, *eos*, 17 *praetermittendos*.

- p. xxiii (§80) lin. 26 conlati.
p. xxiv (§83) lin. 4 quam traditionem; (§87) lin. 29 maiore, 33 maiore;
(§88) lin. 39 quas.
p. xxvi (§100) lin. 14 est; (§102) lin. 22 constructiones; (§105) lin. 44
quendam (*dele* homo).
p. xxvii (§108) lin. 9 quam.
p. xxix (§121) lin. 33 alia.
p. xxxv (§126) lin. 39 accommodatae, 46 uiderer.
p. xxxviii (§131) lin. 41 nostras.
p. xxxix (§134) lin. 12 Hae, 20 potuerim.
p. xlvii (§151) lin. 12 attulerim.
p. L, lin. 11 duae; 12 scriba qui se ipse corrigit.