Prudentius of Troyes (d. 861) and the Reception of the Patristic Tradition in the Carolingian Era

by

Jared G. Wielfaert

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of History
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Jared Wielfaert 2015
Prudentius of Troyes (d. 861) and the Reception of the Patristic Tradition in the Carolingian Era

Jared Gardner Wielfaert
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of History
University of Toronto
2015

ABSTRACT: This study concerns Prudentius, bishop of Troyes (861), a court scholar, historian, and pastor of the ninth century, whose extant corpus, though relatively extensive, remains unstudied. Born in Spain in the decades following the Frankish conquest of the Spanish march, Prudentius had been recruited to the Carolingian court under Louis the Pious, where he served as a palace chaplain for a twenty year period, before his eventual elevation to the see of Troyes in the 840s. With a career that moved from the frontier to the imperial court center, then back to the local world of the diocese and environment of cathedral libraries, sacred shrines, and local care of souls, the biography of Prudentius provides a frame for synthesis of several prevailing currents in the cultural history of the Carolingian era. His personal connections make him a rare link between the generation of the architects of the Carolingian reforms (Theodulf and Alcuin) and their students (Rabanus Maurus, Prudentius himself) and the great period of fruition of which the work of John Scottus Eriugena is the most widely recognized example. His involvement in the mid-century theological controversy over the doctrine of predestination illustrates the techniques and methods, as well as the concerns and preoccupations, of Carolingian era scholars engaged in the consolidation and interpretation of patristic opinion, particularly, that of Augustine.
Acknowledgments

Over the many years this thesis has taken to research and write, I have had the support of a remarkable committee. The project was conceived under the supervision of Nick Everett, who first introduced me to the Carolingians in a seminar taught his first semester (and mine) in Toronto (Fall 2003). His enthusiasm for this project and constant encouragement, even during the lengthy intermission of 2008-10, convinced me that I had a unique angle on an interesting and much neglected topic. Nick’s generosity with his time and willingness to meet, often on very short notice, helped me to keep working amidst the pressures and demands of a new teaching position in Tennessee. And his willingness to push his own work in new directions has inspired me to keep an eye open to ideas from beyond the more familiar world of scholarship on the Carolingians.

My debts to Joe Goering go well beyond this dissertation, though it could not have been written without him. Joe introduced me to the intellectual culture of the Middle Ages and trained me to hew closely to the evidence. He provided instant and incisive criticism of each of the several drafts of my chapters, saved me from many errors, and kept me from expending energy on fruitless lines of inquiry. Joe and Paula Goering also provided material support. They opened their home to me during lengthy research visits to Toronto in the summers of 2010-2013, offered warm conversation, and provided numerous meals. Joe’s deep erudition is surpassed only by his generosity. And my time in Toronto has been enriched deeply by his friendship and by his example.

Isabelle Cochelin, Giulio Silano, and Ken Mills each provided valuable support during my early years in Toronto. Thus, it was particularly gratifying to have them join my committee for the dissertation defense. Isabelle encouraged me to humanize Prudentius, and Giulio urged me to see him as a lawyer. Their incisiveness in the defense will doubtless prove crucial to developing this project further. Ken Mills gave generously of his time and deep learning in the summer of 2006. Our reading on multiple Marys in sixteenth-century Spain proved crucial to my discovering multiple Augustines in ninth-century Francia. Tom Noble provided astute advice on a number of topics, and has helped me begin to think of my dissertation as a book. It was an honor to have him as an external examiner.

The work for this dissertation has happened amidst an eventful domestic life shared in Toronto and in Tennessee with Stacey and the kids, whom I can never thank adequately. When we drove a rickety UHaul into Toronto in the summer of 2003, we were seeing the city for the first time. The friends we soon made eased the transition to urban life and helped make our time in that city into one of the most exciting and rewarding periods of our time together. Kris and Krystal Kobold, Steve and Jan Pede, and Lisa Chen helped us get through that first year. Kris, Steve, and Lisa shared with me the daily joys and hardships of learning Latin. Shawn and Myrna Keough, Dave and Heather Delaney, and Bronwyn and Andrew McDonald provided warm companionship and doted first on Hallie, then on Sadie, our little Canadian. Myrna, Heather, and Bronwyn became lively colleagues and friends to Stacey, while Shawn Keough taught me how to get work done amidst the many distractions of the city and helped me to surmount the barriers that blocked me from seeing myself as a scholar. I remember warmly and with gratitude our conversations about our research and especially our shared faith.

In Cleveland, Tennessee, we have been fortunate to find a congenial community in which to live and work. But living so distant from the library and faculty resources of Toronto posed certain challenges to finishing the dissertation. I could not have completed the research and writing without the generous
financial support of the Lee University. Paul Conn and the President’s Office provided travel stipends in the summer of 2010-11 and generous tuition support in spring 2015, and the University’s Committee on Faculty Research has funded two summer research visits to Toronto. Special thanks go to the several colleagues who frequently asked about my work and provided stimulating conversation on related topics. Rickie Moore shared generously of his time and wisdom on a January afternoon and without his mentorship I would not be working at Lee. Randy Wood, Bob Barnett, Alan Wheeler, David Schlosser, and Aaron Johnson have been particularly supportive. Aaron, who has often acted as a surrogate supervisor, has endured numerous conversations on Prudentius, has read and commented on Chapters 3-5, and has frequently made available his deep learning on the literary cultures of late antiquity and on Neoplatonism. My time at Lee has been enriched greatly by the kindness and support of my students. Jared Johnson worked diligently through the Migne edition of the De praedestinatione and helped me produce the provisional list of patristic citations. He also worked tirelessly on my bibliography. His queries about medieval poetry quickly outgrew my expertise, but I am pleased that he will have more adequate resources now, as he completes his own PhD in the CMS, Toronto. Special thanks also go to Matthew Orsag, another Lee student in Toronto, who has taught his teacher much about the Middle Ages.

I am fortunate to have had the support of generous parents, Doug and Marcy Wielfaert, without whom none of my academic pursuits would have been possible. Both parents worked tirelessly to provide the elementary and secondary education upon which all subsequent learning was based. They supported me financially throughout my undergraduate training and gave crucial material support during the years spent in Toronto. More recently, they, together with David and Cindy Beavers, have made our time in Tennessee more productive and more enjoyable through countless acts of kindness. Rachel and Michael Frazier have endured with good humor a brother’s distractedness and have provided great conversation and companionship along the way. During the years in Toronto, Helen Wielfaert generously hosted us on many visits to the farm. Mildred Norris provided financial and moral support at several important moments. She will remember that my grandfather, Gardner Norris, always said I’d write a book. One of my great sadnesses is that he did not live to see me do it.

Stacey gave up a job and the close support of many friends and family to help me pursue my dream of an academic career. She has been my constant companion and has endured with me the deep personal costs of doctoral research. The dissertation is dedicated to her and to Hallie and Sadie, who have lived with Prudentius for far too long.
For Stacey, Hallie, and Sadie
# Table of Contents

**Introduction** 1

**Chapter One: Student, Court Chaplain, Bishop** 11
- Carmen 79 and Theodulf of Orleans 14
- Education 18
- Arrival at Court 19
- Court and Court Chapel in Imperial Administration 23
- Friends and Associates 25
- Prudentius, “unworthy Bishop of Troyes” 27
- The Diocese of Troyes 30
- Bishop and Diocese 34
- Bishop in Council, c. 845-861 36

**Chapter Two: Extant Works** 41
- *Annals of St. Bertin*, c. 835-861 42
- *Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum* (849/850) 44
- *De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam* (851/852) 45
- *Epistola Tractoria* (856) 47
- *Epistola ad fratrem* (ca. 843-c. 850) 48
- *Florilegium scripturae*, or ‘*Precepta*’ (ca. 843-861) 48
- Dedicatory verse on the Four Gospels (ca. 843-861) 49
- *Flores Psalmarum* (uncertain: c. 830-33 or 840-43) 54
  - Inauthentic:
    - The “Pontifical of Prudentius” 56
    - *Sermo de vita et morte gloriosae Virginis Maurae* 57
  - Conclusion 72

**Chapter Three: Ordering Disorder in the *Annals of St. Bertin*** 73
- *The Annals of St. Bertin* 73
- From Court Historian to Universal Historian 78
  - 835-840 80
  - 840-c.844 81
  - c. 844-861 83
- Prudentius as Historian 85
- The World in its Old Age 95

**Chapter Four: Rewriting the Psalter in the *Flores Psalmarum*** 100
- The Psalter in the Carolingian World 101
- Psalm Derived Literature and Lay Piety 105
- Paraphrasing and Rewriting 109
- Paraphrasing the Psalter 114
‘Quaedam nobilis matrona’ 121
Text of the *Flores Psalmorum* (and partial translation) 126

**Chapter Five: Authorizing Augustine in the *Epistola Ad Hincmarum*** 130

*Epistola ad Hincmarum* 135
Authority, Authorization, Augustine 137
Prudentius and Gottschalk Compared 146
Collectaneum on Predestination 153
Selection of Texts and Varieties of Appropriation 155
Adaptation and Manipulation 162
Omissions 164
The Politics of Predestination 167
Pastoral Concerns 171

**Chapter 6: Accumulating Doctrine in the *Contra Eriugenam*** 174

The “Nineteen Chapters” of Eriugena 176
*De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam* 179
“True Philosophy is True Religion” 184
Divine Simplicity 187
The Will and Human Freedom 189
Divine Judgment and the Body 192
The Visual Argument of the *Contra Eriugenam* 200
Nachleben 210

**Conclusion** 213

**Bibliography** 217
List of Plates

Plate 1: BNF MS. 2445, fol. 6v. 202
Plate 2: BNF MS. 2445, fol. 113v. 203
Plate 3: BNF MS. 2445, fol. 7r. 204
Plate 4: BNF MS. 2445, fol. 3v. 205
Plate 5: BNF MS. 2445, tabular addition 206
List of Appendices

| Appendix I: Biographical Sources | 241 |
| Appendix II: Alumni of the Palace Chapel | 244 |
| Appendix III: List of Patristic Citations from the *Contra Eriugenam* | 246 |
### Abbreviations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>AB</em></td>
<td><em>Annals of St. Bertin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCCM</td>
<td><em>Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSL</td>
<td><em>Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSEL</td>
<td><em>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGH</td>
<td><em>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGH SS</td>
<td><em>Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores (in Folio)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Patrologia cursus completus series Latina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA</td>
<td>Royal Frankish Annals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

For the ninth-century schoolmen and clerics who labored to comprehend a vast tradition of patristic learning on doctrine, liturgy, and ecclesiastical practice, the work of reading and reappropriating the Fathers of the Church evoked images drawn from horticulture and from medicine. The words of the Fathers were like flowers, “gathered as if from an immense meadow,”¹ or even like the herbs and medicines selected and diligently arranged by a physician tending his patient.² Whether such metaphors were intended to convey the immensity of the patristic heritage, the relative smallness of those who endeavored to know and apply the opinions of the Fathers, or perhaps the salutary benefits of fitting patristic consensus to contemporary controversies and concerns, the persistent image of the selection and reading of “flowers” leaves for us a culturally specific picture of erudition. The learned man in the age of Prudentius of Troyes (d. 861) was a creature of the library and scriptorium, a collector and anthologist whose labor was to know and to curate what had already been said. That Prudentius himself understood his work in such terms is evident in the character of the fragmentary corpus of texts attributed to him – a miscellany of annalistic history, florilegia, biblical paraphrase, and theological polemic, all of which make extensive use of earlier authors and texts. These works range from vast compilations of patristic material, designed to overwhelm the reader with the weight of authority, to a short poem in which a eulogy of the evangelists and of Christ is woven out of allusions to classical and late antique verse, to a history that functions as a continuation of the world chronicles of late antiquity through its annual accumulation of the deeds and events of the Frankish court. Each surviving work of this author embraces, in its own way, both the aesthetic and the epistemology of the florilegium: truth is attained and insight gained through the collection, accumulation, and reappropriation of texts.

As a scholar who painstakingly avoided originality, Prudentius of Troyes has been easy for contemporary scholarship to overlook. Though most of his surviving corpus had been edited by the end

¹ Prudentius, MGH SS. Epistolae, t. III, p. 323.
² Alcuin offers both the medical and botanical images in the epistolary preface to his commentary on John, MGH Epistolae, t. IV, pp. 356-57. ‘Solent namque medici ex multorum speciebus pigmentorum in salutem poscentis quoddam medicamenti conponere genus, nec se ipsos fateri praesumunt creators herbarum vel aliarum specierum, ex quorum compositione salus efficitur egrotantium, sed ministros esse in colligendo et in unum pigmentaria manu conficiendo corpus. Sic etiam, sic forsan meae devotionis labor aliquid vestrae caritati proficere valet. Nec ex uno quolibet paternae possessionis prato mihi flores colligendos esse censeo, sed multorum patrum.’
of the eighteenth century,\(^3\) his cult studied by the Bollandists and by Butler,\(^4\) and his merits as an author claimed both for France and for Spain in patriotically motivated literary histories, \(^5\) relatively little scholarship has been written in the last two hundred years on this scholar, saint, and churchman of the ninth century. Most commentary on Prudentius has come from studies of Carolingian era debates over the doctrine of predestination,\(^6\) in which he has been generally described as one of the more extreme

\(^3\) Jacques Sirmond, the great Jesuit scholar who printed Eusebius of Caesarea, Sidonius Apollonaris, and Lupus of Ferrieres, among others, first edited a letter of Prudentius on predestination along with the works of Hincmar of Rheims (1645). The editio princeps of Prudentius' *Contra Eriugenam* appeared five years later by Gilbert Mauguin, *Vetenum Auctorum Qui IX. Saeculo de Praedestinatione Et Gratia Scripserunt Opera Et Fragmenta* (Paris, John Billaine, 1650), 191-574.

\(^4\) Nicholas Camuzat (1611) had identified Prudentius as the author of a sermon on the blessed Maura, a beloved virgin of Troyes, whose association with Prudentius helped to solidify his own reputation for sanctity. Remy Breyer would later establish the antiquity of Prudentius' cult (*Les Vies S. Prudence, eveque de Troyes, et de Ste. Maure vierge* (Troyes, 1725), tracing his local commemoration at Troyes as far back as the twelfth century. Breyer's biography, a precocious blend of enlightenment scholarship and admiring hagiography, was then read by Butler who included the bishop in volume four of his *Lives of the Saints*. Butler's imprimatur has secured Prudentius a listing in a number of popular catalogues and martyrologies, though he does not appear in the official Roman calendar. *The Lives of the Primitive Fathers, Martyrs, and other Principal Saints, compiled from original monuments, and other authentic records, 3rd edition*, vol. iv (Edinburgh: J. Mour, 1798), 67-71. See also, Paul Guérin, *Les Petits Bollandistes vies des saints*. Septième édition. t. 4 (Paris: Bloud et Barral, 1878), 257-60.


\(^6\) For seventeenth-century Jansenists and Jesuits, for whom the ninth century had become a proxy for modern confessional polemics, Prudentius was either a potential ally (in the case of the former), or a dangerously heterodox corruptor of the more subtle teachings of Augustine (in the case of the latter). James Ussher, the Anglican bishop of Armagh and famed chronologist, had published in 1631 his famous study of Gottschalk (*Gotteschalc et praedestinationae controversiae ab eo motae, historia* (Hanover, 1662 [reprint 1631]). In the decades that followed, historical scholarship on Gottschalk and his ninth-century opponents came to serve as channels for polemical exchanges between Jesuits, French Protestants, and Jansenists. Jacques Sirmond responded to Ussher with a brief study of the history of the predestination controversy from Augustine down to the ninth century (*Historia Praedestinationana* (Paris, 1648). In this latter work, published in 1648, Sirmond established a highly influential reading that presents the history of Latin debates over predestination as essentially between orthodox Augustinians and two heterodox extremes, “semi-Pelagians,” on the one hand, and “predestinationists,” on the other (the contours of this reading can be observed in the table of contents and in the preface of the work). The mid-century publications by Gilbert Mauguin (*Vetenum auctorum qui IX. Saeculo de praedestinatione et gratia scripserunt opera et fragmenta*, t. 1 (Paris, 1650), 193-574) and Louis Cellot can be read as a direct response to Sirmond’s interpretation. Mauguin was a Jansenist, who opposed Jacques Sirmond on the question of whether an ancient heretical sect, the predestinarians, had ever existed. His publication of Prudentius, *De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam*, was motivated by his thesis that the strong Augustinians of the ninth century, who supported Gottschalk, maintained views perfectly consistent with Augustine. By the end of the century, the principal works of Prudentius
“predestinarians” of his period. Outside the history of doctrine, he has become well known as an annalistic historian, and in this capacity, as co-author of the *Annals of St. Bertin*, “the most substantial piece of contemporary historical writing of their time,” his name quietly enters the indices of most modern treatments of the political history of the Carolingian era. Still, no complete account of his biography or thorough assessment of his contribution to the historiography of his period has yet been written. In attempting to supply such an account, the following chapters will suggest that Prudentius of Troyes can be read as an author of diverse range and considerable influence. Born in Spain in the decades following the Frankish conquest of the Spanish march, he was recruited to the Carolingian court under Louis the Pious, where he served as a palace chaplain for a twenty year period, before his eventual elevation to the see of Troyes in the 840s. With a career that spanned the first half of the ninth century, this bishop’s personal connections make him an important link between the architects of the Carolingian reforms (Theodulf and Alcuin) and their students (Rabanus Maurus, Prudentius himself) and the great period of fruition of which the work of John Scottus Eriugena is only the most impressive example. His written corpus includes a twenty-six year section of the *Annals of St. Bertin*, verse epigrammata, a paraphrase of the Psalter, florilegia of the scriptures, two letters, one collection of patristic texts on the topic of predestination, and a lengthy work of theological polemic written against the views of Eriugena.

Among the numerous and varied topics such a career might raise for our consideration, three persistent concerns have motivated my analysis of Prudentius. First, particular care has been taken to consider my work on predestination (first published by Sirmond and Mauguin) had been reprinted a second time in vol. 15 of the *Maxima bibilotheca veterum patrum* (1677).

7 See, for example, Henri Peltier, “Prudence de Troyes,” *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, t. 13 (Paris: Librairie Letouzey, 1936).


subject as an author. For contemporaries who knew him to be “especially learned,” the bishop of Troyes was a man of great literary, historical, and theological erudition. Though this reputation was based on a body of work that might have originally included administrative records, liturgical texts, and various works on doctrine and of biblical exegesis, this once-extensive corpus has survived to the present day only in fragments. Negative estimations may characterize these remaining pieces as derivative and uninspired, but I will argue that they reflect forms deliberately selected by their author, in light of certain aesthetic and epistemological assumptions, for highly particular purposes. Put another way, form and content are related. Here, my reading of Prudentius stands to benefit from recent studies that have examined early medieval texts as self-conscious constructions, productive of literary strategies, discourses, and techniques of representation. A quotation-laden polemic, for example, must not be read naively, as the work of an uninspired collector, burdened by tradition and incapable of original thought or expression. In the right hands, quotation and other forms of textual reappropriation (such as paraphrase, allusion, and silent borrowings of various kinds) can be used to demonstrate mastery and to authorize and certify the opinions of an author whose intellectual virtuosity is found in the skill with which he selects, edits, and arranges preexisting sources of knowledge. In forms as diverse from one another as annalistic history, paraphrase of the biblical text, and theological polemic, this author consistently chose to work in

11 He was ‘adprime litteris eruditus’ in the estimation of Hincmar of Rheims, whose obituary of Prudentius recorded in the *Annals of St. Bertin* will be examined below in Chapter One. See Levillain and Grat, eds, *Annales*, 84-85.

12 See, for example, Peltier, “Prudence de Troyes,” 1083.


genres in which his own authorial voice was made to draw out and to harmonize with the voices of others. Thus, special attention will be given to the implications of this literary tendency both for Prudentius himself and for the audiences for whom he wrote.

Secondly, Prudentius will provide eloquent witness to the active reception of the patristic inheritance within the second generation of intellectuals and churchmen of the Carolingian Reforms. Without overlooking the creativity and independence of this author, we might characterize his work as fundamentally connected to mental trajectories originating in scripture and in the works of the Fathers. In certain regards, Prudentius was even more indebted to the Fathers than previous commentators have recognized. Even when he appears to strike out on his own, the Fathers have inspired formal and rhetorical imitation. In his decision to write annals, for example, this author was not merely continuing the official history of the Frankish court. Rather, he was self-consciously participating in the broader chronographic traditions begun by the great Christian authors of late antiquity – Eusebius, Jerome, Prosper, and Gregory – and writing in anticipation of later continuations of world history, such as those to be found in the Annals of Flodoard and of the abbey of St. Vaast. His paraphrase of the Psalter was likewise composed in conscious imitation of a tradition of Psalmic metaphrasis going back to the Fathers; and his theological polemic, intentionally modeled on that of Jerome against Rufinus and of Augustine against Pelagius. Thus, the literary forms in which this author worked express his rootedness in a distinctive synthesis of Graeco-Roman intellectual traditions with orthodox Christian views of time, history, revelation, inspiration, and literary authority.

Still, for Prudentius and his contemporaries, the consolidation of the patristic heritage was far from a fait accompli. That the reception, authorization, and interpretation of the tradition remained an open process becomes especially evident when one examines the number of doctrinal controversies that arose, chiefly in northern Francia, in the period, c. 830-860: arguments over the nature of the Eucharistic conversion, the orthodox formula for the trinity of the Godhead, the role of images and saints’ cults in

---


16 See Paschasius Radbertus, De corpore et sanguine Domini, ed. Beda Paulus, CCCM 16 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) and Ratramnus of Corbie, De corpore et sanguine Domini, ed. J. N. Bakhuisen van den Brink (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1974). Selections from both Paschasius and Ratramnus are translated by George McCracken and Allen Cabaniss, eds. Early Medieval Theology, Library of Christian Classics 9 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), 94-147). Among the extensive literature on this debate, some of the most recent and
worship, as well as numerous smaller disagreements over biblical interpretation, the limits of appropriate exegesis, and other questions. Our author’s involvement in one such debate, a decade-long controversy over Augustine’s teaching on predestination, illustrates to what extent the vast and varied tradition of patristic opinion continued to be contested and defined in the Carolingian period. Prudentius and his contemporaries continued to debate, among other things, basic questions of patristic authority whose answers can appear all too inevitable from the view of later centuries. The controversy over predestination would test whether certain custodians of the tradition, such as Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory, should be read differently from other agreeable and clear-headed, but less widely attested, authorities. It would ask by what techniques of reading and writing a bishop ought to discover the church’s teaching on more obscure doctrines of the faith, especially when such doctrines threatened to scandalize the faithful, who might misunderstand them. It also asked to what extent the liberal arts and other tools of the late antique classroom might be applied to the exposition and clarification of church teaching. In representing the positions of his ecclesiastical province in mid-century debates over doctrine, Prudentius will delineate for us one author’s approach to such questions. The shape of his answers will illuminate studies are Celia Chazelle, The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era. Theology and Art of Christ’s Passion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 209-238; Rachel Fulton, From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200 (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2002), 209-238; Rachel Fulton, From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200 (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2002), 9-59.

Like the debate over predestination (to be examined below in chapters 5 and 6) this was principally an argument between Hincmar and Gottschalk, carried out during the time of the latter’s imprisonment in the 850s. The principal texts are Hincmar, De Una et non trina deitate, Migne, ed., PL 125, 473-618 and Gottschalk, De trina Deitate, in Oeuvres de Godescalc d’Orbais, ed. D.C. Lambot (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1945), 81-99. For interpretation and commentary, see George H. Tavard, Trina Deitas. The Controversy between Hincmar and Gottschalk. Marquette Studies in Theology No. 12 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1996); and Jean Jolivet, Godescalc d’Orbais et la Trinité: La méthode de la théologie à l’époque carolingienne (Paris, 1958).


In his third and final De praedestinatione, Hincmar would list the doctrinal controversies of the 850s. To the list I have provided above, he would add “that the angelic nature was not corporeal; that the human soul was not in the body, that hell was not more than the torturing memory of sins committed; that the saved could see the divine essence with the eyes of the body.” See PL 125, 296D. I am quoting the paraphrase of John O’Meara, Eriugena (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 32.

On the variety of ways in which these questions could be answered by Theodulf of Orleans, Alcuin, and John Scottus Eriugena, respectively, see Otten, “Texture of Tradition,” 9-50.
illustrate the principal tools and methods, as well as some of the more pressing constraints and preoccupations, of churchmen who worked to inherit, but also to define, the patristic tradition in the generations following the Carolingian Reforms.

Finally, a careful reading of Prudentius’ works can also reveal a great deal that is presently unknown about the specific bibliographic contexts in which he worked. Unlike other great library collections of the Carolingian era, whose contents have been reconstructed based on manuscript catalogues and palaeographical studies of particular manuscripts, the contents of the Cathedral library of Troyes remain largely unknown. Here the writings of Prudentius offer a great resource for reconstructing a portion of what books might have been available in Troyes at the middle of the ninth century. Particularly useful in this respect will be two works written by our author: the first, a work on the topic of predestination, addressed to Hincmar of Rheims in autumn 849 or Spring 850; the second, a much longer work written two years later to John Scottus Eriugena on the same topic. Between them, these two works contain over 400 discrete excerpts from 102 separate works of 16 authors of the fourth through eighth centuries. The sole extant witness to the longer work (BNF, Lat. 2445) is a manuscript that appears to bear marginal and interlinear insertions by its author. Thus, when its author can be shown to add to his arguments citations culled from recently acquired texts, this manuscript can provide important clues to the history of book acquisition at Troyes. The definitive account of the Carolingian era library of Troyes will doubtless await a modern critical edition of Prudentius’ works and additional palaeographical and codicological studies of manuscripts of known Troisian provenance. But my examination will provide a preliminary inventory of texts available to at least one author working in Troyes at mid century.

22 See, for example, J. J. Contreni, The Cathedral School of Laon from 850 to 930. Its Manuscripts and Masters (Munich: Bei der Arbeo-Gesellschaft, 1978); and David Ganz, Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance. (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1990).

23 No significant effort has been made to reconstruct the holdings of Troyes based upon palaeographical evidence. According to Bernard Bischoff, Troyes is “paleographical terra incognita,” personal correspondence with Michael Gorman, reported in “Harvard’s Oldest Latin Manuscript (Houghton Library, fMS TYP 495),” Scriptorium 39 (1985), 196, n. 33.


25 Such as the recent discovery by Warren Pezé of two additional manuscripts owned by Prudentius. Pezé’s research came to my attention too late to be incorporated into this study. In chapter five, I have made my own argument for the association of Harvard, TYP 495 with my author. To this MS, we can now add Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale 126. See Pezé, “Deux manuscrits personnels de Prudence de Troyes,” Revue Bénédicte 124:1 (June 2014), 114-150.
The dissertation is organized into six chapters. Chapter One will explore Prudentius’ origins, education, and years of palace service, then survey the local environment of Troyes, in which he would carry out his work as pastor. This chapter will suggest that the young Prudentius had been a student of the erudite scholar and court poet Theodulf of Orleans. This proposed association with Theodulf is then used to establish a more precise date for my subject’s arrival at court and to survey the social milieu of the court during his earliest years of palace service. Finally, Prudentius’ activities as bishop are explored within the setting of the diocese of Troyes and within the contentious environment of mid century ecclesiastical politics.

Chapter Two establishes the corpus of texts that can be securely assigned to this author. Following a survey of the authentic works, I consider the attribution of a sermon on the life of St. Maura, associated with Prudentius since the seventeenth century. It is argued on the basis of a series of anachronisms identified in the text that this sermon belongs to the second half of the twelfth century or later and, therefore, should not be included among the authentic works of our author. Subsequent chapters will then proceed as a series of discrete studies of four examples of Prudentius’ literary production within their literary and historical contexts.

Chapters Three and Four will consider the *Annals of St. Bertin* and *Flores Psalmorum*, respectively, as two responses to the “trials and tribulations” of the 830s and 40s. It will be argued that Prudentius’ section of the *Annals* can be read as both a chronicle of the deeds of Frankish kings amidst political dissension within and invasion from without, but also as a broader narrative of the “world in its old age,” written in continuation of the Christian chronography of late antiquity. The *Flores Psalmorum*, composed in response to the request of “a certain noble woman,” is then evaluated both within the context of Psalm-based literature of the Carolingian era and within broader traditions of biblical paraphrase going back to the early Christian period.

Chapters Five and Six will examine Prudentius’ participation in the mid-century debates over predestination, which drew in a number of the churchmen and scholars of the western Frankish kingdoms. The broad contours of this controversy have been well known since the seventeenth century, when James Ussher, the Anglican bishop of Armagh, published the first modern study of Gottschalk.26 Since that time a considerable amount of scholarship has been dedicated to understanding the debate over Gottschalk in

26*Gotteschali et prædestinatianae controversiae historia* (1631).
light of ancient heresies or of modern confessional divides, either as a revival of the fifth-century Augustinian controversy, or as a precursor to sixteenth-century debates between Calvinists, Jesuits, and Jansenists. More recently, attention has been turned to the ways in which this debate reflected highly particular factors in ecclesiastical politics, contemporary theories of social order, or even disagreements over the study of language. The focus has turned to the study of individual texts and authors and the variety of factors – social, political, and material – that might have mitigated or exacerbated disagreements over doctrine. Individual controversialists are now better understood as authors who wrote for other occasions and in other genres, who were students of the same masters (or rival masters), who met in councils and formed alliances and debated numerous other matters less directly tethered to the definition of doctrine. My study of Prudentius in Chapters 5 and 6 will complement the picture emerging in these recent studies.

Chapter Five considers a letter addressed to Hincmar of Rheims within a year of the official condemnation of Gottschalk at Quierzy (849), focusing on factors of manuscript transmission and of local library collections that contributed to the debate over predestination. If “multiple Augustines” populated the libraries of northern France, it falls to this chapter to show Prudentius delineating and interpreting the

---

27 This is the debate traditionally called, since the seventeenth century, by the label “semi-pelagian controversy,” a label that is both historically and theologically inaccurate. “Semi-pelagian” suggests a partial affinity with Pelagius on the part of the loose coalition of churchmen, doctors, and monastics in southern Gaul who opposed Augustine’s views on nature and grace, whereas this controversy, which began in the late 420s and continued until the Council of Orange (529), was not over the doctrine of Pelagius, but of Augustine. In replacing the misleading “semi-Pelagian” with “Augustinian,” I follow Alexander Y. Hwang, Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace. The Life and Thought of Prosper of Aquitaine (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2009), 2–4.


texts and theological priorities of his Augustine over against the "other Augustines," and even the "pseudo Augustine," of his interlocutors. Chapter Six examines the *De praedestinatione contra Eriugena*. Against the prevailing view that Prudentius and his contemporaries were unable to understand the philosophically sophisticated work of Eriugena, which had been infused with Neoplatonic assumptions beyond the grasp of his contemporaries, this chapter will reveal our author as an intelligent reader and able opponent of the Scot. Prudentius’ reply to Eriugena will especially show his sophistication in the disciplines of logic and his deep familiarity with the late antique philosophical constructs evoked by his opponent.
Chapter One

Student, Court Chaplain, Bishop

As with other notable figures of the Carolingian period, precious little is known of the origins and early career of Prudentius, the great Carolingian era bishop of Troyes. The more secure chronologies of better documented ninth-century authors with whom our subject corresponded place his birth sometime near the turn of the century, not long after Charlemagne and his court had settled down at Aachen. Walahfrid Strabo (c.808-49) addressed Prudentius as one of his teachers; Theodulf of Orleans (d. 821) called him a student; and Lupus, abbot of Ferrières (c. 805-862), wrote as a friend and colleague. Thus his birth in the decade that falls on either side of the year 800, though far from certain, is nevertheless very likely. The fact of his Spanish origins and paternal name, "Galindo," are attested in a much-cited passage of Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, in his continuation of the Annals of St. Bertin: “Galindo, also called Prudentius, bishop of Troyes, Spanish by birth, was an especially learned man.” Despite the well-documented animus of Hincmar toward Prudentius later in his life, his testimony here is generally accepted as unproblematic.

Prudentius makes no explicit mention of Spanish origins in his own writings; however, he does allude at least once to his patria in a verse epigram, written upon the dedication of a display codex of the gospels to the Cathedral treasury of Troyes. Here his birth is located in Hesperia, “the land of the west.” “I, humble Prudentius, [was] born in hesperia, led to the Celts, elevated to the office of bishop, and given the white robes.” Virgil had identified hesperia with the western coast of Italy, "the land of soil and war,"

31 Ernst Dümmler, MGH, Poetae Karolini, II, p. 404. This poem will be discussed below. For the dating of Walahfrid’s birth, see Alice L. Harting-Correa, Walahfrid Strabo’s Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum (New York: Brill, 1996), 7.
32 Dümmler, MGH, Poetae Karolini, t. I, p. 579, l. 1. The possibility of a connection between Theodulf and Prudentius will be discussed at length below (pp. 14 ff.).
35 The challenge of interpreting Hincmar’s obituary, which is deeply critical of Prudentius, will be discussed at length below.
to which Aeneas and his Trojan refugees were destined to return. But by the time of Isidore the word’s meaning had broadened to signify western lands in general, or both Spain and Italy in particular: "both Italy and Spain are called Hesperia because the Greeks when they traveled to either Italy or Spain navigated with the help of the evening star Hesperus." Alcuin, Theodulf, and several minor poets of the Carolingian period followed Isidore in using the word in this fashion. There is, therefore, a strong likelihood that Prudentius was born in Spain.

The patronym “Galindo,” also attested by Hincmar, strengthens the probability of this Iberian connection. Whether the name is of Basque or of Visigothic derivation is unclear, but by the beginning of the ninth century, “Galindo” had become a familiar name among the ruling families of the area between the Ebro and the Pyrenees that the Franks had come to call their Spanish march. Aznar-Galindo, the first person on record to bear the name, was a fidelis of Charlemagne who lost his county to local insurrection in the years following the latter’s death. In 820 Louis the Pious granted this besieged client

---


38 *Italia autem et Hispamia idcirco Hesperiae dictae, quod Graeci Hespero stella navigent, et in Italia et in Hispania, quae haec ratione discernuntur; aut enim Hesperiam solam dicis, et signifias *Italiam*: aut addis *ultimam*, et signifias *Hispaniam*, quia in Occidentis est fine.* PL 82, 507B-508A; "However, both Italy and Spain are called *Hesperia* because the Greeks when they traveled to either Italy or Spain navigated with the help of the evening star Hesperus. These are distinguished in the following manner: when you speak of *hesperia* alone you refer to Italy, whereas when you add *Ultima* to it you refer to Spain because it lies in the furthest reaches of the West." Isidore, Etymologies, XIV.iv.18. (Stephen Barney, W. J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, Oliver Berghof, transl., *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).


40 The name is also attested in Carmen 79 in the poetic corpus of Theodulf of Orleans (to be discussed below).

41 R.P. Gonzalo Diez Melcon, *Apellidos Castellano-Leoneses* (Siglos IX-XIII, ambos inclusive) (Monachil: Universidad de Granada, 1957), 113. Diez Melcon lists “Galindo” under “apellidos Castellano-Leoneses de origen incierto o desconocido” but proceeds to venture some dubious guesses about eastern Gothic origins based on its apparent correspondence to ‘Γαλινδαί’ in Ptolemy.

the counties of Urgell and Cerdanya in return for his longstanding fidelity; and it is likely the death of this Galindo, who eventually defected to the rebellion of Louis’s son Pippin, that Prudentius himself records under the name "Count Aznar" in the Annals of St. Bertin’s entry for 836. Breyer notes yet another "lord Galindo" who lived into the 850s, appearing in the letter of Eulogius of Cordoba to Wiliesind of Pamplona regarding the fate of the Cordoba martyrs. Both Aznar-Galindo and Eulogius’s “Lord Galindo” are known to have originated in the region of Spain to the north of the Ebro River that would become Aragon, whose comital house continued to produce heirs by the name Galindo or Galindez well into the eleventh century.

The northern Spain in which the relatives of Galindo-Prudentius had their origins was a zone of social and political upheaval in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Frankish intervention across the Pyrenees had put both political and financial pressure on the Christian population of the peninsula, particularly in frontier areas like the Ebro valley that the Franks had failed to reclaim from the Caliphate. Iberian Christian migration north and east, in some cases across the Pyrenees, in an effort to escape local persecution is recorded in a number of aprisio grants through which Charlemagne rewarded his dispossessed allies with rights to uncultivated wastelands in Aquitaine and Septimania, especially in the Narbonnais. The small but important immigrant community that occupied these lands took with it the late Roman culture of learning still flourishing in the cities of northern Spain; and where they could find patronage, a few exceptional scholars from among this group continued to cultivate the classical heritage.

43 Nicolaus Antonius, in his ‘notitia historica’ on the life and works of Prudentius (which Migne reprints from the Biblioth. Vet. Hist. (PL 115, 965-72), goes so far as to suggest that Prudentius was the son of count Aznar, though he adduces no evidence to substantiate the claim. AB 836 (Levillan and Grat, Annales, 20): ‘Asenarius quoque citerioris Vuasconiae comes, qui ante aliquot annos a Pippino desciuerat, horribili morte interiit, fraterque illius Sancio Sanci eandem regionem negante Pippino occupauit.’ Thus, ‘Sancio Sanci’ or Sancho Sanchez might also have been a kinsman.

44 Breyer, Les vies, 2. The letter is printed in PL 115, 848C-849C; See also Ann Christys, Christians in Al-Andalus, 711-1000 (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2002) , 75.


46 The aprisio grant was first issued under Charlemagne in 780, when hispani or spani, mostly from Aragon and Navarre, were invited to seize and cultivate, free of local justice and taxes, wastelands in the Midi, in return for fidelity to the emperor and military service. See Lewis, Southern French and Catalan Society, 69-75; and Cullen J. Chandler, “Between Court and Counts: Carolingian Catalonia and the aprisio grant, 778-897,” Early Medieval Europe 11:1 (2002): 19-44.
Perhaps the most outstanding expatriate to emerge from this community was Theodulf of Orleans, the court scholar and poet. Theodulf had been a native of the Ebro valley, likely educated in Saragossa, who had come to Charlemagne’s court in the wake of the latter’s Spanish campaigns. He was well-admired at court for his theological acumen and his pithy and ironic verse, as well as for his ability to saddle friends and enemies alike with colorful and fitting epithets. Before Charlemagne entrusted him with the see of Orleans in 798, Theodulf had served as missus dominicus in southern France alongside Leidrad, bishop of Lyon. It is this period of royal service in Aquitaine that forms the inspiration for Theodulf’s Contra Iudices, in which he fondly remembers the reception paid him by "the crowd of Spaniards," his countrymen, as he approached the ancient city of Narbonne. The "throng of people and clerics" who greeted Theodulf in the Narbonnais, "the crowd of Spaniards," in particular, would have been the milieu of the family of Prudentius, the future bishop of Troyes.

Carmen 79 and Theodulf of Orleans

There is some reason to suggest that Theodulf himself was a teacher and mentor of the Spanish-born Galindo in the period prior to his becoming Prudentius. Beyond Theodulf's native ties to the region of Prudentius’ birth, one finds a possible connection between the two men in a verse epistle addressed to Prudentius, which Ernst Dümmler printed as Carmen 79 of Theodulf's poetic corpus. Dümmler had found the poem, whose author was unknown, placed between the known verses of Theodulf, Alcuin, and

50 ‘Mox sedes, Narbona, tuae urbeaque decoram/ Tangimus, occurrit quo mihi laeta cohos./ Reliquiae Geticì populi, simul Hespera turba/ Me consanguineo fit duce laeta sibi.’ MGH, Poetae Latini, t. 1, p. 497; Alexandrenko, “Poetry of Theodulf,” 164.
51 The only modern commentary to make this association is Gerardo Bruni, “Prudenzio,” Enciclopedia Italiana (1935).
Ermoldus Nigellus in a fifteenth-century manuscript of the British Museum (now British Library, Harley MS 3685, fol. 50v - 53v). Although the name "Teudulfus" appears in the body of the verse and the poem exhibits distinctively Theodulfian conceits and phraseology, Dümmler chose to attribute the work to an admirer and imitator of Theodulf rather than to the bishop himself.

The verse is an example of the "coterie poetry" of court, in which nicknames and epithets were used to praise friends and ridicule rivals, and poetic challenges and riddles were issued. Consistent with this style of verse, the poem employs the conceit of a personified parchment, or cartula, who is instructed by its master, the author of the poem, to carry sweet songs to a dear student bearing both the name Galindo and the cognomen Prudentius:

Carior in cunctis mihimet qui constat alumnis/ Ferto illi dulci, cartula, dulce melos;/ Nomine qui patrio fulget, praenomine nostro:/ Hinc rutilat Prudens, inde Galindo nitet./ Qui merito rebus radiat Prudentius ipsis/ Perpetuo certus, certus ubique puer./ Cum sua te teneris tractarit dextera palmis,/ Continuo nostros profer ab ore sonos./ Adde: ‘Vale, valeas, optat bis mille salutes,/ Qui dominus mihimet, qui pater ecce tuus.’ MGH, Poetae Latini, t. I, p. 579.

As the voices of the poet and the personified parchment come in throughout the poem, it can be challenging for the reader to distinguish the voice of one from the other, a challenge exacerbated by the sad state of the manuscript from which the verse is edited. Dümmler marks lacunae in the manuscript at ll. 26 and 51, and had noted in an earlier edition of the poem the problem of the text’s corruption by a copyist. Thus, when the poet introduces the name of "noster Teudulfus" in l. 34, it is not clear whether

---

53 Dümmler had discussed the problem of the poem’s authorship briefly in an earlier edition, "Gedichte an Prudentius," Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur 21 (1876), 76-86. Here he included 138 additional lines that fit only “very loosely” with the first 77 lines printed in the MGH edition. After discussing a possible attribution to Ermoldus Nigellus or Modoin of Autun, the earlier edition had left the poem anonymous.


he is speaking of Theodulf as someone distinct from himself or whether this "Teudulfus" is to be taken as the author of the poem, the same person elsewhere called "our lord," "your father":

If a noble man should be remembered for all of his merits, friend, then our dear Teudulfus, [should be remembered] in istis rebus.

Si meritis celsus cunctis memoretur in istis
Teudulfus noster rebus, amice, pius.

The possibility of Theodulf's authorship of the poem, on which depends the issue of his association with Prudentius, then, seems to hinge on two questions: first, in whose voice, the voice of the poet or of the parchment, is the Carmen speaking in line 34? And, secondly, what is the intended antecedent of in istis rebus? That is, in what manner or in what sort of "things" should "our Teudulfus" be remembered?

Dümmler's judgment that the poem was not Theodulf's was based on his conjecture that in istis rebus referred to a sequence of episodes described in ll. 15-26, wherein the parchment had referenced two contemporary visions of the underworld and of paradise. Thus Dümmler, in his notes to the MGH edition, suggests that 'in istis rebus' alludes to these visions and that Theodulf was among those already dead (presumably to be found in paradise).

It may be argued, however, that in istis rebus refers not to remembrance of an already dead Theodulf, in visione, but rather to the future memorialization of Theodulf, the author of the poem, through a poetic correspondence between himself and the young Prudentius. In lines 29-33, immediately preceding the reference to "noster Teudulfus," the personified parchment invites the young boy to engage in a poetic contest "with my lord," offering to carry back his poems and promising to engage the help of the most faithful muse Clio in this endeavor. Thus, it is not improbable that ll. 33-34 are in the voice of the *Cartula*, describing the manner in which Theodulf, the author of the poem, will be remembered, that is, in

---

57 Dümmler's reading of l. 4 leaves him to conclude that the poem is addressed from an "otherwise unknown Prudens to Prudentius, afterward bishop of Troyes" ('prius a Prudente quodam alias ignoto ad Prudentium, episcopum postea Trecensem, datum est'), MGH, *Poetae Latini*, t. I, p. 442; also see "Gedichte an Prudentius," 83-86.

the playful record of verses exchanged between master and student – verses exchanged between Theodulf and Prudentius.

Additional clues strengthen the case for Theodulfian authorship. In lines 39-42, the cartula recalls his lord visiting the shrine of the holy Aniane, whose church was in the diocese of Orleans, having been placed in the hand of Theodulf upon his elevation to the office of bishop. Furthermore, the poetic conceit of the personified poem, around which the confusion over authorship has centered, is itself a hallmark of Theodulf's verse. Carmen 30, which is indisputably the work of Theodulf, uses the same device (in a manner redolent of the poem to Prudentius) to greet the monks of St-Benoît-sur-Loire. The device is similarly deployed in Carmen 36, a verse letter to Charlemagne written as a preface to Theodulf's treatise on the Filioque. In both of these examples, Theodulf uses a personified poem to speak of himself in the third person. Finally, and most convincingly, the incipit of Carmen 79, ‘Carior in cunctis,’ appears twice in Theodulf's corpus (Carmina 79, 1 and 29, l. 56), but nowhere else in Carolingian verse, nor, as far as I can tell, in the corpus of medieval Latin poetry.

Then there is the matter of the name "Prudentius." It is almost certain that the name is intended to link the Spanish-born Galindo with Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, the great Latin Christian poet, himself a native of northern Spain. The fifth-century Prudentius was very well known to Theodulf and his contemporaries. His Psychomachia had been part of the curricula of Alcuin at York and of Rabanus Maurus at Fulda. And Theodulf himself singles the poet out for especial appreciation in his verse De


60 Verses exhibiting this conceit are (with the numbering of Dümmler, MGH, Poetae, t. 1, and with the personified object in parentheses): Carmen 2 (liber), Carmen 30 (charta), Carmen 36 (libelle) Carmen 42 (Bible), Carmen 72 (the muses Thalia and Erato).

61 De spiritu sancto, PL 105, 239-241.

62 Other examples in which Theodulf speaks of himself in the third person: Carmina: 2, 30, 36, 41, 42, 43, 59, 62, and 72.

63 I must thank Prof. Andy Orchard for his generous assistance and for introducing me to the searchable database of the Poetria Nova.

64 Isabelle Créte-Protin, Église et vie chrétienne dans le diocèse de Troyes du IVe au IXe siècle (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du septentrion, 2002), 288.

libris quos legere solembam: "And you, O Prudentius, who are able to express many things wisely in different meters, and who are one of ours, and our very kin." Nicknames and name changes were common among the churchmen and savants working in the circle of the Carolingian court, and frequently the gift of a new name, often taken from sacred history or classical mythology, was intended to confer an actual as well as symbolic identification of the individual with his archetype. Both Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, for example, were called David, after the Old Testament king whose example they most wished to follow. Witiza, the earnest young ascetic from Aquitaine, would signal his reform intentions by adopting the name of his monastic model, Benedict. And so Galindo would have received the name Prudentius as a way of underscoring his proximity in birth and in poetic gift to the much-admired author of the Psychomachia. Theodulf, a literary progeny of the fifth-century poet, and mentor to the younger Galindo, possibly issued the flattering nickname himself as an indication of the intellectual promise of a beloved student.

Education

If the reference to Prudentius as an “alumnus” of the person I have argued to be Theodulf of Orleans is in fact a meaningful one, it invites the question of where this student-teacher relationship was established, for how long, and in what subjects. Perhaps Prudentius’ early education was at a school under Theodulf’s supervision, in one of the monastic houses of the Orleanais that Charlemagne had granted to the bishop of Orleans in 798. The Admonitio Generalis of 789 had famously arranged for the establishment of “monastic schools,” wherein young boys, the sons of magnates as well as the lowborn, were to acquire a rudimentary education in grammar and rhetoric without the more onerous commitment entailed by oblation or an adult monastic profession. The careers of individuals like Rabanus Maurus, Einhard, Walahfrid Strabo, and Lupus of Ferrières point to the fluidity with which especially gifted students could move between the schools of the principal monastic centers and the imperial court. That


66 'Diversoque potens prudenter promere plura/ Metro, O Prudenti, noster et ipse parents.’ MGH, Poetae, I; Alexandrenko, “Poetry of Theodulf,” 257-258.


Theodulf’s intimacy with the young Prudentius could have taken root under circumstances similar to those provided for in the *Admonitio* is evident in the arrangements for such schools in Theodulf’s surviving capitularies for the diocese of Orleans. Here the bishop affirms permission for “anyone from among the clergy [of the diocese] who wishes to send his nephew or some other relative to school at the Church of the Holy Cross, or in the monastery of St. Aniane, or St. Benedict, or St. Lifard, or in the rest of those monasteries which were granted to us to rule.”

These monastic benefices resided in the diocese of Orleans, and very likely received considerable attention under Theodulf’s administration of the diocese. It is not impossible to think that Prudentius, whose family shared a regional affiliation with the bishop, might have studied at one of these schools, possibly under the distant, or even more immediate, supervision of Theodulf himself. Alternatively, Prudentius could have received his early education in the court of Louis the Pious, in the early years of his administration, when Theodulf remained a powerful presence prior to his censure and exile in 817.

**Arrival at Court**

In the late 810s or early 820s Prudentius joined the court entourage of the emperor, where he was attached to the palace chapel until Louis’ death in 840. An approximate date for his arrival at court can be put forward on the evidence of Theodulf’s verse letter, which Dümmler dated to “the early years of the reign of Louis the Pious.”

The poem instructs Prudentius, on behalf of Theodulf, to greet a group of friends (*socii*), among whom are listed three rising figures at court:

> Especially Clement, who shines, deservedly adorned with such a name, especially proven in piety.  
> And also Thomas, and equally the power of the Gondachi.  
> The mind of these men is like your own mind, Homer.  
> And to the rest of the crowd of beginners,  
> I sing a pair of songs with a singing pen.

---


70 Dümmler, "Gedichte an Prudentius," 85.

Clement is likely to be identified with Clement the Scot,72 whom Ermold Nigellus describes in his Carmen of 827 as a teacher or chaplain of the palace.73 In a necrology of Fulda, the same Clement, who died on 29 May of an unknown year, is described as having served as magister palatinus.74 He is likely the same Clementius to whom Ratgar of Fulda had sent students for the purpose of studying grammar (grammaticam studendi)75 and whom Notker Balboas, in his Gesta Karoli, (mistakenly) places in the court of Charlemagne, instructing students in the basics of grammar and rhetoric.76 Thomas is a bit more obscure, though he may be identified with Thomas, the praeceptor palatinus, whom Walafrid Strabo addresses in his Carmen 36. “Gondachus,” whom Dümmler took as an alias for “Gunzo,” was presumably a leader of the gang called by the poem the “Gondachi.”77 A courtier named Gunzo would later appear as sinescalcus, chief cook (princeps cocorum), and regiae mensae praepositus between the years 820 and 826.78

If we read Carmen 79 as instructing its recipient to greet as socii the men listed above, all of whom would be serving in positions of high standing within the court in the mid-820s, it is safe to conclude that the poem was written sometime before, when it was still appropriate to address these men of the court as students. Certainly, by 825 it would no longer have been fitting to place such men of rank among a "herd of beginners" (agmina tironum), as friends and associates of an adolescent Prudentius (puer). Thus, on the

---

72 Philippe Depreux, Prosopographie de l’entourage de Louis le Pieux (781-840) (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1997), 155-56.
73 “In the meantime, holy preparations for Mass were readied, and the signal was given for men to attend to the highest rites. The church shone with a glittering array of clergy; the agreeable house flourished with the marvelous arrangements. The corp of priests gathered on Clement’s instructions, and the pious deacons sparkled in good order. Theudo led the choir of singing clergy, and Adhallvitus was there bearing his baton . . .” Ermoldus Nigellus, Elegiacum carmen, lib. iv, ll. v. 2284ff. Thomas Noble, trans., Charlemagne and Louis the Pious. Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and the Astronomer. (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 179. Latin text in Ermold le Noir, Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épitres au roi Pépin, ed. by E. Faral (Paris, 1932, 1964), 174.
74 ‘et (obitus) Clementis presbiteri magistri palatini,’ Dümmler, “Karolingische Miscellen,” Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte 6 (1866), 116; Depreux, Prosopographie, 156.
75 ‘Tertius abbas Ratger . . . direxit . . . Modestum cum aliis ad Clementem Scotum grammaticam studendi’ (quoted from Depreux, Prosopographie, 155).
76 Gesta Karoli, lib. I, c. 1. (quoted from Depreux, Prosopographie, 155). Manitius describes a grammatical treatise ascribed to this same Clementius, which suggests that Theodulf’s praise of him here, as a fellow luminary of Prudentius, is not entirely unjustified. For the treatise on Grammar attributed to Clementius the Scot, see J. Tolkiehn, ed., Clementis ars grammatica (Leipzig, 1928); for its evaluation see Manitius, Geschichte der Lateinischen Literatur, 456.
78 Depreux, Prosopographie, 227.
basis of this internal evidence alone, it appears that the poem was written no later than 820. If Theodulf was indeed its author, it must have been written before 821, the year of his death, though it was probably composed before 817, the year of the bishop’s exile to Angers.\textsuperscript{79} Accepting a date of 820 or earlier for the composition of Carmen 79 would then place Prudentius, by that same year, in the company of other men known to have been at court. Therefore, we may say that Prudentius was at court perhaps as early as 817, but certainly before 820/21.

Apart from what can be inferred from the evidence of Carmen 79, there are two additional clues that indicate a substantial period of service at court. The first is an undated letter composed by Prudentius during his pontificate as bishop of Troyes and addressed to an unidentified recipient, probably a bishop or abbot, in which he expresses relief at "being finally cut loose from the guard of the palace, in which I had been compelled to serve for a long time."\textsuperscript{80} The brief letter, which consists mostly of the \textit{topoi} of ecclesiastical greeting and benediction, was thought by Prudentius’ eighteenth-century biographer to have been written to a blood relative, perhaps a bishop residing in Spain.\textsuperscript{81} There is, however, no reference to Spain in the letter, nor is there any evidence that the fraternal language articulated in the greeting should be read outside of the normal expression of affection and respect of one bishop for another. The letter's preservation in the Formulary of Murbach,\textsuperscript{82} which collects short communications of all genres to serve as a repository of exemplary style, would seem to confirm that the language is thoroughly conventional.

Finally, a formal presence at court as a palace cleric or notary is suggested by Prudentius’ authorship of a section, covering approximately twenty-six years, of the annals misleadingly called by modern editors the \textit{Annales Bertiniani}. The \textit{Annales} are a continuation, beginning with the entry for 830, of the \textit{Annales Regni Francorum (ARF)}, which had become, from the year 794 onwards, a court product written


\textsuperscript{80} ‘... cum repente vix tandem a palatinis excubiis, quibus diu inservire coactus fueram, absolutus...' PL115, 1367.


\textsuperscript{82} Karl Zeumer, ed., MGH, \textit{Leges, Formulae Merovingici et Karolini aevi}, p. 329.
by chaplains in the royal palace. Some manuscripts of the *Annals* append their text directly to the *Royal Frankish Annals* without any break or rubric indicating the start of a new work. Thus it is appropriate to conclude that, just as the final years of the *ARF* were written under the supervision of arch-chaplain Hilduin, the *Annals of St. Bertin* must similarly have been written by a clerk or chaplain of the palace, if not by the arch-chaplain himself. For the period 830-835, the author was likely Fulco, arch-chaplain of the palace and temporarily archbishop of Rheims after the deposition of Ebbo. But from 835 onwards the new arch-chaplain, Drogo of Metz, appears to have relinquished authorship of these records to a clerk of the palace who worked under his supervision. This anonymous cleric was likely Prudentius, the future bishop of Troyes. Prudentius' authorship of a later portion of the annals is explicitly attested in an 866 letter of Hincmar of Rheims to Egilo of Sens, in which Hincmar complains that, in his entry for 859, Prudentius had misrepresented the position of Nicholas I on the doctrines of Gottschalk. The occasion for this disagreement will be explored at length in Chapters 5 and 6, but here it suffices to note that the *Annales*’ modern editors have used the fact of stylistic consistency in the writing between the mid-830s and 860 to suggest that Prudentius’ responsibility for their production extends back to 835 during a stint of service in the palace chapel.

Therefore, based on the evidence of Carmen 79, on his own reference to court service, and finally, on the fact of his authorship of the *Annals of St. Bertin*, a court product, it can be concluded that, before assuming the see of Troyes in the mid-840s, Prudentius devoted nearly twenty years to attendance at court, much of this time working as a cleric or notary in the palace chapel.

---

86 'Nam idem Gothecalcus, vel quia jam tempus est ut veniat quod Paulus praedixit apostolus de ultimis temporibus, vel invidia mei, quasi me tangat quod jussu episcoporum illum custodio, dicitur multos habere fautores, sicut habuit dominum Prudentium, sicut scripta ipsius testantur, quae a pluribus qui illa habent possunt proferri. Qui etiam, videlicet dominus Prudentius, in Annali gestorum nostrorum regum, quae composuit, ad confirmandum suam sententiam, gestis anni Dominicae Incarnationis 859 indidit dicens, Nicolaus pontifex Romanus de gratia Dei et libero arbitrio, de veritate geminae praedestinationis, et de sanguine Christi, ut pro credentibus omnibus fusus sit, fideliter confirmat et catholice decernit.' PL126, 70B (Listed in the PL as letter IX, to Archbishop Egilo).
Court and Court Chapel in Imperial Administration

The admission of a distant-born provincial into the circle of court administration is consistent with the picture emerging in the recent scholarship on the imperial strategy of Louis the Pious. Under Louis, the court actively worked to marry Carolingian magnates into the local aristocracies of frontier regions, and, conversely, sought to bring the children and kinsmen of distant fideles into positions of influence in the Frankish heartlands, thus using the social institutions of the court (aula, palatium) to make the unity of the populus christianus a political as well as spiritual reality. Critical to the success of this enterprise was the recruitment of foreign-born pueri like Prudentius to serve as functionaries in the palace chapel – the informal ecclesiastical community made up of all the clerici, both priests and clerics in lesser orders, who worked in the entourage of the Emperor.

Derived from the group of clerics who attended the cult of St. Martin's cape (cappa) under Charles Martel, the term chaplain or capellanus can occasion the same kind of ambivalence in ninth-century documents as the word clericus in subsequent centuries. Palace chaplains doubtless concerned themselves with the performance of sacred service in the court chapels, with chant, biblical and liturgical scholarship, and the upkeep of chapel fabric, but they also took up the more secular bureaucratic functions that would, in the twelfth century, become associated with the work of the royal chancellery. Hincmar’s De ordine palatii, written in 887 as a recollection of the court at its apogee in the 820s and 30s, describes the all-important office of apocrisiarius, or archchaplain, who presided over both the liturgical and

---


88 As Matthew Innes has said of the concept of the court itself: "The court was a sociological community, not a geographical place. Its composition ebbed and flowed to a seasonal rhythm, and the king's own physical location changed in similar time. At the core of the court, however, lay a well-defined group who saw themselves as palatini, even when they were not at court. Their social identity was defined by their membership of the community of the court, and the customs, habits, and obligations that they shared on account of this." "A Place of Discipline," 61.
bureaucratic functions of the court. According to Hincmar, all capellani, both those occupied with sacred service and those with more secular bureaucratic functions, including the chancellor, would have worked under the archchaplain's supervision.

The precise nature of the work of these clerics, the concrete environment in which they carried out their work, and the nature of the institution of the palace itself remain the subject of much debate in the scholarship. Nevertheless, based on the evidence available to us, we can sketch a picture of Prudentius’ activities and preoccupations during his time at court: We can surmise that, upon reaching the canonical age of twenty-five, he likely received ordination and, thus, that he may have lived under a rule for canons, though the complaint of Wala of Corbie that at court there were clerics living neither as monks nor as canons suggests that not all palace clerics lived under a rule. He would have participated in divine services, certainly at Aachen but also at Ingleheim, Paderborn, Thionville, Compiègne, Attigny, and Frankfurt, and at as many as 150 other palace complexes and royal residences occupied by Louis and his entourage over the twenty years of Prudentius’ time of service. It would have been odd were he not among the teeming ranks of clergy whom Ermoldus Nigellus describes grouped under the command of

---


90 There is a great deal of debate over whether the reign of Louis the Pious is too early to distinguish between clerics as scribes and notaries working in a nascent chancellery and ordained clergy responsible for sacramental and liturgical functions. See Depreux, Prosopographie, 13-21.


92 For the reform of secular canons under Charlemagne, see M. A. Claussen, The Reform of the Frankish Church. Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula canoniceorum in the Eighth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); the text of the Institutio Canonicorum, the regula promulgated for all collegiate clergy at Aachen (817/18), has recently been studied and translated in Jerome Bertram, The Chrodegang Rules. The Rules for the Common Life of the Secular Clergy from the Eighth and Ninth Centuries. Critical Texts with Translations and Commentary (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005).

93 Paschius, Epitaphium, p. 66. ‘Praesertim et militiam clericorum in palatio, quos capellanos vulgo vocant, quia nullus est ordo ecclesiasticus, denotatam plurimum, qui non ob aliiud servivunt, nisi ob honores ecclesiariam et questus saeculi, ac luceri gratiam sine probatione magisterii, atque ambitiones mundi. Quorum itaque vita neque sub regula est monachorum, neque sub episcopo militat canonice, presertim cum nulla alia tyrocinia sint ecclesiariam, quam sub his duobus ordinibus’ (quoted from Depreux, Prosopographie, 17).

94 For the number 150, see Stuart Airlie, "The Palace of Memory," 9 (who cites Werner, 'Missus-Marchio-Comes,' 231.)
Clement the Scot on the triumphant occasion of the baptism of Harald the Dane and his family in 826. In the early 830s, Prudentius would have confronted, along with some one hundred other palace clerics, the question of whom to support in the rebellions that culminated in the deposition of Louis the Pious. Based on his continuing presence at court in the 830s, he was assuredly not among those who sided with Ebbo of Rheims against the emperor. Prudentius also held a front row seat to the spectacle of palace cleric Bodo’s conversion to Judaism while on pilgrimage to Rome (of which so much is made in his annal entries for 839 and 847), and would have been among those advisers tasked with interpreting the apocalyptic warning of an English priest, addressed to Louis the Pious by way of the West Saxon King Aethelwulf. He might also have been present, as Janet Nelson has argued, with Drogo of Metz and the archbishops of Mainz and Trier, when in June 840 Louis the Pious died “on an island in the Rhine downstream from Mainz, within sight of the palace of Ingelheim.” For it was Prudentius himself, in his *Annals*, who recorded the moment and place of the emperor’s passing.

**Friends and Associates**

While at court Prudentius formed ties with those who were to become the dominant voices in the social, political, and intellectual worlds he would inhabit as the eventual bishop of Troyes. Most important among these ties was the friendship forged with a young Charles the Bald, who would emerge from the fraternal squabbles of the early 840s as ruler of the western Franks. Charles’ mother, the empress Judith, has been identified with the *nobilis matrona* who may have commissioned our author’s *Flores*.  

---


96 Depreux’s prosopographical entries for the entourage of Louis the Pious illustrate this test of fidelity nicely. The careers of those clerics who were present at Thionville, at the deposition of Ebbo, seem to continue throughout the 830s and 40s; those who conspired with Ebbo usually disappear, with a few notable exceptions, like Agobard of Lyon. Courtney Booker has reedited the episcopal *Relatio* of the public penance of Louis the Pious, C. M. Booker, “The Public Penance of Louis the Pious: A New Edition of the *Épiscoporum de poenitentia, quam Hludovicus imperator professus est, relatio Compendiensis* [833],” *Viator* 39:2 (2008): 1-19.

97 This is the judgment of Depreux, *Prospopographie*, 350.


101 Matthew Innes, “‘A place of discipline,’” 59-76.
Psalmorum, possibly written in 830-33,¹⁰² and, though no correspondence between Prudentius and the western Frankish king survives, the court chaplain's elevation to episcopal office shortly after the settlement of 843 suggests that the two men had established, at the very least, a relationship of mutual respect and trust during Prudentius' years of palace service.

No less important than this connection with Charles were the relationships Prudentius established with his eventual peers in high ecclesiastical office. Philippe Depreux's work on the prosopography of the court of Louis the Pious has shown the extent to which the palace chapel functioned as a school for the bishops and abbots who dominated ecclesiastical politics in the Neustrian heartlands at mid-century. Of the men whose subscriptions are found alongside Prudentius’ at regional councils in the 840s and 50s, at least ten can be identified as alumni of the palace circle of Louis in the 830s.¹⁰³ Hucbert of Meaux and Rhothad of Soissons, whose dioceses bordered Troyes, were familiars of Prudentius from his time at court, as was Hincmar of Rheims, an oblate of St. Denis with access to the palace through abbot Hilduin, archchaplain from 814-830.

At court Prudentius would have met Lupus Servetus, the erudite monk and later abbot of Ferrières, whose strong view of predestination he later shared against the positions of Hincmar and Eriugena in the predestination controversy of the 850s. Lupus, who was educated at both Ferrières and Fulda, had become attached to the court circle in the late 830s, possibly as a palace chaplain.¹⁰⁴ In a letter addressed to Prudentius in the early 840s, Lupus reveals that the two men had worked together, at the insistence of Charles the Bald, to undertake monastic reform in the Orleanais and Senonais, a project which also involved Heribald, bishop of Auxerre, another veteran of the palace from the 830s.¹⁰⁵

During his time in the palace chapel, Prudentius also came to know and perhaps served as a mentor to the younger Walahfrid Strabo, tutor of Charles the Bald and later abbot of Reichenau.¹⁰⁶ Walahfrid has been placed at court between 829 and 838, during which time he likely served as a chaplain to the empress Judith.¹⁰⁷ An undated verse epistle, addressed from Strabo to Prudentius, reveals the two men to

---

¹⁰² Depreux, Prospographie, 350.
¹⁰³ See Appendix II, a list of alumni of the entourage of Louis the Pious with whom Prudentius would work in the 840s-50s.
¹⁰⁴ Depreux, Prospographie, 322-23.
¹⁰⁶ Harting-Correa, Libellus de exordiis, 7-8.
¹⁰⁷ Depreux, Prospographie, 393-94.
have developed a friendship based on mutual respect and affection for old books. Walahfrid calls his correspondent "magister" and identifies himself as one of Prudentius’ students, an exchange reminiscent of the correspondence between the younger Lupus of Ferrières and an aging Einhard, in which Lupus eagerly seeks out new witnesses to the text of Cicero’s *De inventione rhetorica*, among other books. After an extended salutation, Walahfrid states that he is sending to Prudentius a copy of the poems of Modoin, bishop of Autun. In return, he requests the "more polished works of Lucian," the "minor poems of the great Virgil," and, suggestively, some of Prudentius’ own *monimenta*. Given the context of their appearance in a list of poetic works, these unspecified monuments were very probably works of verse – none of which, unfortunately, survives.

Prudentius’ time at court came to an end with the death of Louis the Pious in June 840. Whether the aging palace cleric would have immediately joined the faction of Frankish magnates in support of Charles the Bald is unclear. Janet Nelson has convincingly argued that the silence of the *Annals of St. Bertin* on the detailed movements of Charles and his brothers during the period 840-41 suggests that Prudentius, their author, remained unaligned until after news of Lothar's defeat at Fontenoy (June 841). On this view, the palace cleric's elevation to the see of Troyes, in the years following the Treaty of Verdun (843), should be understood in the context of the wider efforts of Charles the Bald to win and retain the support of his father's advisors through generous distribution of fiefs and ecclesiastical benefices in the Neustrian heartlands.

Prudentius, "unworthy Bishop of Troyes"

The subscription of “Prudentius, the unworthy bishop of Troyes,” first appears in the winter of 846/47 among the list of bishops who approved the *acta* of a regional council held in Paris. Since the last

---

110 'Accipe, mitto tibi Modoini carmina magni./ In quibus invenies quod ferias, quod ames./ Mitte politorem Lucani vel mihi magni/ Carmina Virgilii mitte minora, precor./ Mitte tui monimenta salis; describe, quid obstet./ Quidve tibi laetis rideat exitibus.' Dümmler, MGH, *Poetae Latini*, t. II, p. 404.
113 Hartmann, MGH, *Concilia*, t. III, p. 149: ‘Prudentius sanctae Trecassine ecclesiae indignus episcopus huic privilegio auctoritate episcopali assentiens in sanctae trinitatis nomine subscripti.’
securely dated council attended by his predecessor was held at Germigny in September-October of 843; Prudentius’ elevation is generally dated between 843 and 846, though the date can probably be put closer to 844. The veteran palace cleric had taken part in a campaign of monastic visitation and reform initiated by King Charles in the fall of that year. Though there is no necessary connection between this mission and Prudentius’ elevation, it is quite possible that recommendation for the office of bishop was intended to confer on a faithful palace servant the ecclesiastical rank proper to his new work as a *missus*, or legate, of the king.

The possibility of a direct connection between Prudentius’ elevation and a short period of service as *missus dominicus* is supported by the fortunate survival of an undated letter of Lupus to Prudentius. The letter has Lupus, by now abbot of Ferrières, writing as a somewhat nervous co-legate to alert “his very dear Prudentius” (notably, Lupus does not address him as bishop) to an urgent matter which will soon require his cooperation. On 7 April (probably of 845), Heribald, bishop of Auxerre, had visited the abbey of Ferrières to convey the wishes of the king that Lupus and Prudentius should complete a mission begun in the previous year. Heribald had just finished his own mission of monastic visitation and was returning to Auxerre, having made his full report to the king. “We should promptly and hastily do the same so that the king would be able to gain information concerning the individual monasteries at the general assembly,” writes Lupus.

... [L]et us know at once by letter how you are feeling and what your pleasure is in this matter. ... For the consideration which the king had for us (indeed he was the very one who had sent us) has been made clear by the honor conferred upon us and by the restoration of religion in the monasteries. I have decided therefore to submit my personal views to the king on these matters before we undertake the mission, to obtain an imperial letter of authorization, and then if it meets with God’s favor to set out. Will you in turn write me your opinion so that the two of us may arrive at the best course of action?¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ *Ut autem hinc meam sententiam vobis aperiam, supervacuum judico loca, quorum statum jam perspeximus, iterum adire, quando nulla sit correctio subsecuta et in Aurelianensi ac Senonico et vestro ac nostro pago restent quaedam coenobia in quibus tempus interim terere possumus, ut, sicut in alis locis, ita et in his etiam emendanda per nos rex cognoscat. Et ne in legatis ejus iuspius jussio conimentatur, si voluerit, sanciat. Quanti enim simus habiti, immo ipse qui nos miserat, nobis impensus honor patefecit et monasteriorum instaurata religio. Proinde antequam legationem adoriamur, regi per me de his quae videbuntur suggerere statui et tractorias accipere et tunc, favente Dei gratia, profisci. Viciissim ergo sensum vestrum litteris exprimite, ut optimum factu ex utriusque ingenio colligatur. Illud autem non vos fugiat, quantumcumque in hac legatione laboraverimus, nec nobis nec hominibus nostris aliquid remittendum, quin agamus quod ceteri, si motus his, qui actenus vexarunt, extiterint.*
While concerned about the difficulty of travel in the early spring, Lupus, ever-mindful of the *honor* which the king had conferred upon the two men, believes that he and Prudentius should complete their mission in an expeditious fashion. The word *honor* in this context could very well mean the specific reward of “ecclesiastical office.” We know that Lupus owed his own elevation to abbot (probably in 840) to the patronage of Charles.\(^{115}\) And, though it is unclear whether the history of patronage that colors Lupus’ use of the word should be likewise extended to the elevation of Prudentius, it does seem probable that Charles had recommended Prudentius to the see of Troyes, not only for his loyalty in the campaigns of 841-43, but also for his more recent period of service as *missus dominicus* in Burgundy.

Lupus’s letter was most likely written in April of 845.\(^{116}\) Heribald had visited on 7 April, and presumably Lupus would have written immediately thereafter. Because the letter suggests that Lupus and Prudentius had previously begun their mission before being interrupted by the difficulties of winter travel, it is likely that they, along with Heribald and other prelates, had received their initial orders in December 844 at the Synod of Ver, or perhaps as early as October 844. In October a synod had been held at Yütz, near the palace of Thionville, under the leadership of Archbishop Drogo of Metz with Charles, Louis, and Lothar, along with their *fideles*, in attendance. The main purpose of the meeting had been to address the issue of widespread monastic irregularity evident throughout lands under Carolingian control.\(^{117}\) The December 844 Synod of Ver (modern Ver-sur-Launette, just north of Paris), then, seems to have been

---

\(^{115}\) Regenos, “Introduction,” viii.

\(^{116}\) Levillain, *Correspondence*, t. I, 172.

\(^{117}\) Canon V of the Synod of Yütz: ‘Et ideo de canonicorum monasteriis et sanctimonialium, quae sub eadem forma vivere dicuntur, consideravimus, sicut apostolus Paulus dicit, *secundum indulgentiam, non secundum imperium*, ut, si propter imminentem rei publicae necessitatem laicos interim committuntur, episcopi providentia, in cuius parrochia consistunt, adiuncto sibi aliquot abbate viro religioso studeatur, qualiter restauratio locorum et studium ac custodia officii et religionis atque subsidium temporalis necessitatis in eisdem locis decentibus iuxta qualitatem et quantitatem moderationis adhibeatur et ministretur; et qui eadem loca tenuerint, eis inde, sicut et de aliis christianae religionis negotiis, pro Christi et vestra reverentia oboediatur. Quodsi quis non fecerit, provisorum curae erit, ut ad vestram hoc notitiam referant, et vestra dominatio secundum sibi a deo commissum ministerium pro modo culpaes, quae emendanda sunt, corrigit. Per loca etiam monastica eiusdem ordinis provisores necesse erit disponere, cum vestra auctoritas eos, qui vices Christi secundum regulam divinitus dictatam in monasteriis agant, studuerit ordinare.’ Hartmann, ed., *MGH, Concilia*, t. III p. 34.
intended to apply locally the concerns about monastic irregularity first raised at Yütz. Canons III and IV of the Synod of Ver clearly describe the same program of monastic visitation, which Prudentius, Lupus, and Heribald, among others, had been tasked with carrying out:

We find that, in the holy places, that is, the monasteries, some deviate in zeal from their profession, a few in laziness, many in the necessary manner of diet and dress. Therefore, we ask that religious men of suitable quality, who have been directed to every parish by your Excellence with the knowledge of the bishops, should examine and correct the state of each place and should report in time to your Highness and to our smallness.\textsuperscript{118}

We know from the letter of Lupus that the jurisdiction of Lupus and Prudentius was to include, in addition to “your province and mine,” the Orleanais and the Senonais, as well as other unnamed provinces which the two men had previously visited.\textsuperscript{119} Their jurisdiction also likely included the diocese of Autun, judging from the evidence of yet another letter of Lupus, written to Usuard, a recalcitrant abbot of an unnamed monastery in that diocese.\textsuperscript{120} The proximity of the diocese of Troyes to the three ecclesiastical provinces identified in the letters of Lupus suggests that Prudentius had already been installed as bishop prior to undertaking his monastic visitation. Because we can date the initial program of visitation to the Synods of Yütz (Oct. 844) and Ver (Dec. 844), then, it seems probable that Prudentius had assumed his see by autumn of 844 at the latest.

\textit{The Diocese of Troyes}

With his elevation to the office of bishop, we can now, for the first time, imagine Prudentius in a concrete geographical setting. The diocese of Troyes was nestled in central Champagne, a region of rolling chalk plains and gentle, sloping rises surrounded on all sides by vast woods, by the Ardennes and Argonne to the northeast; the Der and Othe in the south; and in the northwest, toward Paris, by the forest Brie.\textsuperscript{121} A

\textsuperscript{118} Canon III, Synod of Ver (Dec. 844): ‘In locis sanctis, hoc est monasteriis, alios studio, nonnullos desidia, multos necessitate victus et vestimenti a sua professio deviare comperimus. Quod petimus, ut in omnibus parroechiis directi a vestra mansuetudine religiosi atque idonei viri cum notitia episcoporum scrutentur et corrigant ac singulorum locorum statum vestrae celsitudini et nostrae mediocritati tempore a vobis constituendo renuntient.’ Hartmann, ed., MGH, \emph{Concilia}, t. III, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{119} Levillain, \emph{Correspondance}, t. I, 172. For the Latin text, see above, p. 25, n. 114.

\textsuperscript{120} MGH, \emph{Epistulae}, t. III, p. 72.

\textsuperscript{121} Both the \textit{civitas} and the ecclesiastical diocese of Troyes are the subject of a number of illuminating local histories and archeological studies. A far from exhaustive list includes: Philippe Riffaud-Longuespe, ed. \textit{Troyes}
spidery network of rivers links the eastern reaches of Champagne with the Seine, which flows through the civitas of Troyes toward Paris, some 160 km downstream. With its dry, barren plains, cleared by the Celts before the arrival of the Romans in the first century BC, Champagne would have reminded Prudentius more of the Narbonnais than of the fertile Rhine valley in which he had likely passed many of his years at court.\textsuperscript{122} The Roman road linking Troyes to the Parisian basin in the north and the wealthy cities of the Rhone Valley – Lyon, Vienne, and Arles – to the south made the city a hub for the exchange of goods and ideas between Gallo-Roman Provence and the Neustrian heartlands, an intermediate position that would have shaped the political and intellectual allegiances of the city and of its inhabitants.\textsuperscript{123} Prudentius, for example, will be shown in a subsequent chapter to have allied himself with the powerful see of Lyon, some 240 km to the south, in the fractious debates over the doctrine of predestination that preoccupied the Frankish church in the 850s.

Here in the heartland of Champagne, our subject found himself pastor of an ancient church that played a central role in mediating between the influential sees of the Rhone river valley and those of the Parisian basin. The diocese of Troyes had been founded in the early fourth century by St. Sabinus, bishop of Sens, with the help of his evangelist St. Potentius. The bodies of these founder-saints would be miraculously uncovered by Archbishop Wenilo and translated to the abbey church of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif (Sens) in 847, in the early years of Prudentius’ pontificate.\textsuperscript{124} From the time of its fourth-century foundation the church of Troyes had remained a suffragan of the archdiocese of Sens, under whose jurisdiction it would remain down to the early nineteenth century when it became incorporated into the newly established archdiocese


\textsuperscript{122} Créte-Protin, \textit{Diocèse de Troyes}, 19-20.


\textsuperscript{124} Créte-Protin, \textit{Diocèse de Troyes}, 74-75.
of Paris. At the time of Prudentius’ pontificate, the boundaries of the diocese bordered the sees of Châlons and Soissons in the north and east, Langres in the south, and Sens and Meaux in the west.125

Prudentius’ material and spiritual power as bishop was grounded in the local networks of patronage and pious giving that centered on the holy places of the church of Troyes and its diocese.126 The shrines of the saintly dead and the principal monastic foundations of the diocese were all potential reservoirs of political and spiritual power. The ancient cathedral church of SS. Peter and Paul and its baptistery, of which nothing remains today, had been built in the early fifth century, within the walls of the city, along the road linking Lyon to Auxerre.127 In the sixth and seventh centuries, a modest episcopal palace, oratories and chapels, and a large abbey church for women, Notre-Dame-aux-Nonnains, elaborated the cathedral into an imposing complex of buildings.128 By the tenth century, the abbess of Notre-Dame-aux-Nonnains seems to have played an important role in the local ritual of episcopal consecration, as the person from whom the incoming bishop of Troyes would receive his mitre. It is even possible that this practice extended back into the years of Prudentius’ pontificate.129

In the suburb of the civitas, situated just outside the walls, was another large abbey church, the basilica of Saint-Loup.130 Lupus had been the fifth-century bishop of Troyes and saint, identified as the companion of St. Germanus of Auxerre on his mission to eradicate the Pelagian heresy in Britain. Lupus

---

125 See the map of "le Ancien diocèse de Troyes" in Prévost, Diocèse de Troyes, ii.


127 Crété-Protin, Diocèse de Troyes, 195-96.

128 Crété-Protin, Diocèse de Troyes, 196.

129 For the role of the abbess in the ritual of consecration, see R. Rohmer, “L’abbaye bénédictine de Notre-Dame-aux-Nonnains des origines à l’année 1503,” in Positions et thèses de l’école des Chartes, 1905, 123-129. I have not been able to confirm the claims of this text. I am omitting a description of the abbey of Saint-Quentin, since it is so poorly documented. Founded in the seventh century, the shrine of Saint Quentin appears to have been the site of an abbey church or perhaps of a priory, which may, by the time of Prudentius, have been attached to the Cathedral. See Crété-Protin, Diocèse de Troyes, 196-98.

130 For the archaeology of the abbey of Saint-Loup, see Crété-Protin, Diocèse de Troyes, 201.
served as a fitting example and predecessor for Prudentius, who later devoted such sustained attention to the doctrines of divine grace and human freedom in his correspondence with Hincmar and Eriugena. In the ninth century, the reputation of Saint Lupus seems to have centered on his sanctity, as well as on his role in averting the ravages of Attila during the Huns’ attempted sack of the city in 451.¹³¹ His church, which was rebuilt in the fifteenth century, then later destroyed in the Revolution, is the site today of a local museum.

Echoes of Prudentius’ zealous protection of his jurisdiction over religious houses in the diocese can be heard in the short treatise of Hincmar, *Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis*, which attempts to defend the rights of Rheims over its proprietary churches located within the diocese of Troyes. The work was likely written in response to a (now lost) letter from Prudentius arguing for his diocese’s jurisdiction over the tithe revenue of the churches in question.¹³² Alongside the increasingly hostile confrontation between Hincmar and Prudentius over the orthodoxy of Gottschalk’s teachings, this dispute over ecclesiastical revenues likely contributed to the growing rift between the archbishop of Rheims and the bishop of Troyes. Nothing is known of Prudentius’ response to the request of Pope Leo IV that he confirm the privileges of a monastery founded by the monk Adremar and his brothers, though his receipt of a letter from Rome further illustrates the wide and powerful network of correspondents who addressed him in his role as bishop of the ancient and politically powerful church of Troyes.¹³³


¹³³ Witnessed in a letter of Pope Leo IV edited in MGH, *Epistolae*, t. II, p. 611. ‘Cognoscat prudentia sanctitatis tuae, qualiter hic religiosus monachus Adremarus nomine cum monachis suis, cum summa devotione ad laudem et gloriam sanctae Trinitatis et remedium animae suae suorumque omnium in honorem beati Petri apostolorum principis seu et sancti Leonis eiusdem vicarii papae monasterium desiderat consecrare et situm ac structuram eius sancti coenobii in rebus iuris iam dicti beati Petri apostoli, quae eius vere sunt, fundare ac constitue: quae res praedictae Guidoni gloriosissimo comiti per praeceptum pontificale donate sunt. Quam ob causam iubemus ac hortamur sanctitatem tuam, ut quando ab illius monasterii praedictis monachis, fueris humilitate postulatus, illuc accedere debes, et locum, quem vobis significaverit, ipsas illic reliquias supra nominatorum sanctorum, quas a nobis acceptit, eo tenore et conditione recondas atque consecres, ut semper et perpetuiter sub iure ac potestate sanctae nostrae Romanae ecclesiae iam fatum monasterium consistat atque permaneat. Sanctitatem tuam omnipotens Deus incoluorem custodiat, frater. Bene vale.’
Bishop and Diocese

Prudentius assumed his see in the middle of the ninth century, in the waning years of an era of high-minded reform of the Frankish episcopacy. The former court chaplain no doubt found himself a magnate—a landholder, military and civic administrator, and instrument of regional government. But his primary role was to fulfill the episcopal office as set forth in the ancient canons of the church: to be a pious shepherd and pastor, an agent of peace and concord, faithful teacher, and tireless corrector of the Christian flock. Citing canons likely derived from the Dionysio-Hadriana, the reform legislation of the Frankish church in the late eighth and early ninth centuries had commended to its episcopate the ancient and canonical model of the office of bishop. The Admonitio Generalis (789), for example, admonished those who attained the episcopal dignity to exemplify personally and charismatically the moral uprightness of a Christian pastor, to be temperate and sober-minded, blameless in every facet of life. Having embodied personally the virtues to be sought in good pastors and clerics, the bishop was then to cultivate those virtues in the clergy and religious of his diocese through a vigorous schedule of visitation and examination. This supervisory role of the bishop extended to his responsibility for examining candidates for ordination and providing for the education of his clergy. “For no one may be a complete priest, deacon, or abbot without the instruction of the bishop, for those who are without knowledge or

---

134 See Franeeen S. Hoyt, “The Carolingian Episcopate: Concepts of Pastoral Care as set forth in the Capitularies of Charlemagne and his Bishops.” Yale University PhD Dissertation (1975). Hoyt notes that the abuses of Carolingian rulers regarding the canonical role of bishops must be taken into account. Under Charlemagne and his successors, bishops were elevated by non-canonical elections and were expected to violate ancient canons which forbade the mobilization of clergy on the field of battle. But despite these (admittedly severe) violations, the ideal bishop described in the Capitulary legislation of the 780s and 90s is one rooted in ancient canonical models, op. cit. 13-14.

135 See especially the Admonitio Generalis, (MGH, Capitularia, t. I, pp. 52-62) chapters, 1, 2, 12, 41, 55, 60, 61, 67, 70, 72, and 82.

136 Lotte Kéry, Canonical Collections of the Early Middle Ages (ca. 400-1140) (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 1990). The traditional picture of the so-called Dionysio-Hadriana’s unique authority in Carolingian reform legislation is complicated by the messy reality of other large canonical collections circulating in southern Gaul, particularly the Quesnelliana and the Collectio Hispana. See Abigail Firey, “Toward a History of Carolingian Legal Culture: Canon Law Collections of Early Medieval Southern Gaul,” University of Toronto PhD Dissertation (1995), 112-186. It remains to be determined whether Prudentius, himself a Spaniard, was working uniquely from the Dionysio-Hadriana, the Collectio Hispana, the Dacheriana, or from some other, as-yet-unidentified collection. I will explore this question closely in my examination of Prudentius’s letter to Hincmar and Pardulus (chapter 5), which appears to draw from a canonical collection in its opening arguments.

137 Admonitio c. 61, 70 (MGH, Capitularia, t. I, pp. 58-59).
instruction are displeasing to God.” More than once, the capitularies of Charlemagne had admonished the bishop to guard against error, which is consistently defined as deviation from or contamination of the ancient definition of the faith set down in the writings of the Fathers and in the deliberations of the great councils of the church. Whether errata occur through the careless copying of books or through the pernicious activities of false teachers, the bishop is constantly to realign his texts, his teachings, and the teachings of his clergy with the consensus of authority. Prudentius was, above all else, to be a doctor and corrector of his clergy – and through them, pastor and shepherd of the Christian flock.

It was once thought, as recently as the last century, that we possessed fragments of the Pontifical of Prudentius. And it was supposed that, through these fragments, scholars might reconstruct something of the liturgical and ritual life of the ninth-century cathedral of Troyes. Unfortunately, the text that Migne had printed as the “Pontifical of Prudentius” has been proven to be an eleventh-century missal copied alongside an authentically Prudentian verse. Modern editors had identified the two texts with one another as part of a single ninth-century liturgical work of the bishop of Troyes, until André Wilmart unraveled the false attribution in the 1920s. In the absence of the imagined Pontifical, we possess no particularly local evidence into the nature of Prudentius’ work in his diocese, except for what can be inferred from the deeply sympathetic prologue to a breviary of the Psalter he prepared for his diocese. The work introduces itself as originally written for a “certain noble woman” (whose identity will be explored

---


139 Books: c. 72 of the Admonitio famously admonishes the bishop and his clergy to guard against error resulting from the careless copying of texts (MGH, Capitularia, t. I, pp. 59-60): ‘Et ut scolae legentium puerorum fiant. Psalmos, notas, cantus, compotum, grammaticam per singula monasteria vel episcopia et libros catholicos bene emendate; quia saepe, dum bene aliqui Deum rogare cupiunt, sed per inemendatos libros male rogant. Et pueros vestros non sinite eos vel legendo vel scribendo corrumpere; et si opus est evangelium, psalterium et missale scribere, perfectae aetatis homines scribant cum omni diligentia.’


140 PL 115,1439C-1450B.


143 Ibid.
in chapter 4). But it seems clear that Prudentius later distributed the psalter among a wider readership, likely in response to the pastoral demands of his work as bishop. Our subject’s personal approach to the role of doctor and corrector can also be glimpsed, if only tangentially, in his involvement in the doctrinal debates of the 850s. In chapters five and six, Prudentius will be shown to be one of the more meticulous and erudite of his contemporaries to weigh in on the debate over the doctrines of divine grace and human free will. Above all else his theological method is characterized by a willingness to submit his own ideas to the censorious scrutiny of the fathers of the church. This profound respect for patristic authority likely derived less from a generally conservative cast of mind and perhaps more from a bishop’s understanding of the pastoral nature of his office as set forth in the reform councils of the eighth and ninth centuries.

_Bishop in Council, c. 845-861_

Our picture of Prudentius’ participation in the ecclesiastical politics of his region comes primarily through what can be inferred from his presence and absence at local and regional councils, as well as from his presentation of the years 844-861 in the _Annals of St. Bertin_. Involvement in the synods convoked at Paris (846/47), Anjou (850), Soissons (853), Quierzy (853), Bonneuil (Aug. 855), and Sens (856) is attested either through his direct subscription of the _acta_ of these councils\(^{144}\) or, as in the case of Quierzy (853) and Sens (856), through indirect evidence of participation.\(^{145}\)

The six councils attended during Prudentius’ tenure represent a limited but varied picture of the activities of the northern Frankish episcopacy in this period. The council of Paris (846/47), for example, was concerned almost entirely with reaffirming the royal immunity of Corbie and confirming the appointment of Paschasius Radbertus as its abbot.\(^{146}\) Anjou (850) was specifically convoked to impose an ecclesiastical censure on Duke Nominoe of Brittany and his vassal Lambert.\(^{147}\) The more momentous (and contentious) council of Quierzy (853) concerned the doctrines of Gottschalk to which we will return.

---

\(^{144}\) The _acta_ of the ecclesiastical councils held in 843-860 in the regions under Carolingian control are printed in Hartmann, MGH, _Concilia_ t. III (Hannover, 1984). The subscriptions of Prudentius are as follows: Paris, pp. 148-49; Anjou, p. 203; Soissons, pp. 264, 277; Bonneuil, p. 370.

\(^{145}\) For Quierzy (853) we must rely on the testimony of Hincmar of Rheims (MGH, _Concilia_ t. III, p. 295). Though Prudentius was absent from Sens (856), he addressed the synod by way of a letter to his metropolitan, Wenilo of Sens (MGH, _Concilia_, t. III, pp. 380-81).

\(^{146}\) MGH, _Concilia_, t. III, pp. 140-49.

\(^{147}\) MGH, _Concilia_, t. III, p. 203. Prudentius subscribed, along with twenty-one other bishops a letter written by Lupus of Ferrières to Duke Nominoe of Brittany, the only surviving record for the business of the Council of Anjou (of July and Aug. 850).
in subsequent chapters, and Soissons, held that same year, addressed the status of clergy ordained by Archbishop Ebbo, when he was unlawfully and by force briefly restored to the see of Rheims in 840. Finally, the last council Prudentius is known to have attended, Bonneuil (855), was convoked to condemn, among other things, the perennial issue of king Charles’ alienation of monastic properties as rewards for his lay supporters.

It is particularly noteworthy that Prudentius’ subscription appears nowhere among the acta of the synods and regional councils held between 855 and the time of his death in 861. His lengthy withdrawal from the conciliar activities of the Frankish episcopacy raises the question of the aging bishop’s health in the last decade of his life. Noting his absence from important councils of both the 840s and 850s, Janet Nelson has raised the intriguing possibility of "chronic illness" during the time of his pontificate. Prudentius would later acknowledge and apologize for his habitual infirmity in a letter addressed to Wenilo and the council of Paris in 856: “Having been afflicted with almost every known illness, I am prohibited from attending your holy and desirable gathering.” Likewise, Hincmar in his oft-cited obituary would note that his erstwhile friend and rival had been “wracked by a long illness.”

It is quite possible that this bodily affliction extended back to the bishop’s earliest years in office. His subscription was noticeably absent from the councils of Meaux-Paris (845-46), as well as from the 849 council of Quierzy, held in a royal palace about 200 km northwest of Troyes by way of Rheims.

148 MGH, Concilia t. III, p. 295. We have only the testimony of Hincmar of Rheims regarding Prudentius’ support of the capitula of Quierzy which were intended to resolve the debate over Gottschalk’s doctrine of double predestination. Later at the Synod of Sens, Prudentius would push his metropolitan, Wenilo, to adopt his own capitula which appear to disagree, on several points, with the chapters he had earlier approved at Quierzy (see below, Conclusion, 213-14).

152 MGH, Concilia, t. III, pp. 380: ‘Patri venerabili et ceteris patribus patribusque sincerissime diligentis atque coepiscopis reverendis, Prudentius aeternam in domino salute. Quantum ad meritum peccatorum meorum spectat, iustissimo dei iudicio, quantum vero ad indebitas atque indeficientes eius misericordias pertinere dinoscitur, misericordissimo ipsius munere, infirmatibus pene omnibus notis depressus, sancto desiderabilique vestro conventui adesse prohibeor.’
153 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 84-85. Hincmar’s obituary of Prudentius is given below (p. 40, n. 164).
154 The councils held at Meaux-Paris (845-46) were among the most widely attended and most important held during the time of Prudentius’ pontificate. Several canons (for example, c. 57, 59, 60, MGH, Concilia t. III, pp. 111-12) from these councils pertain specifically to restoration of property and regular life to the monasteries. Thus, the canons of Meaux-Paris would have reflected the reports of the missi who undertook the program of monastic visitation in 844-45 along with Prudentius, Lupus, and Heribald.
attended by many of the same bishops with whom Prudentius had earlier sat in council at Paris in 846/47, including Wenilo, his metropolitan, and Rhothad, whose diocese of Soissons bordered Troyes. Since this is the famous synod at which Gottschalk of Orbais was publicly beaten and sentenced to monastic confinement at Hautvillers, it seems strange that the bishop of Troyes, who later became involved in the debate over predestination, would not have been on the subscription list unless illness or some other obstacle had prevented him from attending. Similarly, the aged bishop appears to have had belated (and very limited knowledge) of the important series of colloquies held in 847 at Meersen between the brother kings Charles, Lothar, and Louis. In his 851 entry in the Annales, Prudentius included the full capitula of the second colloquy of the brothers at Meersen, yet he shows no awareness of the first, and perhaps more important, 847 meeting. Clearly, the limitations imposed by this mysterious infirmity restricted his ability to travel and participate personally in regional politics.

An absence of physical energy might also have prevented his involvement in the political intrigues which enveloped so many of his close associates in the 850s. We know from his own account in the Annals, as well as from other sources, of a Loire-based insurrection against Charles the Bald that, between the years 853 and 858, saw the counts and ecclesiastical prelates of the Troisin and Senonais involved in acts of collusion with Louis the German against the western Frankish king. The plot culminated in Louis’ eventual invasion of Burgundy and Champagne in 858, when for a brief time the usurper brother established a base of operations in Troyes. Count Odo of Troyes and Bishop Wenilo of

---

155 Prudentius’s own account of the condemnation of Gottschalk at Quierzy in his entry for the year 849 (Levillain and Grat, Annales, p. 57) was apparently derived from oral report. Alternatively, as Janet Nelson has suggested (Annals of St. Bertin, 67, n. 2), the Annales’ account of Quierzy could be a later interpolation of Hincmar. The list of bishops and other clergy in attendance is taken from a passage in Hincmar’s second treatise On predestination (c. 856), in which he appears to be drawing on a (now lost) subscription list (MGH, Concilia, t. II, 195.)

156 MGH, Capitularia, t. II, no. 205, pp. 72-4.
157 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 60-63.
158 MGH, Capitularia, t. II, no. 204, pp. 69-71.
159 See Nelson “Annals of St. Bertin,” 181-82. Prudentius’ account of the plot is given in his entry for the years 856 (Levillain and Grat, Annales, 72; Nelson, AB, 82) and 858 (Levillain and Grat, Annales, 76-79; Nelson, AB, 85-89). For a more extensive treatment, from the perspective of the see of Rheims, see Devisse, Hincmar, t. 1, 281-366.
Sens, Prudentius’ metropolitan, were both implicated and deposed from their benefices. But Prudentius himself appears to have avoided association with those complicit in the treachery. We should not think him unsympathetic with the conspirators, since we know from his direct criticism of Charles in 854 that the annalist had disapproved the king’s treatment of his dependents in Aquitaine, the probable cause for both Odo and Wenilo’s involvement in the insurrection. Thus, it is quite possible that fidelity to Charles might have depended more on the limitations of his condition, or perhaps on a personal disposition toward caution, than on unqualified support for the politics of his patron.

Whatever his physical infirmity, Prudentius’ mind clearly remained sharp and his body well enough to carry out his pastoral responsibilities. A conscientious Lupus of Ferrières had written Pope Nicholas I to have deposed the infirm bishop Heriman of Nevers and likely would not have hesitated to do the same to his friend, the neighboring bishop of Troyes, had he thought him incapable of discharging his liturgical and sacramental obligations. If his surviving writings are any indication, Prudentius remained intellectually productive, especially during the closing decade of his life. As I shall explore at length in chapters 5 and 6, the bulk of our subject’s extant written corpus was produced between the years 849 and 853 in the heat of his debate with Hincmar and Eriugena over the doctrines of predestination. Even Hincmar, in his decidedly uneulogistic obituary of his colleague and rival, would concede that the bishop of Troyes continued to write up until the moment of his death. The somewhat puzzling obituary comes in the continuation of Prudentius’ annals, which Hincmar would write from 861 until his own death in 882. In his first entry, though doubtless colored by the rancor of a long and divisive decade, the bishop of Rheims does not neglect to mention his rival’s deep erudition and industry.

---

161 Prudentius is largely silent concerning which local magnates were involved in this insurrection. It is from a synodal letter of 859, for example, that we learn of the involvement of Count Odo of Troyes (Nelson, AB, 86, n. 8). Prudentius, however, does describe the reconciliation between Wenilo and Charles in his entry for 859 (Levillain and Grat, Annales, 80-82; Nelson, AB, 89-91).

162 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 69: ‘Karolus profectionem in Aquitaniam tempore quadragesimae caelebrat, in qua usque post paschalem festivitatem demoratur, eiusque populus paredis, incendiis hominumque captivitatibus totum suum laborem impendit nec ab ipsis ecclesiis et altaribus Dei suam cupiditatem aut audiatiam cohabit.’ This passage has been offered by Nelson as proof that after his elevation to the see of Troyes Prudentius had ceased to write a “court history.” His moralizing remarks do not seem intended for the eyes of king Charles; thus, by 854, the Annals had become Prudentius’ “private history” (Nelson, “Annals of St. Bertin,” 181).

163 “We are reporting to you, kind father, the fact that there is in our diocese, in the town called Nevers, a certain person who holds the office of bishop, whose name is Herimann. Although he has been frequently admonished, and we have waited a long time for him to regain his health, he is incompetent to perform the duties of that office because he is of unsound mind.” Regenos, The Letters of Lupus, 121.
Prudentius, bishop of Troyes, originally named Galindo, a Spaniard by birth, was an especially learned man: it was he who some years ago had resisted the predestinationist Gottschalk. But later, excited by bitter feelings, he became a very keen defender of that heresy against certain bishops who had previously been allied with him in resisting the heretic. Then he died, still scribbling away at many things that were mutually contradictory and contrary to Faith: thus, though racked by a long illness, he put an end at the same time both to living and to writing.  

The obituary, which has been in print since Duchesne’s 1641 edition of the *Annals*, has done much to obscure the reputation Prudentius had enjoyed among his contemporaries as a learned authority on doctrine. Yet, the factual basis for Hincmar’s characterization of our subject remains largely unexamined. Whether the notion of a conversion from critic to “most keen defender” of Gottschalk can be sustained remains to be explored. Here it suffices to note that forces beyond the contestation of doctrine appear to have colored the worsening relationship between Prudentius and the powerful bishop of Rheims. Other factors, it will be suggested, could have contributed to the ongoing controversy between the two men: The increasing embeddedness of our subject in the local contexts of Troyes and its clergy, the ongoing disputes with Hincmar over his church’s possessions in the Troisin, a deepening of new ties between our bishop and the church of Lyon, and the memory of old bonds of collegiality with a circle of clerics who, in various ways, began to suffer under Hincmar’s growing ambition were all contributing causes of the mounting discord between the bishop of Rheims and his learned neighbor. These various factors will be considered in a later chapter, but first let us turn to the extant writings of Prudentius on which these subsequent readings will depend.

---

164 'Galindo cognomento Prudentius Trescinæ ciuitatis episcopus, natione Hispanus, adprime litteris eruditus, qui ante aliquot annos Gotescalco prædestinatiano restiterat, post, felle commotus, contra quosdam episcopos secum haeretico resistentes ipsius haeresis defensor acerrimus, indeque non modica inter sese diuersa et fidei aduersa scriptitians, moritur; sicque, licet diutino langore fatigaretur, ut uiuendi ita et scribendi finem fecit.' Levillain and Grat, *Annales*, 84-85. I have slightly altered the translation of Nelson, *AB*, 94.
Chapter 2
The Extant Works of Prudentius

When in 1611 Nicholas Camuzat, canon of Troyes cathedral, gathered from the cathedral library of Troyes the diverse materials that comprised the sacred history of his diocese, he observed that the literary "monuments" of Prudentius had likely perished in a fire, along with a precious image of St. Maura, a local virgin renowned for her piety. The fire, dated to 23 July 1188 in a twelfth-century Chronicle of Auxerre, wrecked the great Romanesque cathedral of Troyes, the nearby basilica of St. Stephen, and likely destroyed a number of precious manuscripts. This was not the only calamity to befall the city in the centuries between Prudentius’ death and the time of Camuzat. The Chronicon of Robert of Auxerre, which described the events of 1188, had earlier recorded the devastations wrought by northmen and by endemic localized warfare. In the wake of numerous such destructive events, Milo (d. 992), the forty-fourth bishop of Troyes, had leveled the Carolingian era basilica, built in the decades following Prudentius’ death, and had begun construction on a new Romanesque church. Local narratives would later trace to this turn of the millennium construction program the recovery of numerous relics and cathedral treasures that had been thought lost or ruined in the violence of the tenth century. This all suggests an environment inhospitable to the preservation of manuscripts. It is therefore understandable

---

165’ At sufficiat haec notasse de predicta imagine, quae minime reiicienda essent, nisi Tricassinum templum incendio conflagrassse ab eo tempore, quo è viuis excessit D. Prudentius litterarum monumentis, consignatum esset, quod incendium accidit an. 1188 die 23. mensis Iulii, ut Hugo monachus Antissiod. in suo Chronico diligenter observauit.’ Camuzat, Promptuarium, 48.

166 I have been unable to locate the Chronicon of Hugh, which Camuzat uses to date the fire (see above, n. 165). The event is also vividly described (though not dated) in a Chronicon of Robert of Auxerre (which had also been edited by Camuzat (1608)): ‘Plurime quoque ignium clades per Gallias acciderunt, que plurimas urbes et oppida plurimum attriverunt. Inter que Autisiodori pars maxima, tam diviis quam edificiis amplior et insignior, in vigilia sancte Marie Magdalene subita incensione consumpta est. In crastinum eiusdem festi Trece civitas populosa, referta opibus, tectis amplissima, repentina conflagratio fere funditus est attrita. Celebrabantur ibi tunc nundinae, in quibus diversas congereserant opes, qui de diversis partibus confluerant institores. Ita vero de nocte subitum emersit et invalidit vorax incendium et circumquaque ventorum turbine raptabatur, ut, dum volunt unusquisque vel sua vel aliena eripere, aut eos intercipere flamma, aut que servare voluerant desererent exurenda. Facta est perinde inestimabilis rerum depericio, et perierent quam plurimi mediis ignibus intercepti. Episcopalis ecclesia plumbis tegulis decenter operta illo tunc incendio conflagravit. Necnon et sancti Stephani basilica, quam comes Henricus fundarat et doturat reditibus aurique et argenti ornamentorumque varia supellectile adornarat. Periit et cum ea tota illa ornamentorum insignium congesta varietas.’ Chronicon Roberti Canonici S. Mariani Autissiodorensis, MGH SS t. 26 p. 253.

167 See, for example, the Inventio corporis Mastidiae (BHL5676), Acta Sanctorum, t. 14, 141 (Discussed below).
that precious little of the once formidable Carolingian era library of Troyes Cathedral has survived down to the modern period. Inevitably, much of what Prudentius wrote has not survived for us to read. Though it is certain that he wrote poetry and letters (both personal letters and administrative correspondence), no episcopal register, nor verse collection, nor any other substantial collection of personal works survive.

Apart from these lamentable losses, a rich dossier of materials attributed to Prudentius has nevertheless survived through other channels. The most widely available collection in which to read this material is in volume 115 of Migne’s *Patrologia cursus completus series latina*, published in 1852. The edition of Migne, however, includes several misattributions of authorship that must be unraveled. This chapter will begin with a survey of those works that can be securely attributed to our author followed by consideration of three dubious texts printed by Migne.\(^{168}\) Securely dated or datable works are treated first, followed by works of unknown date, followed by the three texts of problematic attribution. Of the three problematic texts, the first, a paraphrase of the Psalter, or *Flores Psalmorum*, is an authentic work of our author, edited elsewhere, for which Migne has simply printed the wrong text. The second is a “Pontifical of Prudentius,” which André Wilmart has proven to be a clear case of misattribution. The third, a *Sermo de vita et morte gloriosae Virginis Maurae*, will require careful consideration to determine the nature of its connection to our author. Despite its several anachronisms the attribution of this sermon to Prudentius has never been decisively challenged. It continues to be used as an authentic source for the local history of Troyes, as well as for the history of female saints of the Carolingian period. In the second half of the chapter, I will argue that this work is the product of the twelfth century or later, and therefore, should not be considered among the authentic works of Prudentius.


The *Annals of St. Bertin* are the single most important narrative source for the political history of the Franks in the ninth century. From them we have a rich account of the final years of the reign of Louis the

---

\(^{168}\) The works of Prudentius, printed in Migne, are as follows (* signifies dubious works): *Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum* (PL 115, 971C-1010B); *De praelectione contra Joannem Scotum cognomento Erigenam* (PL 115, 1010C-1366A); *Epistola tractoria ad Wenilo* (PL 115, 1365B-1368A); *Epistola ad quemdam Episcopum* (PL 115, 1367B-1368C); *Sermo de vita et morte gloriosae Virgins Maurae* (PL 115, 1367D-1376A)*; *Annalium Bertinianorum Pars Secunda* (PL 115, 1375B-1420B); *Versus Sancti Prudentii* (PL 115, 1419C-1420D); *Florilegium ex sacra scriptura* (PL 115 1421A-1440B); *Excerpta ex Pontifici S. Prudentii* (PL 115, 1439C-1450B)*; *Brevarium Psalterii* (PL 115, 1449C-1458D).*
Pious (830-40), the wars fought by Louis’ sons following his death (840-43) and the political settlements that followed, down through the early reign of the last Carolingian emperor (Charles the Fat, d. 888). Prudentius’ co-authorship of this narrative was established in 1638, when Jean Bolland uncovered an otherwise unknown manuscript of the *Annals* in the Cathedral library of Antwerp, with a gloss attributing the entry for the year 859 to ‘bishop Prudentius.’169 On the basis of stylistic consistency in the annals over the preceding two decades, it was concluded that our author had written the narrative from c. 835 to 861. This attribution has been maintained in every edition of the *AB* since the time of André Duchesne’s *Editio princeps* of 1641. Because Duchesne’s edition was prepared from a transcription of St. Omer 706, which had been preserved at the Abbey of St. Bertin for much of the middle ages, the annals were misleadingly called by the appellation *Annales Bertiniani.*170

George Waitz’s MGH edition served as the standard text for study of the *Annals* until 1964, when the Société de l’histoire de France published a new text to replace their earlier edition by Dehaisnes. This edition, which remains unsurpassed, published (posthumously) the manuscript research and notes of Félix Grat and Leon Levillain, with a text by Jeannne Vielliard and Suzanne Clemencet.171 The editors introduced new manuscript evidence,172 including a witness (Meerman lat. 141 (M)) held to be a twelfth-century copy of a manuscript written by archchapelain Fulco (for the years 830-35) and by Prudentius (835-37), who had taken over the annals from Fulco by 835. It was argued that the years written at court between 830 and 837, had been copied by Prudentius, or by a scribe of the palace chapel at his request, and sent to Drogo, the half-brother of the emperor, who was by now jointly palace chaplain and bishop of Metz. Apart from this witness to the first seven years of the annals (which contains only two of the years for which Prudentius was responsible), it was determined that all other extant witnesses to the Annals

---

170 Duchesne’s text was reprinted a century later in *Scriptores Rerum Italicarum*, t. II. A second edition was undertaken by Bouquet in 1749 and printed in tome IV of the *Recueil des Historiens de Gaule et de France*. Bouquet’s text was reprinted twice in the first part of the nineteenth century: once with light emendations by Pertz in the first volume of the MGH (Hanover, 1826) and a second time by Migne in the *Patrologia Latina*. In the late nineteenth century, two modern critical editions of the *Annals* were published within fifteen years of one another: one by Chrétien Dehaisnes, *Les annales de Saint-Bertin et de Saint-Vaast, suivies de fragments d’une chronique inédite* (Paris: Renouard, 1871) and the other by George Waitz for the MGH (1883).
172 In addition to the three MSS used by Waitz and Dehaisnes (St. Omer 706, Brussels 6439-6451, and Douai 795), the 1964 edition utilizes the readings of an additional manuscript (Berlin, Meerman lat. 141) for the first seven years of the *Annals* (830-837).
descend from a copy made for Hincmar of Rheims, sometime after the death of Prudentius. Thus it seems that for the majority of the years covered by his authorship (24 out of 26), the annals of Prudentius can only be known through the text of his continuator and colleague, who at times took a dissenting view of our author’s record of certain events. This problem as it relates specifically to the study of the Annals will be discussed further in a subsequent chapter. But here we introduce what will become a persistent irony: a number of our author’s works survive only in connection with the Cathedral of Rheims, through the efforts of Prudentius’ one-time friend and eventual rival, Hincmar.

2. Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum (849/850):

Prudentius was well-regarded by contemporaries for his deep knowledge of doctrine. We have significant evidence for that expertise in three works, written in the final years of his life, amidst the decade-long controversy over the teachings of Gottschalk of Orbais. The first of these is a letter addressed to Hincmar and his suffragan, Pardulus of Laon, likely written in reply to an earlier letter of Hincmar addressed to our author. The Epistola offers a vigorous defense of the authority of Augustine, including a history of his reception by the bishops of Rome and by other fathers of the church, including Prosper, Fulgentius, Jerome, and Gregory, followed by a concise summary of Augustine’s positions on the fall, divine grace, predestination, human freedom, and the atonement. In contradistinction to positions that Hincmar had earlier circulated among the clergy of his own diocese, Prudentius maintains that the predestination of God is of the elect to blessedness and of the damned to perdition; that the predestination of the damned is not to sin, but to punishment for sins already committed; and that the sacrifice of Christ was rendered only for those elected to be saved. Appended to the letter is a dossier of patristic sources containing some eighty discrete excerpts from eleven authors, but predominantly from

---

174 A description of this correspondence is preserved by Flodoard of Rheims in his tenth-century Historia Remensis Ecclesiae MGH, Epistolae, t. VIII p. 24 (see chapter five below).
175 PL 115, 973B-975C.
176 PL 115, 975D-977B.
178 PL 115, 976A-B.
179 PL 115, 976B.
180 PL 115, 976C.
Augustine. This dossier, or “collectaneum,” was likely the same collection prepared by Prudentius for the approval of a provincial synod held in Paris in November 849. Though here our author clearly advances views on predestination consistent with the opinions of the (recently condemned) Gottschalk, the tone of the letter is measured and amicable throughout. At this early stage of the controversy over predestination, our author seems to have remained on friendly terms with the powerful bishop of Rheims. The letter was preserved until the seventeenth century in a (now lost) manuscript of St. Arnulf’s, Metz, when it was first transcribed by Sirmond and partially edited alongside the works of Hincmar.

3. *De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam* (851/852)

Less than two years after the letter to Hincmar, Prudentius composed a second, much lengthier work on the topic of predestination. This text was likely written over the course of several months, between 851, when the *De praedestinatione* of Eriugena first began to circulate among an overwhelmingly critical audience of Prudentius’ colleagues, and the end of 852, when Florus of Lyon seems to have read it. Despite the immediate occasion for its production and the title assigned to it by Migne, the scope of this work is not confined to a discussion of the doctrine of predestination. It is, rather, a line by line refutation

---

181 PL 115, 979C-1010B (See below, chapter five).
182 Prudentius would later reference this collection in his *Contra Eriugenam*: ‘Nam etsi nusquam eorum scripta legisses, satis ea te poterant de his omnibus informare, quae ante biennium ex illorum libris, deflorata quibusdam fratribus consensus synodi mittere curavi, quae ad te pervenisset si nosse aliter nequivisset, infaustissimus liber tuus, cui largiente Domino respondemus, probabiliter nos instruere poterit. In quo earumdem deflorationum pleraque interposita atque ad tuas pravitates detorta violenterque inflexa reperimus.’ PL 115, 1156C.
183 Jacques Sirmond, “Prefatio,” *Hincmari Opera*, t. 1 (Paris, 1645). Sirmond makes no mention of the manuscript context from which the *Epistola ad Hincmarum* was taken. That it was a St. Arnulf’s MS comes in a biographical note by Nicolás Antonio, *Bibliotheca Hispanica Vetus*, t. 1, (Rome, 1696), 365-368 (published posthumously by Cardinal D’Aguirre), reprinted in Migne, PL 115, 970D.
184 A more precise *terminus ab quo* for the *Contra Eriugenam* is impossible to establish. The first mention of Eriugena’s *De praedestinatione* is by Prudentius, who reports having received extracts of the text from Wenilo of Sens, his archbishop (PL 115, 1009C-1012D ). Yet for the date of Prudentius’ refutation of Eriugena we depend on the conjecture that Eriugena had written late 850/ early 851 (see Goulven Madec, ed., *De praedestinatione*, v-vi). This date is based on the fact that Hincmar had corresponded with Rabanus Maurus in March 850 and had included mention of each of the various works on the topic of predestination written up to that point (MGH *Epistolae* t. V, p. 487-88). Included in the list of works read by Rabanus are a “letter of bishop Prudentius,” along with “opuscula” of Gottschalk and Ratramnus of Corbie, but no mention is made of Eriugena’s treatise, nor of Hincmar’s intention to have him write it. Thus, it is generally thought that Eriugena could not have written any earlier than spring 850. Prudentius’ reply would have followed by the end of 850 at the very earliest, though given the scope of the work and the time it would have taken to produce it, 851 is more likely.
of the earlier work of Eriugena, which had gone well beyond predestination to discuss such topics as the ontology of the Divine, the qualities of resurrected bodies, and the nature of eternal punishment. It is a polemical work, concerned principally to address the perceived impiety of Eriugena’s method of treating doctrine. Against the Scot’s expressly rational and dialectical approach, Prudentius maintains that the truth of the Faith is to be received from patristic opinion and the scriptures. As an alternative to Eriugena’s dialectic, our author employs the practice of extensive quotation from authority, which is complemented by an unusual system of sigla and scripts. For each of Eriugena’s nineteen chapters, objectionable passages are quoted verbatim and set off by the Greek Theta (the sign of a condemned prisoner); followed by the responses of Prudentius, signaled by a Chi-Rho (“the monogram of the name of Christ”); followed by supporting extracts from the Fathers, each of which is identified by name (and often by work) using rubrics written in rustic capitals. The *De praedestinatione* is best described by the title assigned to it by a tenth-century reader: “The Book of John the Scot, corrected by Prudentius, or rather, by the rest of the Fathers, namely by Gregory, Jerome, Fulgentius, and Augustine.”

The text survives in a single manuscript codex of the mid-ninth century (Paris, BNF, Lat. 2445). Based on the presence of stylistic corrections and interlinear insertions that bear traces of the author, Pierre Petitmengin has argued that the manuscript was owned by Prudentius up to the time of his death, after which it came to reside in the cathedral library of Rheims. By the early decades of the tenth century, the

---

186 Chapters 2-3, Madec, *De praed.*, 9-26; *Contra Erigu.*, PL 115, 1024C-1045C
187 Chapters 16-18, Madec, *De praed.*, 93-118; *Contra Erigu.*, PL 115, 1223B-1319D
188 Chapter 19, Madec, *De praed.*, 118-120; *Contra Erigu.*, PL 115, 1320A-1348D.
189 Madec, *De praed.*, 5-6.
190 PL 115, 1015D.
191 ‘Verba quoque ejusdem Joannis ut ab eo digesta sunt pluribus locis inserui, praeposito etiam nomine ipsius cum praecedente illud nota quae Graece dicitur Θητα, quam sententiis capitalibus damnandorum aliqui praescribere solebant.’ PL 115, 1012B.
192 ‘Ubicunque autem mei sermonis interpositio necessarium locum expetit, ne quid mihi tribuerem, si quid boni superna gratia per meae linguae organum loqueretur, notam superponere studui, quae ab Astigraphis crisimon nuncupatur, quoniam velut monogramma nominis Christi effigiare quodam modo cerniture . . .’ PL 115, 1012C.
193 ‘Liber Joannis Scoti correctus a Prudentio, sive a caeteris Patribus, videlicet, a Gregorio, Hieronymo, Fulgentio atque Augustino,’ written on a scrap of parchment, inserted between the fly-leaf and fol. 1 of BNF Lat. 2445, the only manuscript witness to the text.
The manuscript had been given by Sichelms, the prior of St. Remigius, Rheims, to the abbey of Hautvillers, where it remained until the twelfth century. The manuscript then passed to the monastery of the Premonstratensian brothers of Val-Secrét, where it stayed until the sixteenth century, when it came into the hands of Nicolas le Fevre, before becoming part of the collection of Jacques Auguste de Thou, minister of finance to Louis XIV. In the 1640s, after it had entered the library of the king of France (Regius 3819), the manuscript was discovered by Gilbert Maugin, who printed it as part of a library of ninth-century works on the topic of predestination (1650). This edition, which was reprinted by Migne (1854), remains the only edition to date of the De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam.

4. *Epistola Tractoria* on Predestination (856)

Four years after the exchange with Eriugena, Prudentius produced a third and final work concerning the issues raised by Gottschalk’s condemnation. This brief letter, which Migne printed under the title “Epistola Tractoria,” is addressed to Wenilo of Sens and his suffragans, in advance of the Council of Sens (March 856). At Sens it was to be decided whether Aeneas, a notary of Charles the Bald, could be rightfully elevated as bishop of Paris. Worn down by persistent illness, Prudentius was unable to make the relatively short journey from Troyes. Therefore, in advance of the council he addressed a letter, in the care of his messenger Arnold, to be read in the hearing of his colleagues. This letter contained four ‘capitula’ concerning the doctrines of human freedom, divine predestination, the sacrifice of Christ, and the omnipotence of God, to which the candidate Aeneas should assent in order for his elevation to gain Prudentius’ approval. The *Tractoria*, along with Prudentius’ letter to the council, are preserved in the third and final work of Hincmar of Rheims on predestination (written 859).

---

197 *Veterum auctorum qui IX. Saeculo de praedestinatione et gratia scripserunt opera et fragmenta*, t. 1 (Paris, 1650), 193-574.
198 The Council of Sens is known only through indirect witnesses, of which the *Epistola Tractoria* of Prudentius are the most important. See Hartmann, ed., *MGH Concilia*, t. III (pp. 379-382).
199 See Chapter One.
200 Antonio’s note (Migne, PL 115, 970D) relates that the Tractoria were originally edited by Mauguin in a work entitled, *De tribus epistolis Vindiciarum*, which I have been unable to locate. *MGH, Concilia*, t. III, reprints the *Tractoria*, from Jacques Sirmond, *Hincmari opera*, t. 1 (which, in turn, is reprinted in Migne, PL 125, 64B-65B).
5. *Epistola* to ‘a brother’ (uncertain: ca. 843-c.850?)

The only personal letter of Prudentius to have survived to the modern period is a short missive preserved in the Formulary of Murbach and first printed in 1685 in Mabillon’s *Veteribus Analectis IV* (whose version was reprinted by Migne). Charles Zeumer, the MGH editor of the Murbach Formulary, suggests that the letter was not part of the original Formulary, but rather had been added to the collection by a scribe “not much before the middle of the ninth century.” Zeumer notes that the text of the letter is “very corrupt” and concedes that the original sense is “nearly lost altogether.”201 There is little reason to accept the sanguine conjecture of Breyer that the letter was addressed to a brother who still resided in Spain.202 The language of the letter is characterized by the conventions of ecclesiastical greeting and benediction. “My most beloved of brothers” (mi fratrum charissime), “the text of your brotherhood” (germanitatis textus), referring to a previous letter of the correspondent, and “sharing my one kinship” (meum germanum unanimem) all suggest the possibility of a family tie to the recipient, but these phrases could just as easily suggest a strong bond of friendship and collegiality. In light of the relationship established elsewhere between Prudentius and Walafrid Strabo, and the latter’s involvement in the compilation of the Murbach Formulary, Dümmler believed that the letter was addressed to Strabo.203

6. *Florilegium* of Scriptures (uncertain date: ca. 843-861)

Prudentius also compiled a florilegium of biblical texts. This collection, which is found in a single manuscript of the Vatican Library (Vat. Reg. Lat. 191, ff. 88-102v), written from the late ninth to tenth centuries by scribes of the monastery of St. Remigius, Rheims, is explicitly identified in the manuscript as the work of our author.204 Situated toward the end of a collection of diverse materials of a liturgical and

---


pastoral nature (ff. 88-102v), the text of Prudentius is marked off by a title, which reads: “Bishop Prudentius took these, which are called ‘Precepts,’ as much from the Old [Testament] as from the New.”

The first half of the collection contains excerpts from various Old Testament commandments of the Lord to Israel, drawing primarily from the Books of the Law, Joshua, Kings, and Isaiah, and omitting materials that appear so embedded in the context of the ancient Mediterranean as to be impractical or irrelevant for ninth-century Christians. The second half collects the commandments of Christ and of the Apostle Paul, drawing primarily on Matthew, Romans, and the letters to the Corinthians, as well as from several of the minor epistles attributed to Paul. It is possible that such a collection may have been compiled in preparation for the production of a penitential handbook for the clergy of Troyes.

7. Dedicatory Verse on the Four Gospels (uncertain date: ca. 843-861)

Around the middle of the ninth century, Prudentius gave to his church a richly decorated display copy of the gospels, accompanied by a verse epigram of 50 hexameters he had prepared for the occasion of the gospels’ dedication. Drawing on lines of Ovid, Venantius Fortunatus, and especially Virgil, the poem narrates a brief history of Troyes, from the founding of the city, through the dedication of the Cathedral to SS. Peter and Paul, to Prudentius’ own elevation to the high office of bishop, then celebrates each of the Gospel authors, and concludes with a creedal hymn in praise of Christ. The poem was first edited in 1610 by Camuzat, who discovered it “in veteri evangeliorum codice Ms. ecclesiae Tricassinae.” The display gospels codex for which the poem was written is no longer extant, though Camuzat might have had access to this manuscript. As Wilmart has noted, an inventory of the Cathedral Treasury, dated to 20 October 1429, records the presence of eight manuscripts (presumably all display texts of scripture), the oldest of

---

205 The main divisions of the manuscript, according to the description of Wilmart, are as follows: 1. Isidore, De ecclesiasticis officiis (ff. 1-47v); 2. Symboli expositio ad catechumenos (pseudo-augustiniana) (47v-49); 3. Ebbo of Rheims, Opusculum de ministris ecclesiae (ff. 50-51); 4. Hincmar of Rheims, Capitula apud Carisiacum constituta (contra praedestinationanos) (ff. 52v-53); 5. Liturgica, praesertim de paenitentia (ff. 54-75); 6. De Trinitatem iuxta fidel; interrogatio de fide catholica (ff. 75-76); 7. Variae particulae seu excerpta (ff. 75-79); 8. Varias ex Patribus (ff. 79-84); 9. Alcuin, De trinitate quaestiones XXVIII (62-62v, 84v-87); 10. Prudentius, Florilegium ex sacra scriptura sive potius Praecepta (ff. 88-102v).


207 See the note of Trombelli, reprinted in Migne, PL 115, 1422A.

which is described as: “a certain most beautiful text of the gospels, gilded in silver, on which is the image of God in majesty; on one side it is surrounded with precious stones, on the other are images of the blessed Peter and Paul.”

The image of Christ in Majesty on a Gospel Cover recalls the front cover of the Codex Aureus of St Emmeram (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14000) in which the central figure of Christ enthroned is surrounded by the four Evangelists. The poem seems to have been composed with just such a scene in view, since the second half (ll. 15-46) could be read as an ecphrasis of the traditional scene of Christ enthroned in Majesty, surrounded by the four gospel authors, who are associated with their iconography from the Apocalypse: ie. Matthew “tells the man,” Mark roars “like a lion awakened from slumber,” Luke recalls the “oblate calf,” and John is “flying with the nimble wings of the eagle, not growing faint.” This Gospel manuscript, presumably along with the verse’s autograph, on which Camuzat had based his edition, perished in the destruction visited on the Cathedral of Troyes in 1794. The verse had also been copied in a late eleventh-century Missal of Troyes (now BNF Lat. MS 818), which copy records several variants on the transcription of Camuzat (that also formed the basis for the MGH edition of Dümmler).

Since this poem is not treated at length in any of the chapters below, I offer a full translation here, followed by the Latin text of the MGH:

The August monarchs and their Romulean hands

Founded venerable Troyes by command.

And with the name of the Lord Christ radiating throughout the whole world,

a life-giving house was established by the followers of Christ.

Which church the venerable remains of Peter and Paul adorn,

they who rule in piety the Apostolic summit.

To Her, I humble Prudentius, in devoted act,

give with pleasure this gospel book.

I who was born in Hesperia, Led to the Celts,

---


elevated to the pontifical robes and given high office.
The four scribes, inspired by the divine light,
[wrote] with an exceedingly true pen,
Confessing Christ, in [his] various beginnings and in his death,
And, with a not dissimilar faith, they composed his blessed deeds.
Matthew tells of the man, born from the Virgin Mary,
entrusting the nations to be taught,
And [reminding] that he accompanies all the saints, pledging always to be present,
with them and theirs, even to the end of the age.
Mark, with the roar of a lion, awaking from slumber,
Sings of the offspring of the high-throned one, ascending to the heavens.
[And tells of] the disciples [who] spread throughout the world to teach doctrine
And prove with signs and wonders.
Luke recalls the conception by the Holy Spirit,
[and remembers how] the oblate calf endured the horrors of the cross.
And that [the disciples] remained in the sacred rooms of the celebrated temple,
Until they could receive the gift of the Father from heaven.
John, flying with the nimble wings of the eagle, not growing faint,
Looking to behold the everlasting Son,
returns the Word to the very beginnings,
[and recalls] that He became flesh, and at the same time God.
With the sheep having been entrusted to Peter for feeding,
[he tells] that he himself would be given to a tranquil death.
By these, the story of Christ Jesus is told, Lord and God,
Preceding all things, creating all things by his will.
Eternally proceeding from the eternal heart of the Creator,
Omnipotent Son, sown in all power,
Taking on created man from the virgin mother,
Free from sin and [free of] an earthly father,
Teaching astonishing things, performing wonders in power,
Betrayed, mocked, pierced, then crucified.

Giving up his spirit, freeing the blessed
from Tartarus by his own authority, and rescuing his own,

Then, uncorrupted, rising from a three-day death,
He liberated his living members to the highest heavens
Confessed and given by right to the paternal throne,
He exalts all things subdued by his feet.

Whatever the use of this codex is, may it be related to these things
[that I have] bound together briefly: now to you, Good King, I turn my prayers.

Look mercifully on this gift of your devoted servant,
[that it be pleasing] to you, who each year is going to have mercy on me.

PRUDENTIUS²¹¹

De Evangeliorum Libro

1 Augustum Thrici nutu statuere monarchi
     Augusti quondam Romulaeque manus.

Ac domini Christi cunctum radiante per orbem
     Nomine christicolis conditur alma domus.

5 Quam pulvis Petri decorat Paulique verendus,
     Culmen apostolicum qui pietate regunt.

Huic ego devoto famulans Prudentius actu
     Hoc euangelii solvo libenter opus –

Hesperia genitus, Celtas deductas et altus,

10 Pontificis trabeis officioque datus –
Quattuor adflati supero quod lumine scribæ

Veraci nimium compositum eloquentiae,
Initiis Christum variis ac fine fatentes,
At non disparili gesta beata fide.

15 Virgine Matthaeus hominem gignente Maria

Mandantem gentes instruierque refert,
Fine tenus secli sanctos comitariet omnes
Spondentem semper adfore seque suis.

Altithroni Marcus subolem fremituque leonis

20 Scandentem pulso celsa sopore canit.
Discipulos autem mundum peragrasse docendo
Doctrinam signis ac stipulasse novis.

Conceptum Lucas reboat spiramine sancto,

Oblatum vitulum dira subisse crucis.

25 Ast illos celebris trivisse sacraria templi,
Perciperent donec aethere dona patris.

Verbum Iohannes praeventens tempora prima

Atque hominem factum esse simulque deum,
Praepetibus pennis aquilae volitando perennem

30 Intuitu solem non hebetante tuens.

Commissis ovibus pascendi munere Petrum,

Tranquilla narrans se quoque morte datum.

Christus ab his Iesus dominusque deusque refertur,

Omnia praecedens, omnia sponte creans.

35 Aeterno aeternus genitoris pectore manans

Filius omnipotens, omnipotente satus,

Virginea sumens hominem matrice creatum,

Criminis expertem terrigenaeque patris.

Admiranda docens, faciens miranda potenter,

40 Traditus, irrisus fixus et inde cruci.
Emittens animam propria ditione beatam,
Tartaridis solvens eripiensque suos.
Hinc incorruptus triduana morte resurgens
Libravit summis vivida membra polis.

45 Consessusque throni donatus iure paterni
Exultat pedibus subdita cuncta suis.
Perstrictis breviter referat quae codicis huius
Actio: nunc ad te, rex bone, verto preces.
Respice devoti miseratus munia servi,
50 Ac miserando mei annue grata tibi.

8. *Flores Psalmorum*, (uncertain; possibly c. 830-33 or c. 840-43(?))

It was likely in his capacity as palace chaplain that Prudentius first composed the *Flores Psalmorum*, a brief paraphrase of the Psalter which survives in a number of manuscripts of the eleventh through fifteenth centuries. Originally written for “a certain noble woman” who had been “very much afflicted by sadness,” this work is generally believed to have been composed for the Empress Judith, during the time of the rebellions of 830-33. As I will suggest in chapter four, even if the paraphrase was originally written for Judith (an association for which there is no direct evidence), there is no reason necessarily to confine the date of its composition to this period. The *Annals of St. Bertin* record numerous other circumstances of “chance tribulations” suffered by Judith in the final years of her husband’s reign and after. Particularly attractive is the period 840-42, during which it has been argued by Nelson, drawing on a close reading of Prudentius’ annals for these years, that our author remained with the Empress (now the Queen mother) during the earliest years of the civil war that threatened the life of her young son Charles. Whatever the original circumstances of the Psalter’s composition, the author’s prologue (found in Vat Lat. MS 84 (s. XI), the earliest manuscript witness to this work) makes clear that the

---

212 This is the opinion of Dümmler (MGH SS Epistolae t. III, p. 323) and Salmon, (*Analecta Liturgica*, t. II., p. 88.)
214 The Preface is also preserved in Paris, BNF Lat 3761 (s. XII ex.), ff. 77-107v.
text was reissued to a broader lay audience. 215 Despite the evidence of the manuscripts that this was our author’s most popular work among medieval readers, the Flores were nearly consigned to oblivion by Migne, who printed Prudentius’ prologue from an earlier edition by Cardinal Mai with a Ps. Jerome Breviarium Psalterii (incipit: “Verba mea auribus percipe”) having no connection with our author. 216 The actual Flores Psalmorum of Prudentius were brought back to light by Pierre Salmon in a survey of abbreviated Psalters preserved in the Vatican library. 217 Since the publication of Salmon’s edition, which had been based on four manuscripts of the Vatican library, an additional five (potentially six 218) manuscripts have come to light. 219 This brings the present list of known manuscripts to nine, which are as follows:

Vat. Lat. MS 84, s. XI ff. 251-274
Chigi C VI 173, s. XI, ff. 11v-16v
Chigi D V 77, s. XI, ff. 1-43v
Vat. Reg. Lat. MS 334, s. XI-XII, ff. 1-30v
Vat. Archivio S. Pietro G 49, s. XIII, ff. 130r-187r. 220

---

215 Cum quaedam nobilis matrona in civitatibus vel oppidis a pluribus fuisset oppressa, atque ex accidentibus variis tribulationibus, ut plerique nowerunt, adset angustiata, nimisque taediis afflicta, direxit ad me, rogans obnixe ut aliquid ex laude psalmorum ad consolationem compassionis suae brevissimis scriptitare versiculis. Quod ego non solum condolens petitioni, verum etiam ad omnes qui per diversas peragruntur provincias montesque ac valles, necnon et qui per fluminia discurrent et maria, timentes periclitari, ut ait Scriptura, periculos in flumine, periculos in mari, periculos in civitate, periculos in latronum, periculos in solitudine, et caetera, cupientes eripi, et a Deo gubernatore salvari; hoc opusculum parvitatis meae, veluti ex immanissimo prato summatim breviamque studui psalmorum carpere flores.’ PL 115, 1449.

216 Migne indicates that he took the authentic preface of Prudentius directly from Vat. Lat. MS 84, but his text from the edition of the “Psalter of Thomasi,” since the text of Prudentius contained “nothing beyond the words of David.” It is not entirely clear whether the confusion was introduced first by Migne or by Cardinal Mai, who had printed an earlier collection of material drawn from the Psalter (which I have not seen). The text of Migne’s note is as follows: ‘Ex codice Vaticano vetere sumpsi hunc prologum Prudentii episcopi Trecensis, qui saeculo IX in Gallia clarit: ipsos tamen psalmorum flores, sive opsum consequitur opusculum, exscribendum non judicavi; cum nihil fere praeter Davidica verba ibi occurrat. Mai. -- At hos psalmorum flores ex Psalterio Thomasii excepimus. Edit. Patrol.’ PL 115, 1449fn.a.


218 Prevost asserted that this text is preserved in Paris, BNF, Lat. 808 (Diocese du Troyes, 43), but this seems unlikely, as this is a manuscript containing the works of Prudentius, the fourth-century poet. In the description of the online catalogue of the BNF ([http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/](http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/)) there is no indication that the manuscript also contains a work of our Prudentius.


Erlangen, Univ. ms. 151, s. XIII, ff. 1-37 (?)\textsuperscript{221}
Paris, BNF Lat 3761, s. XII ex., ff. 77-107v
Subiaco, monast. Ms. 176, s. XIV, f. 60v
Vat., Ottob. L. 524, s. XV, ff. 11-78
Oxford, Bodlean, D’Orville, MS. 45 (prologue only)\textsuperscript{222}

The Pontifical of Prudentius

Nineteenth-century historians of liturgy had attributed to Prudentius the remains of a liturgical
compilation of the mid-ninth century. Given his long service in the Palace Chapel of Louis the Pious, it
was thought that the bishop’s lost pontifical would provide insight into the liturgical practice of the
imperial court, as well as into the local practice of the Cathedral clergy of Troyes. As recently as
Bishop’s \textit{Liturgica Historica} (Oxford, 1918) it was hoped that this text, imagined to be of such great
importance, might some day be recovered.\textsuperscript{223} The existence of the supposed pontifical was first recorded
by Edmond Martène in his \textit{De antiquis ecclesiae ritibus} (1702).\textsuperscript{224} Martène’s text had come from a
manuscript which he described as “an old pontifical of the church of Troyes, which had been given in gift
to the monastery of Atremarey.”\textsuperscript{225} Intrigued by the mysterious source of Martène’s text, which appeared
to have vanished, André Wilmart looked into the matter in 1922. He discovered that two excerpts from
the pontifical printed by Martène, both of which concerned prayers for the sick and last rites, were
identical to materials printed in a tract \textit{De extrema unctione} by Jacques de Sainte-Beuve (1613-1677).\textsuperscript{226}
In his work on unction Sainte-Beuve had included a fuller description of the manuscript (which he, like
Martène, calls a ‘Codex Arremarensis’) from which he had taken his excerpts. This in turn led Wilmart to
BNF Lat. 818 (previously Regius 3866), a manuscript of the late eleventh century containing a “Missale

\textsuperscript{221}This is likely not the \textit{Flores} of Prudentius, but rather the Ps. Jerome Psalter (‘Uerba mea auribus’) with
which it is frequently confused. See Hans Fischer, ed., \textit{Die Lateinischen pergamenthandschriften der
Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen} (Erlangen: Universitätsbibliothek, 1928), 157. Yet, Salmon who would have been
sensitive to the history of confusion between these texts, lists the manuscript (“Psalterium Adbreviatum
Vercellense,” 51).

\textsuperscript{222}Salmon, “Psautiers abregés,” 74-75, n8.


\textsuperscript{225}`Trecensis ecclesiae vetus pontificale quod dono datum fuit Atremarensi monasterio a S. Prudentio

\textsuperscript{226}Wilmart, “Le vrai Pontifical,” 285-86.
benedictinum ad usum Trecensem.” In every case, the excerpts Martène had attributed to Prudentius could be shown to derive from this Missal. Furthermore, Wilmart was able to determine the original cause for the confusion. On fol. 3 of the eleventh-century manuscript containing the Missal is copied, in a hand contemporary with the liturgical materials, the verse epigram that Prudentius had written to accompany the dedication of a gospel manuscript to his church. Both Martène and Sainte-Beauf had mistakenly associated this verse, authentically attributed to Prudentius, with the liturgical texts to which it was appended. In the words of Wilmart: “Le Pontifical de Prudence n’est qu’un être imaginaire; nous en avons du chagrin.”

Sermo de vita et morte gloriosae Virginis Maurae

Wilmart may have settled definitively the question of the imagined Pontifical of Prudentius, but the question of the Vita Maurae remains curiously open. The attribution of this work to our author has not been revisited in print since the edition of the Bollandists in the Acta Sanctorum (1757). The sermon has been used by several prominent historians in surveys of early medieval sanctity, women’s history, and art historical studies, and as a source for the local history of Troyes. The Life has also been used as a window into the practices of private devotion around images in the decades following the Carolingian

227 The description is from the online catalog of the Bibliothèque Nationale (http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/)
228 “Le vrai Pontifical,” 288.
229 Jean-Marie Sansterre has reported (in “Attitudes occidentales à l’égard des miracles d’images dans le haut moyen age,” Annales 53:6 (1998), 1231, n. 53) an email correspondence with Janet Nelson and Martin Heinzelmann, both of whom recommended caution in the use of this text in light of its problematic MS history. Sansterre later noted (in “Visions et Miracles en relation avec le crucifix,” in Michele Ferrari and Andreas Meyer, eds., Il Volto Santo in Europa (Istituto Storico Lucchese, 2005), 389, n.5) that a study of this text was in preparation by Michele C. Ferrari, tentatively entitled “L’évêque, la sainte et l’hagiographie: la Vie de Sainte Maure de Troyes.” Professor Ferrari, who still intends to publish a study of the Vita, has informed me (via email correspondence, dated July 22, 2013) that in his judgment the life is “younger than the twelfth century.”

231 Crété-Protin, Église et vie chrétienne, 313-15; Roserot, Le Diocèse de Troyes, 48, 62; Prévost, Le Diocèse de Troyes, 44.
response to iconoclasm. The durability of the ascription of this text to Prudentius requires that we consider carefully the sermon on the life of St. Maura as a potential source for our author.

The virgin Maura was a local saint, buried in a church of her own name – Ste-Maure – to the north of Troyes, until 1415, when her relics were translated to the monastery of St-Martin inside the city. Her feast was celebrated in the diocese of Troyes on 21 September. All that is known of her life is drawn from the *Sermo de vita et morte gloriosae virginis Maurae* (BHL 5725) traditionally ascribed to Prudentius. The *Sermo* was first printed in 1610 by Camuzat on the basis of a single manuscript witness, which in more than one place was barely legible “on account of faded (or rubbed out) letters (*ob characteres exesos*)”

In 1725, Breyer included an annotated French translation of the work in his *Les vies de Prudence et Maura*. Keen to respond to questions recently raised by Daille and Mabillon regarding the *Life’s* authenticity, Breyer produced two additional manuscript witnesses: one taken from the library of a Romanesque oratory dedicated to Maura, located just to the north of Troyes, the second, from the priory of St. Martin’s, inside the city, to which her relics had been translated. Breyer offered no description of the date, provenance, palaeography, or codicological contexts of these two additional witnesses. All three manuscripts (the original witness used by Camuzat and the two adduced by Breyer) had been lost by the

---


233 “Maura,” in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, t. 9 (1967).


236 Breyer also acknowledged that criticisms had been raised by the Lutheran polymath, Caspar Barthe, which had been reported in Vossius, *Historicis Latinis* (lib. 3, part 2, c. 4), but he did not judge these criticisms worth countering. ‘Vossius écrit que Gespard Barthius Luthérien l’a commenté; mais ses remarques sont peu de choses, et ne méritent pas que nous nous y arrêtions.’ Breyer, *Les Vies*, 92. The reference in Vossius is to Barthe, *Adversaria*, lib. xliv. cap. xix (which I have not been able to consult).

time the Bollandists began their investigations into Maura only thirty years later. For their part, the editors of the *Acta Sanctorum* noted the problematic manuscript tradition and the liturgical anachronisms first noticed by Daille and Mabillon and considered them sufficiently addressed by Breyer. They went on to observe that in every case the eminent historians who had considered the issue had, in the end, attributed the life to no one but Prudentius. Content to maintain the attribution, they reprinted the edition of Camuzat with emendations based on the French translation of Breyer.

Before reopening the question of this text’s authenticity, it would be well to begin with the sermon’s contents. Written in the first person, as a homily delivered by Prudentius in the cathedral of Troyes, the *Sermo* purports to have been composed at the insistence of the local clergy and monks of the diocese, specifically at the request of Eutropius, provost (*praepositus*) of the cathedral chapter and brother of Maura. The text appears to have been designed for commemoration of the saint’s feast. As such, it does not present the life of its subject as a diachronic narrative. It is, rather, a panegyric celebrating Maura’s virtues and the miracles performed by Christ through her pious mediations.

The sermon begins with an account of Maura’s family, a wealthy local household deeply involved in the ecclesiastical life of the diocese of Troyes. Among the several relatives who appear in the *Vita* are Sedulia, “a widow and mother of the blessed girl,” the aforementioned brother Eutropius, and Maurianus, the father, “a rich, powerful, and noble man,” who had predeceased Maura and was buried in the church of the Apostles. Sedulia and Eutropius, both of whom are placed among the audience for the sermon, serve as sources for aspects of Maura’s life not witnessed firsthand by Prudentius. From them, it is learned that Maura was aged 23 at the time of her passing, and that Eutropius, upon his conversion to the religious life, had given his inheritance to Maura to secure for her an advantageous marriage. Instead of following

---

238 It is not entirely clear whether the MSS were lost or the editors of the *Acta Sanctorum* simply chose not to consult them. See *Acta sanctorum*, t. 6, 272A.

239 *Acta Sanctorum*, t. 6, 272F-73A.

240 PL 115, 1367D: ‘Instatis, charissimi filii, opportune, importune, ut loco sermonis quem diebus solemnibus vobis facere consuevi, de vita gloriosa, et morte pretiosa sororis nostrae Maurae, non solum dicam quidquam, sed et scriptum relinquam posteris profuturum.’


242 PL 115, 1369B-C.

243 PL 115, 1369B. On the invocation of first hand witnesses (often relatives) as a trope, see Schulenburg, *Forgetful of their Sex*, 34-37.

244 PL 115, 1369B.

245 PL 115, 1370A.
through with her brother’s wishes, Maura had become a “bride of Christ” (sponsa Christi) who led the irregular life of a pious virgin in the home of her family.246 The sermon then proceeds as a catalog of discrete episodes involving the saint, moving from her embroidery of vestments for Cathedral clergy and ministry to Prudentius 247 to her deathbed scene; 248 then back to her adolescence; 249 frequent veneration of images in the cathedral of the Apostles, 250 mortifications and pilgrimages, 251 and then to the several miracles and wonders attributed to her. 252 The Sermo concludes with a second deathbed scene, in which Maura, after receiving the sacraments of Eucharist and Extreme Unction, migrates to her heavenly vocation. 253 A number of miracles follow immediately upon her death: Leonicus, the cousin of Maura, is healed of a burning fever; Thecia, another cousin, is freed from a blemish on her face; and the monk Veronus has restored to him his olfactory senses, with which he then smells the sweet odor of Maura’s sanctity. After these, “innumerable miracles followed.” 254

If authentic, the Sermo would place in a more vivid light the work of Prudentius in his diocese. The life is written in the voice of a man whose spiritual conversion owed much to the example of Maura. Before encountering her ministry, Prudentius describes himself as given to worldly preoccupations: “dry as a fig leaf,” unable to feel emotion when approaching the Eucharistic host, until Maura embroiders for him, out of her own resources, new clerical vestments. 255 Upon assuming one of the garments given to

246 The Life does not describe Maura making formal conversion to a regular monastic life of any kind (whether that of conventual monastic, canonness, or regular anchoress). It contrasts Eutropius who “left the world,” but remained preoccupied with worldly concerns, and Maura, who, though she remained in the world, pondered the things of heaven interiorly: ‘Mira res! Eutropius, ut salva pace sua loquar, valde incipio saeculo, de saecularibus cogitabatur; Maura vero, remanens in saeculo, secum de coelo tractaverat, unde fructum nunc reportat in respectione animarum sanctarum, non mortalem ex nuptiis, sed vitalem ex lacrymis, ejus saporem gustans in coelis, cujus odorem olfecit in terres.’ PL 115, 1369D-70A.

247 PL 115, 1370B-1371A.

248 PL 115, 1371A-D.

249 PL 115, 1372A-B.

250 PL 115, 1372B-73A.

251 PL 115, 1373A.

252 PL 115, 1373A-74A.

253 PL 115, 1374B-75A.

254 ‘Quo condigne tradito sepulturae, in loco ubi nunc a fidelibus honoratur, innumera miracula subsecuta sunt, ipso operante, qui vivit et regnat in Omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen.’ PL 115, 1376A.

him by Maura, the bishop is moved to tears. Like the ancient rod of Moses, the young virgin’s handiwork has made water issue from a rock. Later, the bishop recalls how, “out of exigency of time,” he had delivered by rote a sermon on the passion of the Lord, when Maura miraculously interrupted his speech, causing him to feel great compunction for his lack of dedication to the preaching of the word. Here we have the picture of a great secular administrator, who has grown cold spiritually but whose heart is quickened through the pious ministrations of a virtuous young woman. In the absence of any other evidence of this kind, this psychological and spiritual profile of Prudentius is tantalizingly vivid. The Vita is also of great interest for the study of the local history of Troyes. As potentially the only extant literary evidence from the ninth century for the religious life of the diocese, it offers a rich window into the religious topography of the city and its suburbs, the veneration of local saints, pilgrimage to nearby religious houses, the organization of the cathedral clergy, the veneration of images, and other particularly local phenomena of religious life.

Unfortunately, the ninth-century date of this text and its attribution to Prudentius cannot be maintained, as a careful consideration of several anomalies in the text will demonstrate. First, it should be observed that the saintly profile of the virgin Maura itself is exceptional for the period. Maura appears to have no regular monastic profession, she performs frequent miracles, and her life is written by a contemporary cleric. None of these fit the profiles of other Lives of female saints written on the continent at this time. In a comprehensive survey of Carolingian era Lives (written, c.750-920), Julia Smith has shown that most vitae written in this period tell the stories of long-deceased holy women, almost all of whom were abbesses, queens, or regular monastics of some form (either anchoresses or regular

alterum latentem, quem ad operiendam divinam et tuam clementiam, et miseri cordis mei duritiam, non jam latere volo, sed patere. Ficus eram arida, etiam merito non nisi incendum exspectabam; arueram tanquam fenum mittendum in clibanum; anima mea sicut terra sine aqua, et ideo sterilis et infructuosa. Quid exspecto? Quid miseriam meam manifestius non ostendo? Dominici corporis sacramentum cum raro devotionis butyro tractabam, quando vestem contulit memoratam, sine lactuis agrestibus agnum edebam, sine pone lacrymarum ad panem accedebam angelorum.’

256 Also an allusion to Benedict (Vita Benedicti, 4.3).
257 The Vita is used, for example, by Crete-Protin, Église et vie chrétienne, 313-315; 321-23.
258 Albert Castes, who never questions the attribution to Prudentius, notes how exceptional Maura is for a ninth-century saint, in that she is a layperson and a woman. He notes that Gerald of Aurillac is widely regarded as the only lay saint of the period, and his life dates to the first half of the tenth century. “La dévotion privée,” 6.
canonesses). The only lay saint from the period is Gerald of Aurillac, a male saint whose life was written by Odo of Cluny. Smith also notes that the female saints of this period almost never perform miracles. Miracles, when they are found, are attributed posthumously to long dead saints, usually around the translation of relics. While these anomalies might be attributed to the exceptional qualities of the historic Maura, or perhaps to the unique disposition and perspective of her biographer, they are consistent with other anachronisms in the text, all of which point to the environment of the twelfth century.

First, as was noted in the time of Mabillon, ritual and liturgical anomalies consistent with a twelfth-century date appear in Maura’s final words to Prudentius, only moments before her death. “I request a final gift from you, Bishop Father Prudentius, that in the presence of these I might receive from your hand the sacraments of Eucharist and Extreme Unction.” If this petition is read carefully (and literally), then it would appear anachronistic in two respects: First, in word order, Maura places Eucharist prior to Unction. Secondly, she requests the sacrament of “Extreme Unction” long before this terminology was widely used to describe the anointing of the dying. To the first problem, the Bollandists, following Breyer, were quick to note that a ritual of final unction associated with the Viaticum (final Eucharist) is found as early as the late eighth century. Though in the sacramentaries which describe these rites, the anointing always precedes the viaticum, diocesan statutes from Tours in the period contemporary with Prudentius suggest that Eucharist might have preceded unction in the local practice of at least one

263 Castes, for example, who acknowledges all of the anachronisms I just listed, takes them as a demonstration of the extraordinary qualities of Maura and the uniqueness of her biographer. Castes, “La dévotion privée,” 6.
264 PL 115, 1374D: ‘Statimque ad me conversa subjunxit: Hoc extremum munus a te peto, Prudenti Pater episcopae, ut in eorum praesentia de manu tua eucharistiae et unctionis extremae recipiam sacramenta, quod et factum est; statimque oratone Dominica inchoata, cum secundam petitionem implesset, qua dicitur: Adveniat regnum tuum, consummato supernae vocationis jubilo feliciter migravit ad Dominum.’
265 Acta Sanctorum, t. 6, 272.
diocese. Still, the dominant usage in the mid-ninth century is clearly anointing or unction, followed by administration of the viaticum. It could be objected that Maura’s words were never intended to be parsed so closely – that her dying request should not be read as a technical description of a contemporary rite for the dying. In this case, the order in which she speaks the words “Eucharist” and “Unctio Extrema” is hardly decisive. But the term Extreme Unction itself does indicate a significant anachronism. The occurrence of the word ‘Extrema’ in the Life had been noticed by the great Jean Mabillon, whose concerns were duly noted by both Breyer and the Bollandists. Mabillon had searched in the oldest sacramentaries and liturgical texts and concluded: “if I am not mistaken, ‘extrema’ is read nowhere else before the end of the twelfth century.” Breyer was also quick to concede that, outside the Life of Maura, the earliest occurrence of “unctio extrema” is in the Sententiae of Peter Lombard, composed in the 1150s. To address this terminological anomaly (which he did not consider genuinely problematic) Breyer suggested the possibility of scribal intervention. Perhaps a twelfth-century copyist had added

---

266 Breyer specifically cites the Statutes of Herard of Tours (Les vies, 95-96). The canon in question can now be found in MGH Cap. Ep. t. II, p. 132: ‘XXI. Ut in infirmitate positi absque dilatione reconcilientur et viaticum viventes accipiant et benedictione sacrati olei non careant.’ To the Statutes of Herard, cited by Breyer, we can add in favor of the same point canon XXXIII of the roughly contemporary (ca. 870-880) Statutes of Isaac of Langres, MGH Cap. Ep. t. II, p. 194: ‘XXIII. UT NULLUS VITAM SINE COMMUNIONE FINIAT NEC UNCTIONE BENEDICTI OLEI CAREAT. . . . Si in infirmitate deprehensus quis fuerit, vitam sine communione non finiat nec unctione sacrati olei careat; et si finem perspiciat, sacrosancto corpore deo anima eius a sacerdote precibus commendetur.’ Breyer also cites (Les vies, 96-97) the Ordo ad visitandum infirmum attributed to Prudentius in Martene’s De antiquis ecclesiae ritibus (1702), which had specified the communication of the Eucharist twice, before and after the administration of unction. Now, in light of the arguments of Wilmart, we can safely date the “Ordo defuncti” attributed Prudentius to the late eleventh century.


268 ‘Et enim tom. 3 Annalium Benedictinorum ad annum Christi 850, num. 12 Sermonem hunc sine ulla exceptione Prudentio attribuit, et de memorato loco ita scribit: “Tum haec a Prudentio petiti, ut de manu ejus Eucharistiae et Unctionis-Extremae recipeteret sacramenta:” qui unus locus est apud veteres Viatici extreme Unctioni praemissi, quae nusquam alias, si non fallor, Extrema dicta legitur ante finem saeculi duodecimi.’ Mabillon, quoted in Acta Sanctorum, t. 6, 272D.

269 Breyer, Les vies, 101-2.
the word *extrema* to *unctio* to reflect current usage. Such an explanation might be satisfactory were it not for several other anachronisms in the text for which scribal emendation is an inadequate explanation.

Potential anachronisms are also found in the sermon’s description of Maura’s devotion to the church of the Apostles. Each day the young maiden would tarry from morning until the sixth hour before three images of Christ found in the Cathedral. In elaborating on the nature of this devotion, the sermon offers both iconography and habits of veneration that seem out of context for a ninth-century life. I quote the following passage at length to offer a sample:

From that young age she would tarry in the church of the Apostle from the lauds of matin until the sixth hour, where, as you know, the image of the Lord is depicted in three ways: for they are shown as a boy sitting on the lap of his mother, and as a great Lord sitting on the throne of majesty, and as a young man hanging on the yoke (*patibulo*) of the cross. Indeed, the blessed Maura observed this custom from a tender age, that daily she did not cease tarrying before all of the aforementioned [images]: first, prostrating (*prosternens*) herself with her whole body before the infant, next before the young man, thirdly before the king. She could never be drawn away for any reason, but rather each day she watched the Lord tirelessly in this image with her corporeal eye. . . I asked of her and repeated the question many times, why she prostrated herself so morosely, day after day, before the aforementioned image of the Savior. And finally, having been implored in many different ways, she responded, not without much difficulty: “Blessed,” said she, “is the church of the Apostles, in which I have frequently heard a boy crying in the lap of his mother, a young man crying on the cross, and a king fearsomely intoning on his throne but amiably presenting to me a golden rod.” And when I immediately began to put to her a new question about the groaning and crying of our Savior, she, clasping my hand with her own and restraining in this manner my tongue, added these few words: “If dry wood emitted a groan and a cry to cultivate the wondrous sacraments of our faith and reinforce them in the minds of the faithful, it should not be attributed to nature but to miracle.”

---

270 Ab ineante aetate quotidie a matutinis laudibus usque ad horam sextam moram faciebat in ecclesia Apostolorum, ubi, sicut nostis, tribus modis imago Domini depingitur Salvatoris: nam repraesentatur tanquam puer sedens in gremio matris, et tanquam magnus Dominus sedens in solio majestatis, et tanquam juvenis pendens in patibulo crucis. Porro hanc beata Maura consuetudinem a tenera observavit aetate, ut quotidie totum praedictum non cessaret expendere, primo se toto corpore prosternens coram infante, secundo coram juvene, tertio coram rege, nec unquam ulla necessitate potuit abstrahil, quin singulis diebus Dominum sub effigie triplici cerneret indefessa oculo corporali . . . quaesi ab ea, et quaestionem pluribus iteravi, cur coram supraddicta dicti Salvatoris effigie, prosternebat se morose, quotidie, successive. Denique multipliciter obscurata, non sine multa difficultate respondit: Felix, inquit, Apostolorum ecclesia, in qua frequenter audit, et puerum in matris gremio vagi, et in solio terribiliter intonantium, sed mihi virgam auream amicabiliter donantium. Cumque statim ei novam movere incipierem de Salvatoris nostri gemitu et vagitum quaestionem, manum meam manu sua constringens, et per hoc linguam meam compescens, haec pausa subjuxit: Non naturae, sed miraculis ascribendum est, si ad recolenda fidei nostrae mirifica sacramenta, et ea in mentibus fidelium roboranda lignum aridum, gemitum edidit aut vagitum.’ PL 115, 1372B-1772D.
Though this passage describes a devotion to images that may not have been extraordinary for the Carolingian period, let us leave to the side the spirituality evoked here and focus instead on the description of the images themselves.\(^{271}\) Christ is depicted as “A boy sitting on the lap of his mother,” “a great Lord sitting on the throne of majesty,” and “a young man hanging on the yoke of the cross.” All three of these are readily identifiable scenes: *Sedes Sapientiae*, or Wisdom Enthroned, Christ in Majesty, and the Crucifixion, none of which would be impossible to find in Carolingian art, were it described in a mosaic, gospel cover, manuscript illumination, or another miniature form. Given that Maura is said to have prostrated herself before the images, however, we can almost certainly rule out gospel covers, manuscript illuminations, or small ivory works. The *Life* does not specify whether the saint lay before a free standing statue (or statues), an architectural relief, or a painting or mosaic. But when the young woman describes hearing sounds of an infant crying, a young man groaning, and a king intoning, the text makes clear that these sounds were emitted from images made of wood (*lignum aridum*). In the wooden image of the crucifixion described here, Albert Castes believes he has found a witness to one of the oldest wooden crucifixes known to have existed in France.\(^{272}\) The cathedral of Troyes had in its possession an “ancient” (but otherwise undated) crucifix as late as 1779, when correspondence between the bishop and cathedral chapter discussed the prospect of having the image (re)gilded.\(^{273}\) Elsewhere, this same cross (destroyed in 1794) is described by Breyer as an image of Christ on the cross, “clothed in a garment down to his feet.”\(^{274}\) In a fifteenth-century source, contemporary repairs are recorded to the hem of a clothed crucifix.\(^{275}\) Castes, who pieced together these references, also noted that Breyer had said that in the same image, Christ was “as saint John saw him in the Apocalypse.”\(^{276}\) Since the Christ of the apocalypse is usually identified with the type of Christ in Majesty, this suggests an iconographic representation of the

\(^{271}\) I hesitate to press the issue of what seems to me to be an anomalous response to images only because Noble, who has studied carefully the Carolingian responses to iconoclasm, does not appear to believe Maura’s veneration to be problematic for the period. See Images, Iconoclams, and the Carolingians, 343-4, and “Walahfrid Strabo and Maura of Troyes,” 32-45. I have also discussed the issue with William Diebold, who in an unpublished conference paper (delivered at the 48th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI) examined the *Vita Maurae* as an entry into practices of private devotion around images in the Carolingian Era.

\(^{272}\) Castes, “La dévotion privée,” 7-11.

\(^{273}\) The correspondence of 1779, regarding the crucifix and its restoration, is found in Archives départementales de l’Aube, MS G 1313. See Castes, “La dévotion privée,” 7.


crucifixion that focuses on the triumph rather than on the suffering of the cross. Camuzat, who had catalogued what is believed to be the same image, had added that Christ was adorned with a golden crown. Elsewhere, the same image is said to have shown Christ pierced with four nails, rather than the three nails more commonly found in the wooden crucifixes of the thirteenth century and later. What, then, is the significance of these descriptions? These scattered references (if they indeed all refer to the same image) suggest that up until 1794, the Cathedral of Troyes might have had in its possession a very old, wooden crucifix that predated the more common representations of the crucified Christ of the later middle ages. It is quite possible that we have here Maura’s image of “a young man hanging on the yoke of the cross.” But the fundamental question remains: was this crucifix the product of the ninth century or did it belong to a later period? Castes notes that there are some similarities in the iconography of this crucifix to the image of the crucified Christ found in the Drogo Sacramentary and in the Prayer Book of Charles the Bald. And there are at least three examples of wooden or gilded crucifixes in the period broadly contemporary with Prudentius: Teodote’s crucifix of the Basilica of San Michele Maggiore of Pavia (s. x), the (more contemporary) crucifix of Pope Leo IV (847-855), and the crucifix of Aribert of Milan (c. 1040). All of these, it could be argued, bear some similarities to the ancient crucifix once in the possession of the Cathedral of the Apostles. Yet, this would place the cross of Troyes among the very earliest of such images.

Maura also venerated an image of the Christ child “sitting on the lap of his mother.” The image of the Virgin with Christ is a perennial theme in Christian art, with examples dating back to the third century. Tradition has it that Luke painted the first image of this type. But the specific iconography of the Virgin enthroned with Christ seated on her lap – the Sedes Sapientiae, or “Wisdom Enthroned” – was not

---

277 ‘Crucifixi redemptoris nostril non spina sed corona aurea deornasse.’ Camuzat, Promptuarium, 1610, 48R (quoted in Castes, “La dévotion privée,” 10)
widespread until the twelfth century. The earliest example of a wooden statue of Wisdom Enthroned (attested on the basis of literary evidence only) is a Virgin and Infant placed in the Cathedral of Clermont-Ferrand in 946, at the request of bishop Stephen II. Of the more than one hundred free standing wooden statues of the Wisdom Enthroned type from the middle ages only seventeen survive from before the middle of the twelfth century, and only one of these from before the year 1100. Once again, with Maura’s veneration of a Wisdom Enthroned scene, Castes believes we have a phenomenon attested well before it appears in other sources. Never questioning the attribution of the Sermo to Prudentius, he observes that “we are in the presence of one of the oldest known sedes sapientiae on French territory.” Alternatively, we are witnessing an anachronistic reference in a work produced in the period in which wooden statues of the sedes sapientiae were widespread – that is, in the second half of the twelfth century.

The sermon also tells how Maura would embrace and kiss the altar, “where the body of the blessed virgin Mastidia rested.” The origins and deeds of Mastidia are unknown. And the discovery and


284 The Virgin and Child of the south portal of the Western Façade of Chartres is one of the earliest examples of an isolated Virgin and Child in architectural sculpture. It is thought that this relief at Chartres is an isolation of an image of virgin and child taken from the Adoration of the Magi at Vezelay. See Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin*, 48.

285 ‘. . . il semble bien que nous soyons en présence d’une des plus anciennes sedes sapientiae connues sur le territoire français.’ Castes, “La dévotion privée,” 12.

286 ‘Nondum, frater Maurici, a memoria mea elapsum est quod te ministrante occultata fide cognovi. Expleta namque matutina synopsi, innuisti mihi ut Mauram aspicerem arctius amplectentem et dulcius osculantem altare ubi corpus beatae virginis Mastidiae requiescit, sed et hora sexta a fratribus decantata, ad pedes ejusdem altaris lacrymarum suarum rivulum ostendisti, quo proprios oculos linivisti, quae limine quantum tibi profuit, et gratia lacrymarum quam habes, et oculi macula quam modo non habes certis probant et irrefragabilibus argumentis. Ipse namque mirabilium Agni et sponsae suae operum quoad vixeris, clarissimum, vivum et verum testimonium effectus es; nam laudes Christi et Maurae, etsi lingua taceat, oculus tamen quocunque perrexeris praedicare non cessat.’ PL 115, 1373B.

287 The anonymous eleventh-century *Inventio corporis Mastidiae* laments that, either through negligence or through the vicissitudes of transmission, no record of Mastidia’s deeds were available at the time of the *Inventio*’s composition. ‘Sed ejus vitam, quam ex praesentibus intelligimus virtutum copia fulsise plenam, cum desit, aut prae
translation of her body, which is celebrated in Troyes on 7 May, is not recorded until the eleventh century. An anonymous and undated *Inventio corporis Mastidiae* (BHL5676), purporting to be written by an eyewitness, describes the exhumation of Mastidia during the building program of bishop Milo of Troyes (d. 992) and the miracles that later attended her body’s translation in the spring of 1007.\(^{288}\) Maura’s veneration of Mastidia has been used to establish a terminus a quo of the mid ninth century for a cult,\(^{289}\) but no other evidence, besides the *Vita Maurae*, corroborates the veneration of this saint prior to the date of her body’s invention and translation. When in 1610 Camuzat printed the anonymous *Inventio* account in his *Promptuarium*, he did not describe the manuscript witness(es) to this text,\(^{290}\) nor did the Bollandists, who took their edition from Camuzat.\(^{291}\) Without manuscript evidence to corroborate its purported date, I suggest that this text could have been written even later than the eleventh century. Like the *Vita Maurae*, it too claims the testimony of an eyewitness, who seems very keen on establishing his authority by emphasizing his participation in the events described in the text. It is indeed possible that the *Inventio Mastidiae* and the *Vita Maurae* were written contemporaneous with one another by a cleric of Troyes Cathedral, who wished to establish the antiquity of (and links between) two beloved but undocumented saints of his diocese. One need not go down that road, however, to recognize the implications of the demonstrable anachronism. Even if the *Inventio* were authentic there is a considerable gap between the lifetime of Prudentius and the earliest textual evidence for Mastidia. Once again we find Maura attesting a tradition some two centuries before it becomes known through other sources.

Thus, the *Sermon on the Life of St. Maura* appears to admit of a series of liturgical, art historical, and hagiographical firsts (or near firsts): a first reference to Extreme Unction some three hundred years before

\(^{288}\) See the preface *De S. Mastidia Virgine*, *Acta Sanctorum*, t. 14, 141B.


\(^{290}\) In his ‘Nota in praedictam historiam,’ Camuzat attempts to date the building campaign of Bishop Milo, using the *Chronicon* of Robert of Auxerre, but no mention is made of the manuscript(s) from which the *Inventio* was taken. See Camuzat, *Promptuarium*, G50-H58.

\(^{291}\) ‘Eruta MSS. A Nic. Camuzato,’ *Acta sanctorum*, t. 14, p. 142B.
the next occurrence of that phrase; a reference to one of the earliest wooden crucifixes in France and the earliest wooden sedes sapientiae (by a century); and, finally, the first instance of the veneration of a saint whose remains would not be attested elsewhere for another one hundred and fifty years. None of these, as an isolated anachronism, would offer an insurmountable obstacle to the traditional attribution of the Life to Prudentius. But when taken together, in the life of a woman (already extraordinary for her lay status) who performs a string of miracles unlike any recorded in the vitae of other contemporary female saints, these anomalies point to a later date and to a pseudepigraphic author.

In light of the liturgical and art historical anachronisms described above, I suggest that the Life is the work of an anonymous author of the second half of the twelfth century. A twelfth-century context would also explain the extravagant language in which the Vita consistently depicts Maura as a “Bride of Christ” ( sponsa Christi). In the first of two scenes in which Maura’s death is described, the author relates how Christ received Maura at the moment of her death: “Just like a bridegroom descending from his bedchamber after his wedding feast had been seen afar off, [the Lord] was not refused.” The Lord joins Maura to himself in “stable wedlock and makes her his own.” Throughout the text, Maura continues to be called a “bride of Christ” and her miracles are performed under the power of her husband, Christ. Maura’s mother, Sedulia, is called “the mother-in-law of God” (socrus Dei). Even St. Matthew, on whose feast day Maura died, has become a “wedding attendant” (paranymphus) of the bride of Christ. Marriage to Christ was in the middle ages (as today) a common metaphor for the monastic life, applied to

292 Julia Smith’s survey of Carolingian hagiography suggests that any miracles performed by a woman during her lifetime would have been unusual in the life of a Carolingian era saint (“Problem of Female Sanctity,” 7-8). But at least two of Maura’s miracles – her weeping a “river of tears” by which the monk Maurice had his eye healed (PL 115, 1373B) and the conversion of water into milk upon her death (PL 115, 1374D) – would fit well the context of the twelfth century and after, for which Carolyn Walker Bynum has explored the theological and social meanings of “lactation miracles” and miracles involving “effluvia.” See Holy Feast and Holy Fast. The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 272-5.

293 ‘Nec defuit curiositas importuna, si quis forsit an eset intus vel extra, qui tam dulcifluam harmoniam effundere potuisset, verum veraciter deprehensum est et odore et canore, quod tunc etiam descendit in jubilatione, qui ascendit Dominus in jubilacione, nec deditagnus est tanquam sponsus Dominus procedens de thalamo suo, post visa longa sponzialia, sponsae venienti occurret, et in ejus occursu cantica laetitiae dignanter decantare, qui eam jam disponebat traducere, et sibi connubio stabili jungere propriamque dicare. Noli, jam socrus Dei ergo effecta Sedulia, amplius lamentari, quae ipsum audivisti Dominum, in traductione filiae gratulari.’ PL 115, 1371C-D.

294 For “socrus Dei,” see Jerome, Ad Eustochium, Letter 22.20 (CSEL, 54, 170.)

295 PL 115, 1374B: ‘Habes enim tu, beate Matthaee apostole, potestatem sororem circumducendi mulierem sicut frater Domini Jacobus et Cephas, et minus revera censes esse telonarium, quam sponsae Christi paranymphum.’
both male and female religious. The metaphor is not unheard of in Carolingian era saints’ Lives, but it is most commonly used metaphorically to mark a conversion from a secular to monastic status.²⁹⁶ It is important to recall that Maura was not technically a ‘femina religiosa.’ Thus, the *Vita* cannot intend the phrase “sponsa Christi” in the traditional sense, to mark a transition from a secular to religious mode of life. Maura was a simple lay woman who had experienced mystical knowledge of her savior. By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it would have been much more common to apply the metaphor “bride of Christ” to women, regardless of religious status, who had undergone mystical experiences.²⁹⁷ This shift is sometimes associated with the reintroduction of Ovid to the Latin west and the *Sermons* on the Song of Songs of Bernard of Clairvaux.²⁹⁸ In this context, the phrase is less a metaphor for monasticism or virginity, and increasingly a description of an ontological state or even a juridical status. In one of the earliest examples of this perceived shift, the *Life of Christina of Markate* (d. c. 1100), a young maiden is able to have a betrothal annulled on the grounds that she had previously contracted a marriage to Christ, despite the fact that she had not formally converted to the monastic life.²⁹⁹ While the Bride of Christ language of the *Vita Maurae* does not reflect the sensually ecstatic experiences of later medieval mystics, it certainly reflects the assumption, found in the Life of Christina and other contemporary sources, that marriage to Christ could be concrete and literal, as well as metaphorical, and that it need not necessarily imply a formal religious vocation.

This changing sensibility regarding the conceptions of female religious experience is also observed in the relationship between Maura and the bishop Prudentius. The author of the *Life* did not think it unusual to show how the institutional authority of a bishop might be enhanced by (and even prophetically called into account by) the charismatic authority of a female mystic. A spiritually moribund but ecclesiastically powerful Prudentius had experienced a series of inner awakenings through his close encounters with Maura. As John Coakley has recently shown, this juxtaposition of charismatic authority and institutional

²⁹⁶ For example, consider the *Vita Leobae*, written by Rudolf of Fulda, an exact contemporary of Prudentius. In his prologue: “Before I begin to write the life of the blessed and venerable virgin Leoba, I invoke her spouse, Christ, our Lord and Savior.” Noble and Head, transls., *Soldiers of Christ*, 257.
²⁹⁸ Ibid., 18.
authority in the hagiography of a female saint is very common in the twelfth century and following.\textsuperscript{300} It is not, however, a common feature in the stories of female saints of the ninth century. In almost every case (two important exceptions are the Lives of Liutbirga of Wendhausen and Hathumoda of Ganersheim), the Lives of female saints in the Carolingian period are written by authors who had no first-hand knowledge of their subjects.\textsuperscript{301}

What, then, can be concluded about the likely date and author of the \textit{Vita Maura}? I propose that the \textit{Life} was written by an anonymous cleric of Troyes cathedral who wished to record retroactively what the faithful of his diocese had long known about St. Maura: that she was a holy woman, a bride of Christ, who had performed miracles, and around whom a popular cult of devotion had formed. This author likely wrote after 1150, when the term \textit{Unctio Extrema} appeared for the first time in the \textit{Sententiae} of Peter Lombard, but prior to the third decade of the thirteenth century, the period in which wooden images of the \textit{Sedes Sapientiae} were rapidly displaced by Gothic images of the Coronation of the Virgin and the Standing Virgin with Child.\textsuperscript{302} Likely trained in the schools of northern France, our author would have wished to clarify, to organize, and to textualize the sacred history of his diocese.\textsuperscript{303} The \textit{Sermo}, therefore, cannot be used as a direct source for the life of our subject. It does nevertheless offer a certain view of him from the perspective of later centuries. When a learned cleric, steeped in the local history of his diocese, wished to forge a first-hand account of a local saint of the ninth century, he would have wanted to write in the most authoritative voice possible. It is significant that he chose to write as Prudentius.


\textsuperscript{302} Gold, \textit{The Lady and the Virgin}, 61-68.

\textsuperscript{303} He is careful, for example, to attribute to Maura a miraculous healing that “certain men” had wrongly attributed to the gentle abbot Leo. Indeed, throughout, the \textit{Vita} seems keen to establish links between the saints and holy places venerated locally. Maura venerates Mastidia and goes on barefoot pilgrimage to the monastery of Montremey. She miraculously hears the voice of soft-spoken Maurice reading the gospel in the church of the Apostles, while she is some distance away, in the church of St. Aventinus. Upon the migration of her soul, Maura awakens the olfactory senses of Veranus, who now smells the sweet odor of sanctity he had earlier perceived near the body of Saint Leo. Thus, the \textit{Life} reflects a kind of spiritual topography and a network of saintly associations that conveniently ties together the principal local sources of spiritual power.
Conclusion

In sum, we have ten texts attributed to Prudentius in the *Patrologia Latina*: of these, seven are authentic and three are not. One of the inauthentic texts, the *Breviarium Psalterii*, should be replaced with an authentic work, the *Flores Psalmorum*, edited elsewhere by Salmon; a second, the *“Pontifical of Prudentius,”* is a simple case of misattribution; and a third, the *Vita Maurae*, is a pseudepigraphic invention of the twelfth century or later.

Of the eight texts securely attributed to our author, at least five survive only through a connection with the church of Rheims. The *Tractoria epistola*, prepared by Prudentius in advance of the Synod of Sens, had been copied by Hincmar into his own treatise on Predestination, written in the summer of 859. The *Epistola ad Hincmarum* (849) had been addressed to Hincmar and his suffragan Pardulus, and Sirmond first printed this letter from a manuscript of Metz (now lost) that also contained several of the works of Hincmar. These are not the only works of Prudentius to have survived solely through a Rheimish provenance. The editors of the *Annals of St. Bertin* have posited that all extant witnesses to the *Annals* depend on a manuscript once owned (and partially written) by Hincmar, and Levillain has suggested that Hincmar obtained the *Annals* from the Cathedral of Troyes, sometime after Prudentius’ death (probably between 865 and 866). At the time these *Annals* first came to Hincmar, it is likely that they were accompanied by other works of our author in which the bishop of Rheims had a particular interest. The *Precepts* of Prudentius, later copied into a Rheims manuscript, might have come into the possession of Hincmar at this time. Along with this shorter collection from the scriptures likely came the author’s own copy of the *De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam*, to which Prudentius had continued to add corrections and additional patristic support up until the moment of his death. Perhaps it was upon reading this manuscript of the treatise against Eriugena and noticing the recent additions to it, that Hincmar found the basis for his observation, inscribed in the *Annals* for the year 861, that Prudentius had died: “still scribbling things mutually contradictory and contrary to the faith.”

---

Chapter 3

Ordering Disorder in The Annals of St. Bertin

One of the great paradoxes of the period of political unification and cultural reform of western Europe under Charlemagne and his successors is that the institutions of intellectual reform and renewal reached their period of greatest fruition at precisely the moment the political unity began to unravel. The intellectuals and churchmen of Prudentius’ generation were keenly aware of this great irony, and worked all the more energetically in the knowledge that the forces of dissolution were already at work around them.\(^305\) In chapters three and four, I will examine the dual literary efforts of Prudentius to document and interpret these premonitions of disorder through his authorship of a twenty-six year segment of the *Annals of St. Bertin* (chapter three), and to offer consolation and edification in the midst of disorder through his creation of a paraphrase of the Psalter (chapter four). Though quite different in basic content, scope, style, and genre, these two works were united in addressing (and fostering) the growing awareness that the work of previous generations was on the verge of lapsing into a state of calamity and decay.

My examination of Prudentius as annalist and florilegist may also serve to attune us to two features of his theological writings that will become a principal focus of this study in chapters five and six, namely (1) his historically oriented exposition of (or at least historically self-conscious orientation to) theological questions and (2) his distinctive approach to the practices of the selection, adaptation, and compilation of texts. Both of these features will appear frequently in the contributions of our author to the mid-century debate over predestination, but they are first introduced and refined here for the preservation of memory and the edification of the faithful.

*Annals of St. Bertin*

The writing of monastic annals in Western Europe in the middle ages likely began in the seventh and eighth centuries in the practice of preserving short notices of the deeds of abbots and other dignitaries in the margins of calendric tables used to calculate the date of Easter.\(^306\) This distinctive form of history writing, which may

\(^305\) For elaboration of this theme, see Paul Dutton, *Politics of Dreaming in the Carolingian Empire* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 1-4.

\(^306\) Annals, which may be considered a basic form of historiography, arise independently in a number of literate cultures; the various annals of antiquity from the Babylonian Period to the annalistic histories of Greek and
be distinguished from the early Christian world chronicle by its focus on recent events and the marking of time from the Dionysian date of the Incarnation, could function visually, that is chronographically, to integrate the local activities of an abbey or cathedral court into the broad sweep of God’s provident ordering of the histories of nations and their peoples. The annalistic ordering of “deeds” (gesta) and “events” (facta) thus worked, alongside independently written literary histories, biographies, and hagiography, to preserve the memory of a local community while situating it within a broader world-historical framework. In the late-eighth and ninth centuries court-centered or royally sanctioned annals, like the Royal Frankish Annals (hereafter RFA), provide us with an official or king-centered history of the Frankish kingdoms written on the model of, and sometimes bearing a complex textual relationship with, local monastic annals. Since the time of Ranke, who convincingly argued for their official character, the RFA have been recognized as the work of multiple authors working in the palace chapel between the years 741 and 829. By the middle years of the

Roman origins in classical antiquity do not share a genealogy. Therefore, we need not think of early medieval annals as dependent upon any one of these forms for their inspiration. For the argument that the origins of annal writing is associated, in particular, with the use of calendric tables to calculate the date of Easter, associated post Whitby (664) with monasteries planted on the continent by Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionaries, see Michael McCormick, Les annales du haut moyen âge (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975), 13-15; D. O. Croinin, “Early Irish annals from Easter Tables: a case restated,” Peritia 2 (1983), 74-86; and D.P. McCarthy, “The chronology and sources of the early Irish annals,” Early Medieval Europe 10 (2001): 323-41. McKitterick now dismisses her earlier acceptance of a direct connection between paschal annals and the major court annal traditions like that of the RFA and AB. See History and Memory in the Carolingian World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 97-100. For other, possibly late antique channels of diffusion such as consular annals and minor annalistic histories, see the introduction to Steven Muhlberger, The Fifth-Century Chroniclers: Prosper, Hydatius, and the Gallic Chronicler of 452 (Leeds: Cairns, 1990), 1-47.

307 The Royal Frankish Annals are among “the first to use the year of the Incarnation as the organizing principal of the narrative on a yearly basis,” McKitterick, History and Memory, 97. For the distinction between annals and chronicles, which often become indistinct from one another in the later middle ages, see McCormick, Les annales, 11-13.


309 Before Ranke convincingly demonstrated their consistently pro-Carolingian bias (“Zur Kritik fränkisch-deutscher Reichsannalen,” Abhandlungen der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin, 1854), 415-56), the RFA were known as the Annales laurissenses maiores, after the monastery of Lorsch where they were first discovered. It is generally thought that a first author, working under the patronage of the court, redacted local monastic annals and private accounts to form the annals for 741-788, after which the annals became updated on an
reign of Louis the Pious the keeping of the annals, or the “Deeds of the Kings” (*Gesta Regum*), had become a responsibility of the palace chaplain. The *Annals of St. Bertin* began in the chapel of Louis the Pious as a continuation of this practice.

Named after the abbey where their oldest manuscript copy was for a long time preserved, the *Annals of St. Bertin* (hereafter *AB*) continue the annual history of the Frankish kingdoms from 829 when the *RFA* end down to the year 882. In their oldest MS witnesses, the *AB* are placed after the *RFA*, without interruption, change of hand, rubric, or any other indication that the two works should be held apart. Were it not for the survival of a number of manuscripts in which the *RFA* end abruptly in 829, we would have no reason to regard the *Annals of Saint Bertin* and the *Royal Frankish Annals* as two separate works. Thus the *AB*, in their earliest years, are, like the *RFA*, a kind of “official record.” Written during a critical but sometimes poorly documented period in the history of Western Europe, they constitute together, according to one modern historian, “the most substantial piece of contemporary historical writing of their time.” They were composed in a period of great transition, just as the empire established by Charlemagne and enlarged by his successor was beginning to give way to forces of political fragmentation and localization. As the *Annals* themselves became dislodged from the court following the death of Louis the Pious, they were transformed from a (semi)official and public text to an annual or semi-annual basis by a court historian working in the palace chapel. For the latest on the composition of the *RFA* and full bibliography, see Collins, “The Revisor Revisited”; and McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 101-111.

---


312 With the exception of *M* (Berlin, Meerman lat. 141), a twelfth-century MS which contains a copy of the *AB* for the years 830-837 (which Levillain and Grat have argued descends from a copy made in 837 on the orders of Prudentius for Drogo, bishop of Metz and palace archchaplain). The MS preserves its section of the *AB* immediately after a copy of the collection of annals known as the *Annales Mettenses priores*, which was, like the *RFA*, an annalistic account connected to the court, possibly written (or at least compiled) at Chelles by Charlemagne’s sister Gisela. See Yitzak Hen, “The Annals of Metz and the Merovingian Past,” in Innes and Hen, eds. *Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 175-190.


local and private one. Thus, they may be said to record, and even reflect, the dislocation and
displacement of the wider world around them.

Based upon considerations of style, vocabulary, length of annual entry, and (where evident) of authorial
perspective, the AB’s modern editors all agree that at least three annalists were responsible for the production
of this text. The work of the first author, who wrote for the period 830-35, is characterized by a humble,
sometimes agrammatical style, use of the titles domnus and domna to refer to Louis and the empress Judith,
and a preference for contemporary usage in place names. This author is generally believed to have been the
palace archchaplain Fulco. When in 835 Fulco assumed the see of Rheims, replacing the recently deposed
Ebbo, a new author took over responsibility for the annals' production. This second author used a more elegant
Latin, longer sentences, fuller annual entries, and preferred classical place names and imperator
and augusta for the emperor and his wife.

Clues to the identity of this second author are provided by his continuator, Hincmar of Rheims. Hincmar
gained responsibility for the annals in 865 and carried them from 861 to the time of his death in 882. On at
least three occasions, Hincmar implies that he was continuing the work of Prudentius, the Bishop of Troyes:
First, in his entry for the year 861, his first contribution to the annals, the bishop of Rheims records the
unflattering obituary of his predecessor that we have already seen in chapter one. Though there is nothing
in the passage to identify Prudentius as co-annalist of Hincmar, it should be noted that Hincmar left no
comparable biographical entry in the annals for any other of his ecclesiastical colleagues. Next, Hincmar
explicitly states in a letter of 866, addressed to Archbishop of Egilo of Sens, that Prudentius had been
responsible for the annals in the year 859, the year in which “he, namely Lord Prudentius, who for the deeds

---

315 For an example of Nithard’s Histories moving from a “public” to “private” account, see Janet Nelson,
317 Both Pertz and Waitz in their introductions to the MGH editions of the AB lamented the poor style of the
annalist from 830-35. Pertz (MGH SS t. 1 (1833), p. 419) noticed the consistent use of hostis for exercitu, hostiliter
for exercitialiter, and pardonner for perdonare, the use of deponent and active forms as passives and passives for
actives, indicative for subjunctive, pluperfect for imperfect, the use of ‘habere’ with the perfect, and ‘debere’ with
the future.
318 Pertz (MGH SS t. 1 (1833), p. 420) draws particular attention to the use of classical place names, which
may suggest a knowledge of Caesar’s Gallic Wars. In a letter addressed to Hincmar of Rheims, Prudentius will later
allude to Caesar, when he says (in reference to Augustine’s critics in southern Gaul), “The Gauls, about whom a
certain author says that they are always hasty in their council.” PL 115, 975.
320 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 84-85.
of the year of Our Lord 859, indicated what he wanted in the Annals of Our Kings, in order to confirm his own opinion." The entry for that year had concerned the position of Pope Nicolas I on predestination, which the annals describe as consistent with the doctrines Prudentius himself had supported in a short tract written before the Council of Sens (856). Finally, in one of the now lost witnesses to the AB, a MS of the Cathedral library of Antwerp, known in the seventeenth century to Jean Bolland and André Duchesne, a manuscript gloss, written in the same hand as the main text, had identified Prudentius as author of the annals. The gloss, written adjacent to the entry for 859 (the same entry Hincmar had noted in the aforementioned letter to Egilo), was once again concerned that the annalist had misrepresented the positions of Pope Nicolas on predestination: "Here bishop Prudentius wrote about Nicolas as he wished it had been, but he did not say what had really happened." The manuscript bearing this gloss, which includes the text for the years 839-863, is thought to have been a copy made for Hincmar, either from the autograph of Prudentius or from a copy made for King Charles the Bald after Prudentius’ death. In sum, the testimony of the Antwerp MS, together with Hincmar’s letter of 866, make it likely that Prudentius had written the Annals from 835 (when the editors first detected a break in authorship) down to his death in 861.

The lost manuscript transcribed by Bolland and its gloss also raise crucial questions concerning the relationship between Prudentius’ section of the annals and possible editorial interventions by their continuator. Using Bolland’s transcription, Levillain was able to conclude that all extant manuscripts of the AB are descended from Hincmar’s lost archetype, save one fragment preserving only the years 830-37 (Levillain and Grat’s MS M), which is descended from a copy of the annals for those years likely

---

321 'Nam idem Gothescalcus, vel quia jam tempus est ut veniat quod Paulus praedixit apostolus de ultimis temporibus, vel invidia mei, quasi me tangat quod jussu episcoporum illum custodio, dicitur multos habere fautores, sicut habuit dominum Prudentium, sicut scripta ipsius testantur, quae a pluribus qui illa habent possunt proferri. Qui etiam, videlicet dominus Prudentius, in Annali gestorum nostrorum regum, quae composit, ad confirmandum suam sententiam, gestis anni Dominicae Incarnationis 859 indidit dicens, Nicolaus pontifex Romanus de gratia Dei et libero arbitrio, de veritate geminae praedestinationis, et de sanguine Christi, ut pro credentibus omnibus fusus sit, fideliter confirmat et catholice decernit.’ PL 126, 70B. Presented in the PL as letter IX, to Archbishop Egilo (MGH Ep. 187, MGH. KA, i, pp. 194f.)

322 ‘Hic Prudentius eps de Nicolao scrisit quod ut fieret uloluit; sed quia factum fuerit, uerum non dixit.’ Levillain, “Introduction,” xix.

323 Though since the Antwerp MS is lost this would be impossible to prove. Levillain argues that both the main text and the gloss were from the hand of Hincmar. His argument depends upon: 1) The observation that Jean Bolland’s description of the hand which copied the lost Antwerp MS compares favorably to the two known examples of the hand of Hincmar (found in Laon 407 and Paris, ms. lat. 10758 and 2866) and 2) taking literally Bolland’s observation that the gloss was “eadem manu,” whereas Poupardin had suggested that “eadem” in this instance may have meant merely “contemporary.” See Levillain, “Introduction,” xvi-xxii.
prepared for Drogo of Metz by Prudentius himself.\textsuperscript{324} With only this very partial direct witness to Prudentius’ text, spanning just two of the twenty six years for which he was annalist, we can only speculate regarding the role played by Hincmar, the continuator, in correcting, redacting, and reshaping the materials of the earlier annalists. Hincmar was content only to gloss (and thus not to correct) the materials in the entry for 859 with which he disagreed. But how many other passages did he silently alter? At least one entry for 849, related to the trial and condemnation of Gottschalk of Orbais, has been identified as an obvious interpolation, taking as it does a view of Gottschalk that Prudentius demonstrably did not share.\textsuperscript{325} Though it is possible that other less obvious interpolations and quiet corrections were made by our annalist’s successor,\textsuperscript{326} the working assumption of my examination will be that, unless an entry demonstrates an attitude at odds with what is known elsewhere of Prudentius’ views or shows clear stylistic aberrations, then the material should be reasonably treated as the work of our author.

\textit{From Court Historian to Universal Historian}

Prudentius’ annals represent and reflect the rapidly changing contexts of the annalist. Though one finds no formal change in the writing over the twenty-six year period for which our author was responsible for the text (apart from variation in the length of the annual entries), changes can be detected in the focus of the writing, the \textit{dramatis personae}, and the horizons of the annalist that suggest Prudentius’ section was composed within (at minimum) three distinct but overlapping contexts. If the years 835-40, are a court-based account, centered on the royal entourage of Louis the Pious, and modeled on the \textit{RFA}, then the period 845-861 is evidently written from the more local (and more limited) viewpoint of Troyes and bears a western Frankish and distinctively ecclesiastical perspective. In between are the years 840-44, which include a series of short entries following the death of Louis the Pious that cover the years of the civil war and its aftermath. These three distinctive contexts for composition, though they do not appear to have affected the form of the yearly entries, nevertheless altered the nature of the information available to our author as he compiled his annual entries. As I will argue below, these changing contexts might also have altered, over time, the author’s perception of how his part related back to the world-historical whole. This

\textsuperscript{324} Levillain, “Introduction,” xxxii.
\textsuperscript{325} The entry for 849 (Levillain and Grat, \textit{Annales}, 56-57) records the condemnation of Gottschalk at Quierzy, the occasion for which will be examined in chapter 5.
\textsuperscript{326} Nelson argues for another interpolation in the entry for 846 (see Nelson, \textit{Annals of St. Bertin}, 63 n.1).
evolving perspective of the annalist’s task in writing his annals may in turn provide an explanation for why he chose to continue privately a court-sponsored and public history long after his dislocation from the circle of the court.

Mid 835-840

The years 835-40 are set off from the period that follows by their evident focus on the court of Louis the Pious. It is for the character of these entries, and for the years immediately preceding them (during which archchaplain Fulco was annalist), that the *AB* have long been regarded as a court product. In these years the entries are built around a clear, if unevenly realized, program drawn from the model of the *Royal Frankish Annals*. The annalist is preoccupied with (but never limited to) such topics as the emperor’s itinerary, the observance of high holidays, in particular, Christmas and Easter, 327 annual hunts, 328 the annual assemblies, 329 and receipt of the annual gifts. 330 In his presentation of the ongoing struggles between the emperor and his sons, the *AB* consistently represent the perspective of Louis’ court: the emperor is the patient father, suffering with equanimity the humiliations imposed on him by his obdurate sons. When the annalist observes, “it was settled on our side,” 331 he writes as a partisan of the emperor, whom he likely accompanied on much of the energetic itinerary recorded in the entries for 836-40: constantly active during these years, Louis moves his residence from Metz, 332 to Thionville, 333 to Aachen, 334 to Mainz, 335 checks the coastal defenses in Frisia, 336 summons general assemblies, 337 takes a

---

327 The celebration of Christmas is documented for 835, 836, 837, 838, but the only mention after the death of Louis (in 840) is 853.
328 Hunts are not mentioned by Fulco in the annals for, 830-34, but are consistently documented by Prudentius for the years 835-39 (except 837), perhaps as a way of shoring up the “secularity” of Louis in the years following his recoronation. Following the death of Louis, hunting appears only infrequently in Prudentius’s section of the *AB*. This may be evidence for a change of the annalist’s circumstances (from court to his assumption of the see of Troyes) as much as it is a change in emphasis or interests.
329 Assemblies are held in 836 at Worms, in 837 (location undisclosed), in 838 at Quierzy, and in 839 at Chalon.
330 Receipt of the “annual gifts” is recorded for 835, 836, 837, 839. The phrase does not occur again, following the death of Louis the Pious in 841.
pilgrimage to Rome (837), and prays at the shrines of the martyrs.\textsuperscript{338} For much of this time, the annalist is close enough to report not just the itinerary but also the mood and emotional state of the emperor (who is more than once described as “very angry” or “carrying himself with grave bearing”).\textsuperscript{339} The annalist appears to have been with Louis in winter 839 as the emperor and his men engaged in a standoff with Louis the German near the city of Mainz.\textsuperscript{340} The immediacy of his account, which makes for compelling reading, suggests an author with access to the intimate thoughts of his subject during a harrowing encounter with a rebellious son. Again in 839, the annalist will record the inner suspicions and reservations of the Emperor, as he reacts to a delegation from Constantinople: “he suspected . . . so he decided that . . .”\textsuperscript{341} Later that year, the annalist again seems to have accompanied the Emperor on campaign in Aquitaine. As Nelson has noted, the vividness of Prudentius’ account of the fighting suggests that he was either an eyewitness or in very full correspondence with a participant or first-hand observer.\textsuperscript{342}

The assumption that Prudentius began his annals as a court record is reinforced by his access to official documents and the oral reports of messengers to court. When the annalist reports, with minute geographical precision, the details of Louis’ 837 provision for the inheritance of his youngest son Charles, he writes from the same document used by the contemporary historian Nithard to record the \textit{divisio regnorum}.\textsuperscript{343} Elsewhere, in his entry for 839, he will report verbatim from a letter of King Aethewulf of Wessex to Louis the Pious and provide details of a settlement between Louis the German and Lothar that again appears to report the wording of a documentary source.\textsuperscript{344} The precise reporting of numbers is likewise evidence of the annalist’s close proximity to the center of the court circle. In his account of the winter of 839 the annalist reports that “nearly 3,000” of the emperor’s men had crossed the Rhine when

\textsuperscript{337} See n. 329 (above).
\textsuperscript{338} Paris, 838 (Nelson, \textit{AB}, 40).
\textsuperscript{339} 835 “grauiter ferens” (Levillain and Grat, \textit{Annales}, 23); 838 “egre tulit” (Levillain and Grat, \textit{Annales}, 23).
\textsuperscript{341} “Quorum aduentus causam imperator diligentius inuestigans, comperit eos gentis esse Sueonum, et, exploratores potius regni illius nostrique quam amicitiae petitores ratus, penes se eo usque retinendos iudicauit quoad ueraciter inueniri posset utrum fideliter eo necne peruenirent.’ Levillain and Grat, \textit{Annales}, 31. I have followed Nelson’s translation (\textit{AB}, 44).
\textsuperscript{343} Levillain and Grat, \textit{Annales}, 22-23; Nelson, \textit{AB}, 38, n. 6.
\textsuperscript{344} Levillain and Grat, \textit{Annales}, 29-30.
the Saxons arrived to reinforce Louis during the standoff outside Mainz. Elsewhere the same year, he recalls that “2,437 deaths were reported” following a St. Stephen’s Day flood covering “nearly the whole of Frisia.” Given his apparent attachment to the imperial entourage for much of 839, it is quite possible – even likely – that Prudentius was in the company of the emperor when he died in May of 840 on an island in the Rhine, “within sight of the palace of Ingelheim.” The annalist seems to have measured the distance with his own eyes.

If we are to identify a moment of transition when Prudentius’ annals go from a public, court-based history to a private history that more transparently reflects the unique perspective of their author, the moment begins in May 840, that is, in the months following the death of Louis the Pious. Levillain suggests that our annalist remained the good courtier, continuing the official history begun in the chapel of Louis, but now writing from within the entourage of his youngest son Charles. But a close analysis of the annal entries for 840-43 mitigates against an unqualified acceptance of this view. In the period of fraternal strife following upon the emperor’s death, the annals do approve more consistently the actions of Charles over those of the two older brothers. In 841, for example, Charles is reported to have evaded Lothar’s armies with “forceful prudence and prudent force.” Later that year, Charles is “full of joy and affection,” “afire with generous feelings,” able to win allies in the Haspengau, “more by love than by fear.” Lothar, the eldest, who remains unreconciled with his brothers, is consistently portrayed as militarily reckless, murderous, impious, and even sacrilegious. Louis the German is only fully

---

345 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 27.
346 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 28.
347 ‘Imperator uero a persequendo filio rediens, correptus morbo, in insula Rheni infra Mogontiam ad prospectum Ingulenheim palatii sita XII kalendas iulii defunctus est.” Levillain and Grat, Annales, 36.
348 Levillain’s suggestion is that Prudentius continued the annals upon the orders of Charles: ‘et c’est là vraisemblablement que le futur évêque de Troyes reçut du roi l’ordre de continuer ses Annales, qui, très pauvres depuis la mort de Louis le Pieux, redeviennent plus amples.’ Levillain, “Introduction,” xiii. The annals, together with the annalist, moved with Judith’s chapel following the death of the emperor.
349 ‘Qui tamen uirili prudencial prudentique uirtute transposito flumine, omnes in fugam bis terque cogit.’ Prudentius will elsewhere play on his name in this manner. See his Epistola ad Hincmarum (PL 115, 877B), ‘quod quantae sit imprudentiae vestra prudentia viderit.’
350 841, Nelson, AB, 50.
351 In one striking anecdote, Lothar attempts to buy the loyalty of his followers by cutting up and distributing the pieces of a “wonderful silver platter,” “on which there shone a map of the whole world,” along with the movements of the planets and signs of the zodiac. If this was the same dish describe in Charlemagne’s will, it
purged of his earlier betrayal of the elder Louis, when he allies himself with Charles at Strasbourg. Clearly, the annalist favors the younger Charles, having known him in the palace court from his earliest youth, and he likely remained a political supporter of Charles long after his father’s death (though as we move into the 850s, a weaker supporter). Still this sentimental (and perhaps even formal) allegiance to the youngest son of the emperor need not require the AB to have continued as a court product. Several clues suggest that the writing of the annals had become dislodged from residence in the imperial entourage following the death of the emperor. First, after Louis’s death in 840, Prudentius no longer writes with the vividness of a first-hand observer in the way that he had done for the emperor’s campaigns of 839. This more remote perspective could suggest only a distance of time, meaning that the accounts of these years were written some months (or even years) after the events they describe. But it more likely suggests that Prudentius was writing in this period, not as an observer, but as a distant correspondent. In support of the latter possibility is the fact that the annalist does not appear to have a detailed command of Charles’s itinerary during the earliest years of the civil war, at least from the death of the emperor in May 840 until after the battle of Fontenoy in June 841. Nor does he appear to have access any longer to official documents (for instance, he neglects to record, or is perhaps unable to record, as Nithard so famously does, the wording of the Oaths of Strasbourg in February 842).

It is unclear where Prudentius physically passed the years which intervened between the death of the emperor in 840 and his elevation to the see of Troyes in 844. In the months immediately following Louis’ death, he might have moved with the empress Judith to Poitiers in Aquitaine, along with many of the entourage from the palace chapel, taking the manuscript of the annals with him. It is also possible that, like Drogo of Metz and other magnates, the annalist waited until after the decisive defeat of Lothar at Fontenoy to make explicit his allegiance to Charles and his mother. By summer of 842, the annalist might be understood why a former resident of the palace would lament the passing of such a celebrated relic of the court.

---

352 When he grants Walcheren to the Danes, who are pagan, Lothar commits an “utterly detestable crime.” (841, Nelson, AB, 51). In late 841, Lothar ravages the land beyond Le Mans with “such acts of devastation, burning, rape, sacrilege, and blasphemy.” (Annal 841, Nelson, AB, 52).
355 This is the suggestion of Nelson, AB, 178.
seems to have reengaged in court service, now on behalf of Charles. In his entry for that year Prudentius will note that Charles had handpicked trusted legates to survey the imperial fisc in preparation for an equitable division of the kingdom between the three brothers, a settlement solemnized in the Treaty of Verdun (843). This is the only notice of missi in Prudentius’ section of the Annals, and, given his known participation with Lupus of Ferrières in an official mission of monastic visitation in autumn 844/ spring 845 (see chapter one), it is possible that Prudentius’ service as an official envoy started here, as early as 842. Though it would have kept him in the circle of trusted advisors to the young king, such service physically removed the annalist from Charles’s entourage during the sometimes violent months following the battle of Fontenoy. This distance from the center of court is reflected in the rather spare and unevenly written entries for the years 843-44.

844-861

Following Prudentius’ elevation to the see of Troyes in 844, we can again place our annalist in a specific context. Now we can imagine an author whose perspective remained broad – recording events from as far afield as Benevento, northern Spain, Ireland, and Saxony – but whose access to information was increasingly uneven. Though it might be too strong to suggest that the author developed something so definite as an “episcopalist’s perspective” in the years following his elevation to the see of Troyes, it is clear that he had begun to notice more frequently the problems that confronted and the calamities which befell his ecclesiastical colleagues. He maintains several of the themes established in earlier annal entries: the invasion of Danes and Northmen, the political struggles between the successors of Louis the Pious, and the occurrence of meteorological and astronomical phenomena. Now from the vantage of a centrally placed episcopal see, the annalist will also introduce new themes and write according to new patterns that

---

356 According to Nelson, Löwe had suggested that Prudentius’ perspective amounted to an “episcopalist position” that represented the rising consciousness of the northern Frankish episcopate in the 840s and 50s. Nelson observes (“Annals of St. Bertin,” 181) that if this were an episcopalist narrative it would be strange to leave out (as Prudentius does) several of the “episcopalist triumphs” of the 840s such as the councils of Ver (844) and of Meaux-Paris (845). See chapter one for my thoughts on Prudentius’ involvement in these councils.

357 Yet the reports of invasion will now come slowly. For example, Levillain has suggested that for 852-53, the annalist had already drafted his entry for the year, then later interpolated the invasions of Danes, with which the entry begins, once the information had been made available to him. This explanation would account for the interruption of chronology in placing an event dated to late March ahead of notice that Charles and Lothar had celebrated Epiphany (Jan. 6) at Quierzy. See Levillain, “Introduction,” lxi.
begin to reflect, albeit in subtle ways, his dislocation from court. The severity of the weather, the translation of relics, disturbances in the churches of sister dioceses, violence against neighboring bishops, theological controversy, the perfidy of the Jews, the suffering of Christians in Ireland, Spain, and Benevento are all concerns and preoccupations which emerge only in the late 840s/early 850s. We might also note during these years subtle shifts in the ways in which astronomical and meteorological phenomena and natural disasters are treated in the annals. In the entry for 832, Fulco had noted an eclipse of the moon; Prudentius likewise noted a lunar eclipse in 838, “fiery red tails as well as shooting stars” in 839, and a solar eclipse just before the death of the emperor in 840. Such phenomena were earlier reported according to the established custom of the court annals. However, in the entries for 845-861, these astronomical observations will increasingly join natural disasters, mysterious disturbances in the natural world, and even local disturbances, as portents and prodigies foreboding imminent political calamities and misfortunes. A flood in Liege, which transported a vineyard, “with its earth, vines and all its trees completely intact,” across the River Yonne; a pack of 300 ravenous wolves, marching

---

358 No detailed observations concerning the weather during the years written at court, but remarks concerning the severity of the winter in 844, 845, 856, and 860. This may reflect Prudentius’s embeddedness in an administration of a church, whose rural population and whose material wealth depended upon the regular harvest brought by favorable weather.

359 853: The body of St. Martin withdrawn from Tours to Orleans to escape the assaults of the northmen (Nelson, AB, 77); 858: The blessed martyrs George the Deacon and Aurelius, and the head of Nathalie are translated from Cordoba by a “certain monk” of the abbey of SS. Vincent and Germain. (Nelson, AB, 89); 859: The blessed martyrs Denis, Rusticus, and Eleutherius removed to Nogent sur Seine, to escape the assaults of the Northmen. (Nelson, AB, 91).

360 857.

361 Death of Frothald of Chartres while fleeing the Danes (857).

362 Controversy over Gottschalk (849).

363 The annalist’s anxiety concerning the growing influence of Jewish communities in the Spanish March and in Spain first emerges in connection with Bodo’s conversion to Judaism (838, 848). In 848 Jews betray Bordeaux to the Danes, and in 852, Barcelona, to the Moors.

364 847.

365 847, 852.

366 843, 845, 852.

367 In 837 Lupus had taken up the question of astronomical portents in light of the opinions of Virgil (Georgics I, 488) and Josephus (Jewish Wars VI, 5.3). He addressed his findings to the monk Altuin, following the appearance of what would later be called Halley’s comet. For a full survey of Carolingian era preoccupation with portents see Scott Ashley, “The Power of Symbols: Interpreting Portents in the Carolingian Empire,” Medieval History 4 (1994), 34-50.

368 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 52; Nelson, AB, 63.
throughout Aquitaine in formation, boldly charging all who would resist them (846); a flash of lightening ripping through the crypt of the cathedral church of Cologne, killing a priest, a deacon, and a layman (857) – these are the kinds of events that a court-based annalist would likely deem unworthy of incorporation into the annual record.

Although the principal political events of the Frankish kingdoms continue to remain a focus of the annals in these years, the entries can be shown to overlook some of the more important events, colloquies, and controversies between Charles, his brothers, and (as we move into the late 850s) his nephews. As noticed in chapter one, the annalist omits any mention of the momentous first Council of Meersen (848) and only rarely documents ecclesiastical councils (even those that he is known to have attended). Nelson has noted, in particular, the annalist’s relative silence regarding a Loire-based insurrection of 856-858, which involved the counts of Aquitaine cooperating with Louis the German in an invasion of the Western Frankish kingdom. I will return later to the question of why our author may have neglected events of such political importance involving his own colleagues and associates to record instead the invasions, anomalies, and disruptions that appear in the later years of his annals. Here it will suffice to note that in the period 845-861 the AB should no longer be considered “official” or “king-centered” in purpose.

Prudentius as Historian

Having considered the episodic and disunified nature of the annals, it remains to consider them as a unity. What do the annals say about the annalist as a witness to and writer of history? Prudentius was one of a number of historians who worked in the ninth century under the patronage of the Frankish court. Einhard, Thegan, Nithard, Claudius of Turin, Frechulf of Lisieux, Walahfrid Strabo, and the anonymous biographer of Louis known as “the Astronomer” all produced or, in the case of Walahfrid, edited, histories of various kinds in the period contemporary with Prudentius’ authorship of the Annals of St. Bertin. Though it would be overzealous to speak of something so definite as a “historical school,” we

370 Levillain and Grat, Annales, 74; Nelson, AB, 84.
should think of these men as authors in conversation with one another, working within established genres, at times constrained (or even motivated) by historiographical convention, but always conveying a highly particular view of the events they describe. In addition to his personal familiarity with contemporary historians from his years at court, Prudentius would also have had occasion to examine at various moments in his twenty-six year career as annalist a number of their works. In Thegan’s *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris*, the Astronomer’s *Vita Hludowici imperatoris*, the histories of Nithard and previous authors of the *RAF* and *AB*, our annalist would have read narratives of contemporary events crafted using literary strategies inherited from Roman classics and the Christian historiography of late antiquity. As Courtney Booker has recently shown, these authors composed and constructed contemporary political narratives in light of preexisting narratives and typologies, so that Louis’ deposition in 833, for example, could become a “tragedy” (for the earlier annalist of the *AB*), a “Christological passion” (for the Astronomer), and a typological drama (for Thegan). Though there is some danger in imputing too much intention and forethought to authorship of a text that, for many of its entries, was drawn up on an annual basis, under constantly shifting political, social, and even physical circumstances, Prudentius clearly worked within the standard historiographical forms, patterns, and expectations of his contemporaries.

The use of the annalistic form itself involved a decision that limited the scope and defined the texture of the annalist’s history. It was also a decision that conveyed certain definite claims about the relationship between objective truth and the subjectivity of the author. Walahfrid Strabo, for example, had

---

372 One may consider here the analogy of colleagues in a modern academic department, all with various academic backgrounds, methodological training, areas of specialization, but nevertheless who, under the convention of collegiality, develop a loose frame of complementary if divergent conversations.


375 Regarding the continuity between late antique historiographical traditions and Carolingian historiography, see Rosamond McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 30-31.

376 On the “content of form” see Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), ix-x, and regarding specifically the annalistic form, 3-11.
observed in his prologue to Thégan’s *Gesta* that writing in the “custom of the annals” inclined “more to truth than to elegance.” Such a statement by a contemporary history writer should remind us that Prudentius was not naïve to the fact that a particular historiographical form makes definite epistemic assumptions and should be chosen with certain rhetorical ends in view. As we have seen, the bishop continued, even after his removal from court for the see of Troyes, to execute his entries in a style consistent with those of the previous annalists of the *AB* and the *RFA* going back to the first entry of the *RFA* in 741. We need only consider Hincmar’s more colorful and verbose continuation of the *AB* for the years 861-882, to appreciate that Prudentius could have chosen to break with the annalistic style of his predecessors had he wished. That he was not averse to (or incapable of) more prolix written forms is amply demonstrated in the survival of his *De praedestinatione* (whose modern edition fills over 350 columns of the *Patrologia Latina*). Thus the “lapidary concision” of the annals should be viewed as a self-conscious decision by our author to maintain the annalistic style inherited from the palace chapel.

What are some of the implications of this decision? Annals often begin *in medias res*, record primarily recent and local events, and end abruptly, making no effort to achieve “narrative closure.” One may argue, as Hayden White has done, that a purely annalistic form offers a representation of reality distinct from proper narrative history, in which the sparing, unadorned catalog of events reflects (whether or not intentionally) a world in a state of violent upheaval and constant hardship. Yet, however much White’s society on the brink of dissolution is found in the *AB*, Prudentius’ account of his period will confound any typology that equates the annalistic form with the refusal to narrate. In our annalist’s entries it is impossible to posit a hard distinction between “annals,” which prefer lists and catalogs, and the “chronicle,” which (according to White) self-consciously if imperfectly narrates and interprets

---

377 Pertz, ed., *MGH SS* t. 2, 586.
378 Hincmar’s continuation, which covers only twenty one years (as opposed to Prudentius’ twenty six), is more than twice the length of the portion of the *AB* written by Prudentius. Hincmar writes “exempla,” a succession of engaging anecdotes, rather than in the bare frame of the annalistic style proper. The last section especially, “reflects the strong personal feelings which Hincmar entertained against some of his political and ecclesiastical opponents” (Laistner, *Thought and Letters*, 263). “Compared with Prudentius’ section, they are often entertaining and occasionally, even, quite gripping,” (Nelson, *AB*, 185).
379 PL 115, 1009C-1366A.
connections between events. Our author will engage in both annalistic enumeration and genuine narration. Though many of his entries are indeed lists of facts, with little comment, exposition, or narrative linking them, other entries are more purposeful compositions that offer clues to the historical (and theological) vision of their author. When the less expository entries are joined together with the fuller, more obviously ideological narrations, Prudentius’ section of the AB can be shown to tell the story of a world in the midst of great political and social change. They also form, drawing upon the typology of the Old Testament and the narrative of sacred history, a coherent critique of that world.

Consider, for example, the consecutive entries for 838 and 839. Both come from Prudentius’ years at court, but they differ dramatically from one another in terms of length, organization, appropriation of sources, and narrative logic. The entry for 838, which is of average length, is a quick catalog of the year’s signal events and themes: Christmas celebrations, the continuing perfidy of Lothar and Louis the German, the invasions of Danish pirates, Saracen raids, the general assembly held at Quierzy in mid-August, followed by autumn hunting, raids against the Obodrites, a lunar eclipse, and the death of Pippin, one of the emperor’s four sons. Even if we restrict ourselves only to what is reported by the annalist, the year may be appropriately described as eventful. Yet the total length of the entry is only 72 lines. In the annalist’s presentation, the happenings of the year seem to follow one upon the other. The only common thread linking the events of the year is the person of the emperor, who acts and is acted upon, with little explanation offered concerning his motive in acting. Temporal clauses, particles, and ablative absolutes create an overriding sense of continuity between the items enumerated in the entry, yet there is no causal, only a temporal, relationship between the events described. Any apparent connectedness, such as that suggested by the lone igitur, “therefore,” is only rhetorical.

This catalog of deeds for 838 is pulled into a broader world of meaning when joined to the much fuller account of the year 839, by far Prudentius’ longest entry at 282 lines. The central concern for this entry is the continued drama of the emperor’s relationship with his sons and (now) grandson. The year begins with a bitter stand-off with Louis the German near Mainz, includes the emperor’s reconciliation with

---

383 Moving past White’s narrow typology of “annal,” “chronicle,” and “proper history,” one might also speak of “mixed modes,” in which a primarily annalistic text will incorporate a variety of narrative modes and rhetorical devices from other genres usually read as literature. See Joaquin Martínez Pizarro, “Mixed Modes in Historical Narrative,” in Elizabeth M. Tyler and Ross Balzaretti, eds., Narrative and history in the early medieval west (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 91-104.

384 Counting from the unnumbered lines of the Levillain and Grat edition.
Lothar (again) and repartitioning of the kingdom to the benefit of Charles, and ends with an Aquitainian campaign against Pippin (son of the deceased Pippin). Into this central narrative of relations between father and sons the annalist interposes a series of events that at first glance bear little relation to one another or to the central theme of domestic discord. There are the strange episode of the palace chaplain Bodo’s conversion to Judaism, devastating floods in Frisia followed by astronomical portents, the arrival of envoys from Wessex and Constantinople, and the renewed attacks of Danish pirates. Several such interpolations form setpiece scenes with their own plots and narrative development. The conversion of Bodo and the arrival of an envoy from England bearing the prophetic vision of a “certain pious priest” are especially vivid and have been scrutinized as discrete episodes for their own intrinsic interest. But only when put into the broader literary pattern of the entry for 839 do these strange detours from the political and domestic history of the palace make sense. A full list of the events of the year, as they are organized by the annalist, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines:</th>
<th>Description of Episode:</th>
<th>Date if Indicated in AB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-31</td>
<td>The emperor Louis engages in a standoff with Louis the German</td>
<td>Feb.-March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-57</td>
<td>Bodo, a palace chaplain and scholar, commits apostasy</td>
<td>“Meanwhile”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58-68</td>
<td>Flood in Frisia [Dec. 26] and fiery colors appear in the night sky</td>
<td>Dec. 26 and Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69-119</td>
<td>Envoy from England; prophetic vision of a certain pious priest</td>
<td>After Easter (April 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120-152</td>
<td>Envoy from the Greeks and the Rhus arrive from Constantinople</td>
<td>18 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153-197</td>
<td>Emperor and Lothar reconcile at Worms and redivide the empire</td>
<td>30 May ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198-229</td>
<td>The emperor Louis negotiates a settlement with Louis the German</td>
<td>After 1 Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229-239</td>
<td>Expeditions on the Saxon frontier and hunting in Ardennes</td>
<td>Beginning of Sept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240-249</td>
<td>Attacks of northmen and subsequent negotiations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250-274</td>
<td>Emperor’s army worn by fever, campaigns in Aquitaine</td>
<td>“Autumn”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>275-282</td>
<td>Saxons fight Sorbs and treaty with Horic, king of the Danes</td>
<td>“Meanwhile”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several observations may be made. First, the criteria that make events worthy of remembrance for this year (as with other years) seem to be “in their liminal nature” – hardships, betrayals, extravagant

---

385 See Frank Reiss, “From Aachen to Al-Andalus: the journey of Deacon Bodo (823-76)” Early Medieval Europe 13 (2005): 133-140.
386 On Bodo, see Reiss, “From Aachen to Al-Andalus,” 133-140; For the vision sequence see Dutton, Politics of Dreaming, 107-110.
387 White, Content of Form, 7.
Next, the St. Stephen’s Day flood, which Prudentius dates to the seventh Kalends of January (or December 26, 838), is given out of sequence so that it might be joined to the astronomical anomalies of February. This is the only obvious interruption of the otherwise loosely chronological ordering of the year’s events. Finally, at 51 lines, the vision of the English priest, which is given verbatim from a letter of Aethelwulf of Wessex addressed to Louis the Pious, is by far the lengthiest of the episodes recorded for the year.

How then do these events fit together? The interweaving of the Bodo episode, the vision sequence, and portents, together with the annalist’s ongoing narrative of discord within the palace and northern invasion are here intended to create a literary environment of moral admonition and exhortation. While Bodo’s apostasy, the portents, and the mysterious arrival of Russians (the first occurrence of the word Rhus in a Latin text) all contribute to the mounting atmosphere of prophetic warning, it is the interpolation of the vision of an English priest that makes the warning explicit. For several reasons the vision sequence represents a rare occurrence within Prudentius’ annals: it is one of only two instances in which the annalist claims to quote verbatim from a document (though there are at least two additional examples in which one may detect the silent use of documentary materials). It is the only scene in which the annalist recounts a prophecy or vision and one of two examples of an overtly theological or apocalyptic interpretation of external invasion. Finally, the political and literary contexts from which the vision emerges are striking: it is the vision of an English cleric, conveyed to the king of Wessex, inscribed in an official letter, carried by envoy to the Frankish court, and now reported (we are left to presume) verbatim in the Annals of the Frankish king and emperor.

The vision may be summarized as follows:

---

388 As is typical of the annalistic form, according to White, Content of Form, 10.
389 My analysis is intended to complement the provocative and suggestive treatments of this passage by Dutton, Politics of Dreaming, 107-110; and Reiss, “From Aachen to Al-Andalus,” 134-35.
391 The other is in 851 from the Acta of the Council of Meersen II (Annales, 60-63). Nelson notes the use of documentary evidence in 837 (AB, 38, n. 6). One may presume that the division of the kingdom described in 839 (Levillain and Grat, Annales, 31-32) is also based on documentary evidence. Nelson notes that the AB is the only source to record this division (AB, 45, n.10).
392 I have reproduced here the full text of the dream: ‘Visio cuiusdam religiosi praesbiteri de terra Anglorum, quae post Natale Domini ei rapto a corpore ostensa est. Quadam nocte cum idem religiosus praesbiter dormiret, quidam homo ad eum uenit, praecipiens illi ut eum sequeretur. Tunc ille surgens secutus est eum; ductor uero illius duxit eum ad terram sibi ignotam, ubi uaria et mira
Just after Christmas (of an undisclosed year) a certain pious priest from the land of the English, having been transported one night out of his body, was met by a mysterious guide who led him to an unknown land filled with wondrous buildings. Among these buildings was a church in which the priest witnessed young boys reading books inscribed with lines of black ink and lines of blood. Upon asking his guide the meaning of this scene, the priest learned that the lines written in blood represented the diverse sins of the Christians. The young boys reading the books were the souls of the saints, who daily interceded for the Christian people. The vision ends with a prophecy: If the Christian people do not quickly repent of their sins and observe the Lord’s day more consistently, then a great and insufferable disaster will come over them. A foretaste of this judgment has already caused an abundant harvest to spoil. If the people continue in their vices, an immense cloud will cover the land for three days and pagani will arrive with a multitude of ships to devastate the land by fire and sword. If, however, the people can be made to do penance (poenitentiam agere) and atone for their sins, then they might escape these punishments through the intercession of the saints.

Already transplanted from its oneiric and oral contexts among English clergy to the literate and courtly contexts of the imperial palace, this vision of sin and judgment must now be interpreted within the literary environment created for it by the annalist. Though it has been argued that the vision may be read as “an aedifica constructa uidit, inter quae aeclesia facta erat in quam ille et ductor eius introiuit ibidemque plurimos pueros legentes uidit. Cumque ductorem suum interrogaret an inquirere auderet quinam pueri essent, respondit ei: “Interroga quod uis, et libenter tibi indicabo.” Et cum ad illos adpropinquaret ut uideret quod legerent, perspexit libros eorum non solum nigris litteris uerum etiam sanguineis esse descriptos, ita uidelicet ut una linea nigris esset litteris descripta et altera sanguineis. Cumque interrogaret cur libri illi sanguineis lineis descripti essent, respondit ductor eius: “Lineae sanguineae, quas in istis libris conspicis, diuersa hominum christianorum peccata sunt, quia ea quae in libris diuinis illis precepta et iussa sunt minime facere et adimplere uolunt. Pueri uero isti qui hic quasi legendo discurrent animae sunt sanctorum quae cotidie pro christianorum peccatis et facinoribus deplorant et pro illis intercedunt, ut tandem aliquando ad poenitentiam conuertantur; et nisi istae animae sanctorum tam incessanter cum fletu ad Deum clamarent, iam aliquatenus finis tantorum malorum in christiano populo esset. Recordaris quia anno praesenti fruges non solum in terra, uerum etiam in arboribus et uitibus habundanter ostensa sunt, sed propter peccata hominum maxima pars illarum perit quae ad usum atque utilitatem humanam non peruenit; quod si cito homines christiani de uariis uiciis et facinoribus eorum non egerint poenitentiam et diem dominicum melius et honorabilius non obseruauerint, cito super eos maximum et intolerabile periculum uenient: uidelicet tribus diebus diebus et noctibus super terram illorum nebula spississima expandetur, et statim homines pagani cum immensa multitudine nauium super illos uenient et maximam partem populi et terrae christianorum cum omnibus quae possident igni ferroque deuastabunt. Sed tamen si adhuc ueram poenitentiam agere uolunt et peccata illorum iuxta praeceptum Domini in ieiunio et oratone atque elemosinis emendare studuerint, tunc has poenas et pericula per intercessionem sanctorum euadere poeterunt.’ Levillain and Grat, Annales, 29-30.
attempt from the inside to draw Louis’s attention to the troubled state of his empire," it seems unlikely that the emperor would have needed reminding of a message already commended to him by a foreign king. Nor would he have required notice of the troubled state of his *imperium*. Nor would the annalist, who consistently depicts the actions of the emperor in a favorable light, have wished here to insinuate an implicit critique. Rather, the vision sequence functions as a literary key through which to order the disorder unfolding in the pages of the *Annals*. The events of 838, as well as the events of the years that follow 839, take on a more particularly theological (and thus historical) significance when interpreted in light of the prophecy of the pious English priest: the world of the Christians is in a state of political and social upheaval – of which sin is the root cause – and without the immediate and full repentance of the Frankish people, this environment of impending calamity will only grow more ominous.

Nowhere is this warning more clearly born out in the annals than in the steady rush of invasions by Northmen, Danes, and Saracens who had already appeared in the *AB* but will become more prominent visitors in the entries following 839. In his entry for 845, for example, with the years at court now behind him, Prudentius would shade his record of the devastation wrought by invaders in light of the prophecy earlier given by the English priest. “The Northmen went back down the Seine to the open sea. Then they devastated all the coastal regions, plundering and burning. God in his goodness and justice, so much offended by our sins, had thus worn down the lands and kingdoms of the Christians.” This is the only instance, outside of the vision sequence of 839, in which the annalist offers a specifically theological interpretation of the mounting destruction visited on Francia by the Northmen. Whether as instruments of divine wrath or as actors moved by their own destructive motivations, the invaders would continue to visit the land of the Franks in every subsequent year of Prudentius’ authorship of the text save one (849). As we have already noticed, these invasions are a principal theme of the *AB* in the period, 845-861, surpassing in some years, the prominence given to royal and ecclesiastical politics.

---

396. For a survey of the religious and theological significance attributed to invasions of northmen in ninth century sources see Simon Coupland, “The Rod of God’s Wrath or the People of God’s Wrath? The Carolingian Theology of the Viking Invasions,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42 (1991), 535-554, which confronts the view that the invasions were framed in the sources in terms of a religious contest between paganism and christianity, a view established by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Vikings in Francia*. The Stenton Lecture 1974 (Reading: The University of Reading, 1975).
Yet, if the desolations wrought by invaders had been an obvious implication of the English priest’s warning, then a reprieve from their onslaught might recall the vision’s alternative mode of fulfillment: repent and be granted an escape. The annalist would later remember and invoke this alternative as a faint ray of hope amidst dark and disorderly times. Again in his entry for the year 845:

So that the pagans should no longer go unpunished in falsely accusing the most omnipotent and most provident Lord of improvidence and even impotence, when they were going away in ships loaded with booty from a certain monastery which they had sacked and burned, they were struck down by divine judgment either with blindness or insanity, so severely that only a very few escaped to tell the rest about the might of God.397

In this unexpected showing of divine mercy, it is almost certain that our annalist recalled both the warning and the promise of the English priest’s mysterious vision. Here the word pagani (used to describe those whom the AB, in every other instance, call by the term Nordmanni) sounds a linguistic echo of the earlier prophecy.398 The annalist is also testing here a phrase to which he will return, four years later, in a letter addressed to Hincmar of Rheims and Pardulus of Laon, whom the annalist would accuse, like the pagani in the passage above, of confusing divine omnipotence with impotence.399

In the entry for 839, then, we see some of the literary and theological patterns through which our author will select, organize, and interpret the events of earlier and later years. Though other entries are more parsimonious, once they are placed within a universe of apocalyptic meaning made explicit here, their cast of characters, events, and prodigies can become imbued with an apocalyptic and typological significance.400 Prudentius’ annals as a whole conform to a broader schema of vice and virtue according to which persons act and events occur in light of their literary characterization rather than from human

397 ‘Sed licet peccatis nostris diuinæ bonitatis aequitas nimium offensa taliter christianorum terras et regna attruerit, ne tamen etiam pagani improvidentiam aut certe impotentiam Dominum omnipotentissimum ac prudentissimum inpune diutius insulament, cum a quodam monasterio direpto incensoque oneratis nauibus repedarent, ita diano iudicio uel tenebris caecati uel insania sunt percussi ut uix perpauci euaderent, qui Dei potentiam caeteris nuntiare.’ Levillain and Grat, Annales, 50-51.
398 ‘Pagani’ only appears here and in the dream sequence. By comparison, “Nordmanni” occurs at least six times (835, 836, 837 [x2], 844, and 845).
399 ‘Et ubi erit quod jugiter diurnis nocturnisque confessionibus nos credere in Deum Patrem omnipotentem fidelissime dicimus? Si aliqua vult, et non facit, quod absit ab omnium salvandorum cordibus, impotentiae arguitur qui omnipotens praedicatur.’ PL 115, 976A.
motivation or natural causation. The annalist’s point of view, then, comes most clearly into relief, not as much through his direct commentary or organization of material, as through his indirect characterization of the principal protagonists and antagonists in the unfolding family drama of the emperor Louis, his sons, and grandsons. Louis is always constant; his sons, inconstant: “on this side the righteous father, on the other the unfaithful son.” Lothar proposes perfidy in an Alpine pass; Louis the German refuses to receive his father at Mainz. Pippin falls out of, then back into, favor just before his death in 838. Charles, the good son of a better father, in middle age falls away from his obligations to his vassals, but more through lack of restraint than through the maliciousness that had earlier characterized his brothers. Following the settlement at Verdun in 843, the brothers, no longer pitted against one another, for a time become exemplars of political, as well as spiritual redemption, before Charles and Louis renew fraternal strife in the mid-850s. New villains emerge, such as Nominoe, king of Brittany, and his vassal Lambert, and later, Erispoe, all of whom succeed the (now) redeemed Lothar as the annals’ exemplars of perfidy and inconstancy.

Passed through the annalist’s figural hermeneutic, the domestic trials of the emperor and his sons can become a familiar story of other well-known fathers and sons. Louis is eager to reconcile with his sons, as David was with Absolom; he spoils the son of his favorite wife and naively invites rebellion among the disinherited elder brothers, just as Jacob had done with Joseph and his brothers. Patient in the midst of domestic crisis, natural disaster, and physical hardship, Louis exemplifies the qualities of

---

401 See the observations made of the section written by Prudentius’s predecessor Fulco in Booker, Past Convictions, 26-27.
403 This is not the place to speak broadly about medieval figural hermeneutics, but it would be counterintuitive to think that Prudentius, a student of scripture and of Latin exegetical and theological works, was not informed of the broader typological logic of the exegetical traditions of the Latin fathers. For an analogous (though unrelated) exploration of the ways in which biblical typologies can work in the writing of history, see Derek Krueger, “Typological Figuration in Theodoret of Cyrrhus’s Religious History and the art of Postbiblical Narrative,” Journal of Early Christian Studies 5 (1997): 393-419. Auerbach’s theory of the use of figures in history writing is summarized nicely in his treatment of Ammianus Marcellinus in Mimesis: “Figural prophecy implies the interpretation of one worldly event through another; the first signifies the second, the second fulfills the first. Both remain historical events; yet both looked at in this way, have something provisional and incomplete about them; they point to one another and both point to something in the future, something still to come, which will be the real, and definitive event,” Mimesis. The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 73.
Job, allowing Prudentius to maintain a literary parallel established by the previous annalist in his description of the events of 830-33. The sons have their biblical exemplars as well: At once types of the prodigal of the gospel parable and of David’s son Absalom, the older sons (Lothar, Louis, and Pippin) drift from their father, actively betray him, then reconcile. Although there is no univocal or one to one correspondence with the typology of the Old Testament, such as one may find in the biographies of Louis by Thegan and the Astronomer, it is evident that the rich, polyvalent tapestry of scripture provides the literary context that forms the annalist in ways both conscious and subconscious. Prudentius’ annals, like those of the AB annalist who preceded him, present an “aesthetic of biblical correspondence.” The correspondences exist, not always because Prudentius intends to create them, but because the providential narrative of Israel’s history enfolds the Franks (and the annalist) into its story in ways that are sometimes too powerful to resist.

The World in its Old Age

Prudentius’ annals leave for their modern readers a number of lingering questions. What was the original purpose behind their composition, who would have read them and to what uses might they have been put? Unlike the authors of literary histories, biographies, and saints lives of the period, the annalist leaves us no account of the purpose for which he wrote nor does he indicate the intended readership of his text. Though the AB entries for the years 835-40 appear to maintain the official and king-centered character of previous entries of the AB and the RFA, it still remains to ask to what practical purposes these texts, which Hincmar would later call the Gesta Regum, might be put. If the court wished for the annals simply to mold public opinion, then, as Nelson has noted, the AB would have been a far poorer instrument for such purposes than more persuasive and impressive instruments like the “great assemblies, consultations,

---

405 In the work of the previous annalist of the AB, Ganz hears echoes of Job (“Debate on Predestination,” 285), whereas Booker finds a resemblance to the story of Jacob and his two sons, noting Walahfrid’s application of the nicknames Jacob and Rachel to Louis and Judith in De imagine Tetrici (Past Convictions, 286-87, n. 59).


408 For an example of how much can be learned from the introductory tropes found in classical histories and historical biographies, see John Marincola, Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
oath-takings, public addresses, and ritual displays” available to Charlemagne, Louis, and their successors.  

After his departure from court, Prudentius would have been even more unlikely to have written his annals out of some imagined usefulness to Charles (or one of the other brothers). Evidence that the king had limited access to the Annals in the period 845-861 would serve to underscore the poor propagandistic value of the text. Levillain and Grat believed that no copies of the AB were made at any time between 837, when a manuscript of the Earlier Annals of Metz together with the first seven years of the AB were written for Drogo of Metz, and 865, when the annals came into the possession of Hincmar. The only text of the years 838-861 would have remained in the possession of Prudentius – their author – for the entire period of his authorship. Charles was physically and politically removed from Troyes during most of this time, so there is little chance that the king would have used, consulted, or even have seen the annals during the period 845-865. Although it is likely that the author’s unique MS of the AB did come into the king’s possession after his death, given his criticisms of Charles in the entries for 853 and 855, it is improbable that Prudentius had the court in view as his primary audience.

If no longer to write the “official history” of the Deeds of the Frankish kings, then perhaps Prudentius wrote to chronicle the rising consciousness of the Northern Frankish episcopate. This at least was the opinion of Heinz Löwe. Yet if this were his newfound purpose in writing in those years following his elevation to the bishopric of Troyes, then the annalist did a remarkably poor job of pursuing his theme. The annals neglect to mention the councils of Ver (844) and Meaux (845), both key moments in the emergence of the Frankish episcopate as an independent force in mid-century politics. We have already noticed that the account of the council of Quierzy (849) is a likely interpolation of Hincmar and the only ecclesiastical council treated in a passage original to our annalist is Soissons (853). Rather than narrow his focus to the Frankish church, the annalist appears in these later entries to broaden his canvas to include the deeds performed and devastations suffered by all Christians throughout whole the world.

---

409 Nelson, “Annals of St. Bertin,” 191. The old orthodoxy which maintained that the annals were originally written for propagandistic purposes has been challenged not only by Nelson, but also, in connection specifically with the RFA, by Collins, “Reviser Revisited,” 192-93.

410 Since we have Hincmar in his letter to Egilo, referring to the “Deeds of the Lord King,” which Charles had recently let him see (presumably this is when Hincmar made his copy of the Annals). ‘Ipsum autem annale quod dico, rex habet et ipse est ille liber, quem coram uobis in ecclesia, ubi uos nobis commendauit, coram uobis ab illo mihi praestitum ei reddidi,’ Hincmar to Egilo (866), quoted from Levillain, “Introduction,” xvii.

Why, then, during the administratively demanding years of the 840s and 50s, when hampered by illness and preoccupied by a theological controversy for which he was writing a lengthy and erudite treatise on predestination, did the annalist take such care to continue his yearly narrative of the deeds and events of his day? If not for the court or to construct the self-consciousness of the northern Frankish episcopate, then for whom was our annalist writing? While an author’s precise intentions in composing a work may elude later readers, in the case of Prudentius’ annals we find a particular vision of the world and its past that adequately explains the continuation of entries long after their author’s disassociation from court. His move to Troyes resulted not in any transfer of annalistic concern or orientation away from court to the church, but rather in a broadening of historical vision and an attentiveness to the concrete ways in which trajectories originating in biblical narratives could shape the understanding of contemporary events. From within this new framework, the writing of annals would no longer be conceived from the narrow viewpoint of Charles’ court or even the church of Troyes. These small worlds had become circumscribed by a more profound theological vision.

The extant manuscript witnesses to the AB, in providing evidence to the later uses to which this text was put, may grant some insight into this more expansive historical and theological outlook of our author. Of the two complete manuscripts of the Annals extant, the oldest witness is St. Omer 706, a manuscript written in the late tenth century in the Abbey of St. Bertin, where it formed part of a larger miscellany of histories, annals, and chronicles. In the fourteenth century, this compilation was dismembered and reassembled into two codices, both of which were later given to the monastery of St. Omer, where they became St. Omer MSS 706 and 697. At some point, a quire from MS 706 became detached and migrated to the municipal library of Brussels, becoming Brussels MS 1583. Reassembled in their original form, these three manuscripts contain, in order, the following texts: the Historia Romana of Eutropius; the Chronicon of Marcellinus Comes; the Notitia galliarum; a slightly reworked version of the Historiae of Gregory of Tours; the “Carolingian Continuation” of (Ps.) Fredegar’s Chronicon; the Royal Frankish Annals together with the Annals of St. Bertin; and the Chronicon of Bede. Together the texts of this historical miscellany, composed mostly of annalistic histories and chronicles written between the fourth

412 My discussion of the manuscript witnesses is drawn from Levillain, “Introduction,” xxii-xxxviii; and McKitterick, History and Memory, 50-51.

413 For the importance of examining the MSS in discerning the aims of “Carolingian history books,” see McKitterick, History and Memory, 1-59 [for AB, 50-51].
and tenth centuries, would have formed a kind of world history spanning the years from Creation to the turn of the first millennium AD. Brussels, MSS 6439-6451, the only other complete manuscript of the AB, is a copy of the St. Bertin MS, made 50 to 100 years after its archetype. Material drawn from Prudentius’ section of the annals would also appear in the tenth-century Annals of Flodoard of Rheims and, in the twelfth century, in a text that circulated under the title Chronicon de gestis Normannorum in Francia. In this latter work, which was taken exclusively from reworked extracts of the AB and the Annals of St. Vaast, our author’s numerous accounts of the Northmen who despoiled the Franks are (re)written as the history of Normans, who (now) have become the Franks.

Elsewhere, as in the historical miscellany of St. Omer 706, the AB would be made to form part of a narrative of world history in a rather ambitious text known to modern editors as the Chronicon of St. Vaast. This work, which is found on ff. 1 to 139 of MS 795 Bibliothèque publique de Douai (Levillain and Grat’s MS D), is an eleventh-century compilation that traces the history of the world from Creation until the year 900, using large extracts from the works of earlier annalists and chroniclers. Its narrative from Creation to the year 725 is drawn from the Chronicon of Bede; 725 to 741, from the “Carolingian Continuation” of (Ps.)Fredegar; 741 to 814, from the Earlier Annals of Metz, 815 to 844, the RAF and the AB. The history of the years 845 to 874, taken from a fragment of the Chronicon of St. Ame of Douai, is treated in folios 120-127, which were taken from a later manuscript (of the twelfth century), and sewn into the Douai MS in the eighteenth century. Finally, the original portions of the Annals of St. Vaast are written on folios 128-139, which belonged to the original eleventh-century codex.414

How, then, would Prudentius have viewed these later appropriations of his work? I suggest that he would have approved. While we can never presume to know fully the intent of any author, especially one who omits to tell us his purposes, the uses to which the AB are put in these later compilations might have been consistent with the annalist’s original motive in continuing his narrative long after service in the palace chapel had concluded. Knowing that the world, groaning in its old age, was being worn down by famine, invasion, and the perfidy of men, our annalist was faithfully and self-consciously narrating his modest contribution to a history that began with Creation, whose first volume is written in the pages of scripture, where the archetypes of contemporary actors were first read, and whose lietmotif is the perennial rhythm of human sinfulness, divine judgment, and repentance. Echoes of this more universal

history, whose full scope is known only to the mind of God, will appear later in the annalist’s theological writings, where we read that God created man good and just, but man had impiously wasted this gift, freely condemning himself to die.\textsuperscript{415} The pages of the \textit{Annals of St. Bertin} are a witness, alongside the work of many other monastic chroniclers and annalists of subsequent centuries, to the historical effects of that Fall.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{415} ‘Sequentes igitur saluberrimam tanti Patris doctrinam, dicimus, ut caetera omittamus, Deum summe atque incommutabiliter bonum et justum hominem, sola bonitatis suae abundantia de terrae limo conditum, anima rationali donatum, libertate quoque arbitrii decentissime decorasse, ut eo bene et liberaliter cum adjutrice Conditoris gratia utens, non mori posset; contumaciter vero perperamque abutens, justissime addictus mori posset arbitrio.’ \textit{Epistola Ad Hincmarum}, PL 115, 975D.
Chapter 4
Rewriting the Psalter in the *Flores Psalmorum*

It was amidst the trials and disturbances recorded in the *Annals of St. Bertin* that Prudentius was first asked to produce for a “certain noble woman” a little book of private prayers drawn from the Psalter. This abbreviated or paraphrased Psalter would later circulate among a broader audience, with the following explanatory preface appended to it:

> When a certain noble woman was oppressed by many in the cities and towns, and reduced by various chance tribulations and, as many know, very much afflicted by sadness, she ordered me, asking repeatedly, to write in brief verses from the Psalms for consolation of her suffering. I am not only sympathetic with her petition, but also with everyone who wanders through diverse provinces, mountains, and valleys, who roams rivers and seas, fearing dangers, as the scripture says, dangers in river, dangers in sea, dangers in the city, dangers of robbers, dangers in loneliness, and the rest – all eager to be rescued and saved by God, who is in control. And so in this little work, out of my own meagerness, I have undertaken to pluck briefly and concisely, as if from an immense meadow, the flowers of the Psalms.\(^{416}\)

Having ruminated upon the words and phrases of the Psalms so concisely plucked, our author then abbreviated, adapted, transformed, and ultimately rewrote them into an extended psalmic oration. The literary and consolatory merits of the resulting prayer, a Psalm-infused cry for help amidst trials and temptations, are perhaps difficult for the modern reader to appreciate. Migne, following an earlier edition by Cardinal Mai, thought the results so pedestrian as to print in their place a shorter and more popular abbreviated psalter wrongly attributed to Jerome.\(^{417}\) Yet, the manuscript evidence suggests that for a medieval readership the *Flores Psalmorum* were the most enduring and influential work of our author. Prudentius himself judged his work so much a success that he later decided to republish the prayer for a broader audience. By the eleventh century, the *Flores* had found their way to Italy, where they would be

\(^{416}\) ‘Cum quaedam nobilis matrona in civitatis vel oppidis a pluribus fuisset oppressa, atque ex accidentibus variis tribulationibus, ut plerique noverunt, adesset angustiata, nimisque taediis afflicta, direxit ad me, rogans obnixe ut aliquid ex laude psalmorum ad consolationem compassionis suae brevissimis scriptitarem versiculis. Quod ego non solum illius condolens petitioni, verum etiam ad omnes qui per diversas peragruntur provintias montesque ac valles, necnon et qui per fluminia discurrent ut maris, timentes periclitati, ut ait scriptura, ‘periculis in flumine, periculis in mari, periculis in civitate, periculis latronum, periculis in solitudine,’ et caetera, cupientes eripi, et a Deo gubernatore salvari; hoc opusculum parvitas meae, veluti ex inmanissimo prato summatim brevitatimque studui psalmorum carpere flores.’ MGH *Epistolae*, t. III, p. 323.

\(^{417}\) See chapter two, ‘Flores Psalmorum.’
copied at least six more times in Italian scriptoria. In this chapter, the surprising success of the *Flores* will be considered first within the development of a literary culture of Psalm-based piety among lay readers of the Carolingian period, then within the broader tradition of paraphrase and rewriting of the biblical text by late antique and early medieval authors. When considered in light of these two traditions, the particular literary qualities and special pastoral function of the *Flores* will become more apparent. In conclusion, the chapter will take up the elusive identity of the anonymous noble woman who first commissioned the *Flores*. A potential association with Dhuoda of Uzès or with the Empress Judith will situate the work back into the concrete world of the social and political contexts described in chapter one.

*The Psalter in the Carolingian World*

Prudentius produced the *Flores Psalmorum* in an era in which the public and private practices of Christian devotion centered around meditation upon the Psalter. To most readers, both lay and clerical, the Psalms were better known than any other text from the ancient world. The New Testament churches had used the Psalter as a basis for common or congregational prayer (Eph. 5:19). Likewise, from the earliest decades of the cenobitic communities in Egypt and in Palestine, the Psalter had become the prayer book of the monastic tradition. John Cassian witnessed the importance of Psalm singing in the communities he founded in southern France, and the Psalmody of the Monastic Office is discussed in the early sixth-century rules of Caesarius and Aurelian of Arles, as well as in the *Rule of St. Benedict*, which in the ninth century would come to form the basis for the monastic Office of the Latin West. Under the Carolingian reforms, monastic communities as well as cathedral clergy began to chant the entire Psalter each week, along with pious laypersons who endeavored to recite the hours privately.

---

419 Cottier, “Psautiers abrégés,” 217.
423 For the Psalm assignments of the canonical hours prayed by cathedral clergy, following the Carolingian Reforms, see Black, “The Divine Office and Private Devotion,” 57-58, 61-62. For a more extensive treatment of the relationship between monastic and secular Offices and the texts of private devotion, see idem, “The Daily Cursus, the Week, and the Psalter in the Divine Office and in Carolingian Devotion,” (Toronto, University of Toronto, PhD Dissertation, 1987), 29-44.
Most monks and regular clerics had memorized all of the one hundred and fifty Psalms— in some cases, in two translations.\textsuperscript{424} In addition to this widespread familiarity with the Psalter in the context of Christian worship, Carolingian exegetes had at their disposal a vast tradition of patristic commentary,\textsuperscript{425} in which the Psalms were read as polyvalent and rich in exegetical possibilities. The Psalms of David could function as a concordance for harmonizing the Old and New Testaments.\textsuperscript{426} In the laments and agonies of the Psalmists, the church fathers had identified a type or foreshadowing of Christ in his suffering. In the praise hymns and exultations, the Psalms had prophesied Christ the Lord triumphant.\textsuperscript{427} Thus, for Prudentius, the imagery of the Psalms would have struck a deep psychological resonance, complemented by an exegetical culture in which the Psalter was consistently read through a Christological lens.\textsuperscript{428}

By the early ninth century the Psalter had also come to play a significant role in the private devotional practices of lay Christians. Some of the most handsomely written and richly decorated manuscripts to emerge from Carolingian scriptoria were Psalters written for lay elites. The so-called Dagulf Psalter, written ca. 783-95 for Charlemagne (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS. 186), the Psalters of Louis the German, ca. 840-76 (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS. Lat. Theol), of Lothar, ca. 842-55 (British Library, Add. Ms. 37768), and of Charles the Bald, ca. 842-69 (Paris, BNF Lat. MS 1152) all witness a demand on the part of lay audiences for complete texts of the Psalter.\textsuperscript{429} While these display texts might have been intended more as prestige objects, or as symbols of ‘ruler piety,’\textsuperscript{430} than as books meant for practical use, there is also strong evidence to suggest that a demand existed among lay readers for

\textsuperscript{424} Both the Gallican Psalter, that is, the translation of Jerome based on the Hexapla, and the third translation of Jerome, based on the Hebrew text. Benedicta Ward observes that this had been the case with Ceolfrith, Bede, and Wilfrith; it is also likely true of Carolingian era scholars, whose clerical vocation was established in the first half of the ninth century, during which the Gallican Psalter gradually gave way to the Psalter \textit{Iuxta Hebreos}. See “Bede and the Psalter,” 5.


\textsuperscript{426} For a brief discussion, with bibliography, see Dyer, “The Singing of Psalms,” 535-38.

\textsuperscript{427} For a rich discussion of Augustine’s Christological reading of the psalter, see Rowan Williams, “Augustine and the Psalms,” \textit{Interpretation} 58:1 (2004): 17-27.


\textsuperscript{429} In addition to these there were of course a number of other lavish Psalters whose recipients may have been clerics rather than laypersons, such as the Utrecht Psalter, perhaps the most influential codex to emerge from a Carolingian scriptorium.

functional Psalters with exegetical and devotional commentary. This demand is evident in the survival of over two dozen deluxe Psalters of the ninth through eleventh centuries written with a marginal gloss.\(^{431}\) The rudimentary nature of the gloss commentary – usually a distillation of patristic commonplaces of interpretation –\(^{432}\) suggests that many of these texts were produced for laypersons, rather than for clerics (for whom more advanced exegesis might have been appropriate).

The glossed Psalters are only one example of aids designed for study of the Psalms in the context of private devotion. There also circulated various manuals of instruction for Psalter usage, such as those attributed to Alcuin of York. Toward the end of his life, after he had assumed the abbacy of St. Martin’s, Tours, Alcuin had written to Charlemagne to describe how a lay person, still living in the world (adhuc in activa vita consistit), might approach the rudiments of Christian prayer.\(^{433}\) Though he did not provide a full program of Psalter usage in this letter, in a subsequent work, the *De laude Psalmorum*, Alcuin had elaborated on his earlier outline of Psalter devotion.\(^{434}\) According to the *De laude*, the Psalms could be used 1) to perform penance, 2) to pray when one lacked the words to pray, 3) to praise the omnipotent God in his majesty and goodness, 4) to pray when afflicted with diverse trials or spiritual temptations, 5) to pray amidst despair or 6) when God has allowed one to be tested, 7) to sing in praise of God in times of prosperity, and, finally, 8) to contemplate the divine laws in the innermost mind.\(^{435}\) For each of these

---


\(^{432}\) Gibson, “Glossed Psalters,” 96-97.

\(^{433}\) MGH, *Epistolae IV*, nos. 304-304a (pp. 463-65).

\(^{434}\) Alcuin’s biographer, writing sometime before 829, would later mention an outline of Psalm reading designed for Charlemagne. ‘. . . docuit etiam eum per omne vitae suae tempus, quos psalmos poenitentiae cum letania et orationibus precibusque, quos ad orationem specialem faciendam, quos in laude Dei, quos quoque pro quacumque tribulatione, quemque etiam, ut se in divinis exerceret laudibus, decantaret.’ (*Vita Alcuini* 15, ed. W. Arndt, MGH SS 15.1 [Hannover, 1887]), 193. Quoted from Jonathan Black, “Psalm Uses,” 4. *De laude Psalmorum* is a work, widely agreed to be Alcuin’s, that was often attached to a *Liber de usu Psalmorum*, which also circulated under Alcuin’s name. The longer *Liber de usu* is generally believed to be misattributed to Alcuin. For a defense of the attribution of the shorter *De laude Psalmorum* to Alcuin and critical edition, see Jonathan Black, “Psalm Uses in Carolingian Prayerbooks: Alcuin and the Preface to *De Psalmorum usu*,” *Mediaeval Studies* 64 (2002): 1-60. All references to this text below are to Black’s edition.

\(^{435}\) To offer an indication of the author’s organization of the eight categories, I provide here the Latin text of the eight categories or conditions for Psalm usage without the Psalm incipits. For the full text, see Black, ed., “Preface to *De Psalmorum usu*,” 51-60: “1. Si vis pro peccatis tuis paenitentiam agere et confessionem peccatorum
distinct uses of the Psalter the *De laude* enumerates the incipits of those Psalms best suited to the category at hand. For example, to do penance, Alcuin had prescribed the “Seven Davidic Psalms of Penance,” (which were already well known under that heading). For prayer amidst despair (use 5 from the list above), he recommended “As the hart pants,” “How lovely,” “God, my God, to you at the break of day,” (that is, those Psalms numbered 41, 83, and 62 in the Douay-Rheims Bible). For prayer amidst diverse trials and temptations (use 4 above), he proposed “God, my God, look on me,” “Hear, O God, my supplication,” “Hear O God my prayer, when I pray to you,” and “Save me, O God,” (Psalms 21, 60, 63, 11). The *De laude Psalmorum* is thus a simple and effective guide to the Psalter, written by a man who exercised great influence over several generations of lay intellectuals of the Carolingian period. The text survives in a variety of forms and adaptations in over 200 manuscripts of the ninth through fifteenth centuries. Dhuoda of Uzès, one of the most celebrated female authors of the early middle ages, knew the *De laude* and incorporated it into the closing chapter of her *Liber manualis.* Modifying and elaborating the earlier advice of Alcuin, she enjoined her young son William to pray the Psalter regularly, both for his own edification, as well as for intercession both for the living and for the dead. Her words (which echo Alcuin’s) fittingly summarize the emerging attitude toward the Psalter among the learned lay intellectual.

tuorum et veniam rogare delictis, quantum valeas intente, non celeritate verborum sed mente cogitando ac scrutando, decanta septenos davidicos paenitentiae psalmos quorum initium est: [incipits omitted] 2. Si vis orare, permite mentem tuam in virtute psalmorum quorum initium est: . . . 3. Si vis omnipotentem Deum laudare et ipsius maiestati omniumque beneficiorum suorum quibus humano generi ab initio mundi, . . . 4. Si diversis tribulationibus afflicitus sis et vel humanis vel spiritibus temptationibus undique adstrictus, et tibi videtur te a Deo esse derelictum . . . 5. Si tibi praeens vida fastidiosa sit, et animum tuum delectet supernum patriam contemplare et omnipotentem Deum ardentis desiderio, intente mente hos psalmos decanta. . . 6. Si te in tribulationibus a Deo derelictum intellegas, compuncto corde decanta hos psalmos . . . 7. Post autem acceptam quietaem ac prosperitatis tempore, hos psalmos in laude Dei decanta . . . 8. Si volueris intima mente exercere te in divinis laudibus ac praeeptis et mandatis caelestibus . . .”

436 For the appellation “lay intellectual” in this context, see Patrick Wormald and Janet Nelson, eds., *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Particularly apt are the words of Nelson, in her introduction (p. 5), that a “lay intellectual” in this period is a category that “may have been limited to those with enough Latin to recite psalms.”

437 Black, “Preface to *De Psalmorum usu*,” 3, 36-43.

person of this period: “Nothing in this mortal life can make us cling more closely to God than the divine praises of psalmody. For no mortal can unfold in words or thought the power of the Psalms.”

Psalm Derived Literature and Lay Piety

The primers of Alcuin and Dhuoda on Psalm devotion assumed a reader with access to a full Psalter. But other devotional texts could be offered as an alternative to a complete collection of the Psalms. In the first half of the ninth-century, two new types of Psalm-based literature emerged for devotional use: first, that of prayer books, or libelli precum, which comprised prayers and collects from the office, original prayers, and prayers derived from the Psalms. The second, the type to which Prudentius’ text belongs, is the abridged or abbreviated Psalter. The abbreviated Psalters participate in a tradition that derives from an anonymous Collectio Psalmorum attributed to Bede. The Collectio already carried Bede’s authority by the time of Alcuin, who had it copied into a codex of Psalm-related materials prepared for Arno, bishop of Salzburg, in which the text is described as follows: “There is also in this little book a small psalter which is said to be the psalter of the blessed priest Bede which he collected in sweet verses in praise of God with prayers from each of the Psalms according to the Hebrew truth.”

Alcuin’s description of the Collectio Psalmorum introduces two issues relevant for understanding the literary form of Prudentius’ version of

---


440 Andre Wilmart (Precum Libelli Quattuor Aevi Karolini [Rome: Ephemerides Liturgicae, 1940]) has edited four Carolingian prayer books of the ninth century that represent this latter category: works of private devotion, drawn from combinations of materials derived from the Office (which already utilizes the Psalter extensively) and original Psalm-based prayers, two of which (Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale Lat. 1742 and Cologne, Dombibliothek MS 106) are associated with Alcuin. For a survey of both of these texts see Radu Constantinescu, “Alcuin et les ‘libelli precum’ de l’époque carolingienne,” Revue d’histoire de la spiritualité 50 (1974), 17-56; for the Cologne MS, see Leslie Webber Jones, “Cologne MS. 106: A Book of Hildebald” Speculum 4 (1929), 27-61.

441 Cottier reminds us that medieval readers (beginning with Alcuin, who in his letter to Arno of Salzburg, states that the Psalter “is said” (dicitur) to be the work of Bede) were not certain about the authorship of this text “Psautier abrégés,” 221. Yet Benedicta Ward believes it is unquestionably the work of Bede. For the Jarrow Lecture (1991), she provided a study and translation of the text, Bede and the Psalter: Jarrow Lecture, 1991 (St. Paul’s Parish Church Council, 1991), 18-32.

442 ‘Est quoque in eo libello psalterium parvum, quod dicitur beati Bedae presbyteri psalterium, quem ille collegit per versus dulces in laude Dei et orationibus per singulos psalmos iuxta Hebraicam veritatem.’ MGH, Epistolae, t. IV, p. 417 (ep. no. 259).
the Psalter. First, Bede is said to have collected prayers from each of the Psalms. That is, Bede’s Psalter represents the whole of the Psalms in outline form, without altering or paraphrasing the text of the excerpted Psalms. As Benedicta Ward has suggested, Bede’s text seems to have been designed as a “memory device,” intended to bring alive the full range of textual, and so devotional, associations found in a complete Psalter. It “was a way into the whole Psalter” and “could be said in place of the full liturgical psalter at need.” As such, Bede’s abridged Psalm text could be read for all the varied uses that Alcuin had recommended in the De laude Psalmorum discussed above. Secondly, Alcuin mentions that Bede’s Collectio Psalmorum was written according to “the true Hebrew version.” This observation raises the issue of the variety of Latin translations available to be used in a Psalter paraphrase. The principal texts circulating in the ninth century were the Old Latin or Roman Psalter and the two psalter translations associated with Jerome, ie., the Gallican Psalter and the Psalter ‘Iuxta Hebreos’. After the Carolingian reforms, the Gallican Psalter had begun to displace both the Roman Psalter and the Psalter Iuxta Hebreos (which had been rarely used) in Frankish churches north of the Alps. (The Roman Psalter continued to be used in Italy; the Psalter from the Hebrew, only in Spain and in Britain.) It seems that Bede’s abbreviation, based upon the Hebrew text, would have sounded strange to ninth-century readers whose ears had been tuned to other, more familiar translations. Thus, by the middle of the ninth century several new Psalter abbreviations were written in imitation of Bede, but based on the Gallican and Roman Psalter texts.

An abbreviated Psalter wrongly attributed to Einhard, which survives in Vercelli, Archivio Capitulare MS. 149, clearly participates in this tradition. In a preface to this otherwise anonymous work, which will be called here the “Vercelli Psalter,” it is observed that Bede’s collection would have been sufficient for contemporary readers were it not based on the unfamiliar translation from the Hebrew: “Since that translation is not used in modern times I did not think it superfluous if I made [a Psalter] from that which

444 The Roman Psalter was the Old Latin Psalter (occasionally though incorrectly associated with Jerome’s first Psalter translation [c. 382-385], of which only fragments survive). The Gallican Psalter was the second translation of Jerome (ca. 386-391), based on the Hexapla of Origen. And the Psalter Iuxta Hebraeos was a final translation by Jerome (c. 392), based on pre-Masoretic Hebrew text of the Psalms. See Koert Van der Horst, “The Role of the “iuxta hebraeos” translation,” in Koert van der Horst, William Noel, and Wilhelmina C. M. Wüstefeld, eds., The Utrecht psalter in medieval art: picturing the psalms of David (Tuurdijk: HES Publications, 1996), 37-38, 72-73.
at the present time the church sings to Christ over almost all the world.”\textsuperscript{446} In supposing that his Psalm text was the one which the contemporary church nearly universally employed, the anonymous Vercelli author reveals his Italian liturgical context. His abbreviation is based on the Roman psalter. It is for this reason primarily that Salmon has argued that this text should not be attributed to Einhard who, as a student of Alcuin, would have used the Gallican version.\textsuperscript{447} The Vercelli Psalter also modifies the program of abbreviation employed by Bede. Whereas Bede had attempted to represent the full range of materials found in the complete Psalter, the Vercelli author edited the Psalms with a particular end in view, namely, to cultivate compunction. Not all of the Psalms are excerpted (though most are) and the focus is especially on those Psalms that express either profound joy or sorrow.\textsuperscript{448} The Vercelli Psalter was meant to sow tears. In this respect the text’s author anticipated the uses to which a number of Psalter paraphrases would be put in the centuries that followed. Saint Anchaire, for example, was said to have approached the Psalms in a similar fashion: “From the passages of the Bible which led to compunction he made for himself out of each psalm a little prayer.”\textsuperscript{449} Saint Anselm would also compose a Psalter specifically designed to foster remorse, followed by humility, followed by tears.\textsuperscript{450}

To this tradition of remorse and compunction, we must also assign a popular Psalter written towards the end of the ninth, beginning of the tenth century, attributed to Jerome. Surviving in more than thirty manuscripts of the eleventh through fifteenth centuries, this Ps-Jerome type, known by the incipit ‘Verba

\textsuperscript{446} Fecit hanc excceptionem ante me Beda presbyter Anglorum, quae sufficere posset illum habere uolentibus, si de illo psalterio, quod hebraicum appellamus, eam non fecisset. Sed, quia haec tradition in usu modern non habetur, non iudicai superuacuum fore si de illa hoc facerem, quam tempore praesenti pene tota per orbem terrarum Christi cantat Ecclesia.’ Salmon, “Psalterium Adbreviatum Vercellense,” 55. I have adapted the translation of Ward, “Bede and the Psalter,” 12.

\textsuperscript{447} Salmon, “Psalterium Adbreviatum Vercellense,” 40-41.

\textsuperscript{448} Ward, “Bede and the Psalter,” 13.


\textsuperscript{450} Post Flores psalmorum additae sunt orationes septem. Quarum prima non tantum oratio quantum meditatio dicenda est, qua se peccatoris anima breuiter discutiat, discutiendo despiciat, despiciendo humiliet, humiliando terrene ultimi iudicii concretat, concussa in gemitus et lacrymas erumpat. In orationibus uero Stephani et sanctae Mariae Magdalenae quaedam sunt, qua se intimo corde dicantur, cum uacat, plus tendunt ad accendendum amorem . . .’ From the letter of Anselm to Adelaide (Ep. 10), the daughter of William the Conqueror. Schmitt, ed., Sancti Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera omnia, vol. 3 (Stuttgart, 1968), 113. See Cottier, “Psautier abrégés,” 216.
mea auribus,’ is the abridged Psalter wrongly attached to our author in Migne’s *Patrologia Latina*. The ‘Verba mea auribus’ type is easily distinguished from the *Flores Psalmorum* of Prudentius in several ways. First, the ‘Verba mea’ is primarily a penitential text. Even more than the Vercelli author, the Ps.-Jerome abbreviator reworked his Psalter to highlight expressions of deep sorrow and remorse, comingled with appeals for forgiveness. Though this text was written in the late ninth century, it anticipated the Psalm-based prayers of the *devotio moderna*, a fact underscored by the text’s frequent incorporation into Books of Hours written in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{451} The Ps.-Jerome’s exclusive focus on penitential material also dictates that excerpts are not included from all of the Psalms. Whereas Bede had collected from each of the Psalms and the Vercelli author had drawn extracts from 97 Psalms,\textsuperscript{452} the Ps. Jerome abbreviator only treated 53 of the 150 Psalms in the Gallican Psalter. Like the *Collectio* of Bede and the Vercelli Psalter, the ‘Verba mea auribus’ also adheres strictly to the words of the Psalmist. Complete verses from the selected Psalms are excerpted and knitted together without any other modification to the wording of the biblical text. In this respect, the *Collectio Psalmorum*, the Vercelli Psalter, and the Ps. Jerome are all three properly called florilegia.

Thus, by the time Prudentius composed his own abbreviation of the Psalter, it would appear that the ninth century had already witnessed a proliferation of other Psalm-related texts intended for lay audiences, including deluxe Psalters, glossed Psalters, prayer books composed of Psalm-based materials, and finally, at least three abbreviations of the Psalter of the florilegium type. It was in this context, in which there had been a profusion of shorter devotional texts derived from the Psalms, that a “certain noble woman,” beset by trials and afflicted by sadness, came specifically to request from Prudentius some “brief verses for consolation drawn from the Psalter.” Working in the tradition of the *Collectio* of Bede, our author replied to his anonymous matron with an extended prayer, fashioned out of words and phrases drawn from each of the one hundred and fifty Psalms. Unlike Bede, our abbreviator appears to have made no effort to account for the whole range of materials found in the Psalter. Like the Vercelli author

\textsuperscript{451} For a survey of the manuscripts, see Salmon, “Psautilers abrégés,” 76-82.
\textsuperscript{452} According to my count, based on the edition of Salmon (“Psalterium Adbreviatrum Vercellense,” 40-55-78), the Psalms omitted are: 1,2, 10, 13,14, 23, 28, 33, 36, 45, 46, 48, 49, 52, 57, 71, 72, 73, 77, 80, 86, 90, 92, 94, 95, 97, 99, 103, 104, 106, 109, 111, 112,116, 120, 121, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 126, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150.
and the Ps.-Jerome, he was to excerpt in accordance with a unified theme, but not to foster compunction or strictly to perform penance. Rather, his theme was to provide courage amidst diverse trials or spiritual temptations (that is, in situations consistent with Alcuin’s uses 4-6, as described in the *De laude Psalmorum*). In approaching each of the one hundred and fifty Psalms with this focus in mind, Prudentius moved beyond the tradition of simple abbreviation initiated by Bede. Unlike the other abridged Psalters of the period, the *Flores Psalmorum* is “not a mere compilation of extracts of each psalm . . . [I]t is a text that evolved more often as a paraphrase of the biblical text in seeking to express a more developed and more personal prayer.” The metaphor of the *florilegium*, though suggestive, is not entirely adequate to describe the creation of this text, which includes not only the selection and light adaptation of words of scripture but also, in some cases, a complete rewriting of individual Psalms. Prudentius’ decision to paraphrase rather than to abbreviate the Psalter appears to be unique within the context of Psalm-based literature of the eighth through eleventh centuries. To arrive at a literary parallel, one would have to look to the various paraphrases of biblical texts by late antique Christian authors, or to those found in late medieval books of Hours. While the latter would have exercised no bearing on Prudentius’ own conception of his task, late antique literary paraphrase offered a potentially influential precedent for our author. Before examining the text of the *Flores* themselves, it will be helpful to survey some of the ways in which the paraphrase and rewriting of biblical texts, and in particular of the Psalms, had been approached by authors in this earlier period.

*Paraphrasis and Rewriting*

The practice of rewriting authoritative texts (*metaphrasis* in Greek, or *paraphrasis* in Latin) had deep roots in the textual culture of Judaism and of Early Christianity, as well as in the school exercises of the late antique classroom. In his *Antiquities* Josephus had essentially rewritten or paraphrased much of the Old Testament (a practiced that would be imitated by early medieval chronographers, like Gregory of

---

453 Though his preface will include a short prayer which concludes: “That these verses may prepare me for eternal life and for the remission of all sins and for the duration of living well and for performing a true and worthy penance,” the primary aim of the Psalter is clearly not penitential. See below.  
454 ‘Ce n’est plus une simple compilation d’extraits de chaque psaume, comme on en a vu précédemment: c’est un texte plus évolué qui paraphrase assez souvent le texte biblique en cherchant à exprimer une prière plus développée et plus personnelle.’ Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 74-75.  
455 Recall, for example, Augustine’s recollection of a schoolroom exercise, in which he was required to write in prose the speech of Juno to Aeneas from Book I on the *Aeneid* (*Conf.*, I.xvii).
The Gospels of Matthew and Luke are themselves thought to be a rewriting of source materials drawn from Q and Mark. As the Christian faith (and along with it, Christian literary culture) expanded among the learned elites of the Greek East, a number of paraphrases and rewritings of individual books of scripture were generated for a variety of theological purposes and according to a variety of aesthetic criteria. The earliest and most notorious revision of the New Testament texts is that of Marcion, who altered scripture primarily through omission but also emended the text to make it conform to his own idiosyncratic doctrinal concerns. Beyond the heavily publicized interventions of Marcion, which elicited a vigorous reaction from the second century church, other lesser known revisions and rewritings of scripture were undertaken both by individual scribes and by local Christian communities. Texts like the Codex Bezae, for example, a fifth-century uncial manuscript of the Greek and Latin texts of the Gospels and Acts that preserves a large number of unique readings (particularly, for the Acts of the Apostles), suggest that New Testament books continued to be revised, adapted, and in some cases completely rewritten according to the doctrinal presuppositions of local churches. Whether these alternative versions of biblical texts are considered as heretical corruptions of an original text or simply as local

---

variants of a fluid textual tradition, the alteration of the sacred text out of doctrinal concern could be considered a species of paraphrase. The literary and cognitive processes that underwrite the revisions of a scribe motivated by doctrine are comparable to the paraphrastic habits of approved authors, who worked in traditions of paraphrase more acceptable to the broader Christian community.

As we move into the third and fourth centuries, several such approved paraphrases of biblical texts were undertaken by orthodox writers, not to censor the received text as with Marcion and the *Codex Bezae*, but rather to interpret and adapt it for practical as well as aesthetic purposes. Perhaps most relevant as a point of comparison for our author is the *Paraphrase of Ecclesiastes* by Gregory Thaumaturgus (d. c. 270). In his pastoral role as bishop of NeoCaesarea, Gregory had rewritten the faintly nihilistic Hebrew text of Ecclesiastes into a Greek Christian text. Keeping closely to the Greek Septuagint, Gregory’s paraphrase reconstructs *Ecclesiastes* in light of a Christian understanding of righteousness so as to arrive at a moral clarity not found in his more ambiguous source material. The anonymous *Koheleth* or “teacher” of the Hebrew text has become “the Shepherd,” referring simultaneously to Solomon (whom Gregory believed to have written the original) and to Gregory himself in the role of Christian bishop. Gregory’s reworking of ancient Hebrew wisdom for pastoral purposes anticipates Prudentius’ aims in rewriting the Psalms. But other late antique Christian authors rewrote scripture for purely literary and aesthetic reasons. Juvenecus, a contemporary of Constantine, had rewritten the four Gospels as Latin epic poetry. Similarly, but according to more exacting literary constraints and in Greek, the narrative of the Gospel of John had been composed as Homerocento poetry, in which lines and half lines of Homer were made to tell the Gospel of John in Hexameter verse. A cento paraphrase of the Psalter, wrongly attributed to Apollinarius of Laodicea, was written according to a similar plan by the

---

461 It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to venture into the contentious debates that surround the issues of orthodoxy and heresy in the early church. In the field of textual criticism of the biblical text, the recent trend has been the study of idiosyncratic recensions of New Testament texts as windows into the social and theological worlds of “local Christianities.” Bart Ehrman is one of the better known proponents of this view. See his “The Text as Window: New Testament Manuscripts and the Social History of Early Christianity,” in Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, eds., *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 803-830; The latter essay provides a taxonomy of the recent literature, as well as a precis of the argument of Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 3-46.

462 For this argument, see Johnson, *Miracles of Thekla*, 96-93.

463 Johnson, *Miracles of Thekla*, 89.


fifth century, and around the same time Arator, a Latin Christian poet, produced a hexameter paraphrase of the Acts of the Apostles.

These latter examples represent the ways in which the Christian scriptures could be rewritten according to the canons of classical Greek and Latin, by learned Christians whose literary techniques were formed in the still thriving schools of the Late Antique grammatici. Our author is unlikely to have known these above examples (with the possible exception of Juvencus). He would, however, have known the numerous examples of paraphrase and of biblical rewriting found in the pastoral and theological writings of the Latin Fathers. Augustine provides an especially apt example of this kind of paraphrase in the Confessions. With respect to literary form, the opening of the Confessions is not unlike our author’s own Flores Psalmorum: both share an ambiance of Psalmic meditation. Without direct quotation of any specific line of the Psalter, the first two lines of the Confessions recall at once Psalms 47:2, 95:4; 144: 3; and 146:5, as well as 2 Cor. 4:10 and I Pet. 5:5: “You are great, Lord, and greatly to be praised. Great is your power and there is no number to your wisdom. Man, a little portion of your creation, wants to praise you: a man bearing his own mortality, carrying the witness of his sins and the testimony that you resist the proud.”

For the next six chapters of Book I, Augustine’s words comingle with those of the Psalmists. While the extent of the correspondences between Augustine’s text and the Psalter is too great for this practice to be considered mere allusion, rarely do the Psalms appear as simple quotation. These opening chapters of Book 1, along with much of Book 9, in particular, are a kind of intricate meditative paraphrase, in which the words of the psalmist(s) are subordinated to the narrative of Augustine’s own life and offered back to God in prayer. This type of rewriting need not be conscious and deliberate to qualify as paraphrase. But it should be noted that Augustine had been steeped in the literary exercises of the late antique schoolroom, in which the paraphrase of classical texts was one of the principal instruments of instruction. The Confessions themselves provide one of the most vivid recollections of this practice. After describing his harrowing experiences at the hands of elementary schoolmasters (1.9), Augustine recalls with a mixture of pride and deep revulsion how adept he had become at the classroom

exercises of the *grammatici*, chief of which was the composition in prose of speeches from Virgil. 467 Such exercises were meant to instill literary habits of quotation and paraphrase in a future rhetorician, and were ultimately designed to bind the oratory of the late antique speechmaker to the literary world of the age of Augustus. But for Augustine this formal literary training fostered equally well his capacity to take in the words of the psalmists and other biblical authors, ruminate upon them, and ultimately fuse them with his own authorial voice.

Paraphrasis of the Psalter (as well as allusion and direct quotation) appears throughout all thirteen books of the *Confessions*. In Book 9, the author prays the Psalter while in his retreat at Cassiciacum, 468 then, after reading Psalm 4, he recalls with remorse his years as a Manichee, wishing that his former coreligionists could see him weeping over the Psalter, so that they too might be filled with compunction. The entire scene is set out in words drawn from the verses of the Psalms. Here, we have the author reflecting on reading the Psalter while simultaneously using the words of the Psalmist to narrate his own biography. The Psalms have become Augustine’s own *Confession* and have encompassed the narrative of his life. 469 “Reading, he listens, and listening, he recollects what he has read (9.4.88-98). . . The relationship between Psalm 4 and the ‘text’ of [Augustine’s] life is supported by words and phrases drawn from other psalms. The vocabulary of his recent reading, so rearranged, is imposed on past experience, which is in turn reshaped.”470

It need not be argued that the *Confessions* exercised a direct literary influence on Prudentius,471 in order for Augustine to remind us that late antique literary culture was steeped in the practices of quotation, allusion, and paraphrase of authoritative texts. Augustine’s *Confessions* also demonstrate that paraphrase could be a vehicle of sublime literary expression, as well as a tool of interpretation – a technique of exposition, in which the interpreter simultaneously shapes and is shaped by the received text. Thus, a paraphrase of the Psalter, such as the one composed by Prudentius, should not be dismissed as

467 Conf. 1.xvii.27 (Chadwick, 19).
468 Conf. 9.iv.8 (Chadwick, 160).
471 The *Confessions* were not nearly so influential in the ninth century as they would become in the twelfth century and later (see Michael Gorman, “The Early Manuscript Tradition of St. Augustine’s *Confessions*,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 34:1 (1983), 216-15 [reprinted in Gorman, ed., *Works of Augustine*, 216-47]). Nevertheless, Prudentius clearly knew the text and quoted it repeatedly (though not extensively) in his *De praedestinatione*. See Appendix III, p. 244.
merely “derivative.” Though the Psalms form “the textual basis for the Confessions,” clearly the Confessions are uniquely Augustine’s. In the same way, against the dismissive attitude of Migne, that the Flores Psalmorum are simply “the words of David,” it must be insisted that words of David could also become the words of Prudentius, particularly when those words were carefully chosen and deliberately arranged to aid a “certain noble woman” in her devotion to God.

Paraphrasing the Psalter
Upon receiving the request that he should extract Flores from the Psalms, Prudentius worked to craft an original prayer in the form of a paraphrase of the entire Psalter. Then, after determining that this work should be circulated among other readers within his diocese, he produced a preface describing the original occasion for the Psalter’s composition and the purposes for which he had modified it for a wider readership. According to this preface, the Flores Psalmorum was designed to serve two purposes:

First, it would provide encouragement for those who (like the noble woman who had commissioned it) found themselves to be in the midst of either physical or spiritual peril:

I am not only sympathetic with her petition, but also with everyone who wanders through diverse provinces, mountains, and valleys, who roams the currents of the sea, fearing dangers, as the scripture says, dangers in river, dangers in sea, dangers in the city, dangers of robbers, dangers in loneliness, and the rest (II Cor. 11:26) – all eager to be rescued and saved by God, who is in control. And so in this little work, out of my own meagerness, I have undertaken to pluck briefly and concisely the flowers of the Psalms, as if from an immense meadow.

Secondly, the text, like the Collectio of Bede, could serve as an outline of the Psalms for those who wished to celebrate the offices but were unable to do so under exigencies of travel or “other diverse perils.”

Granted, there are many imitating the examples of the holy Fathers (which we have learned from experience) who each day complete in Divine praises the whole Psalter. Nevertheless, for those who want to perform this work and [yet] who stand in diverse perils and are neither

---

472 It is here assumed that Migne is the voice of the “Edit. Patrol” cited in PL 115, 1450 fn. a.
473 ‘Quod ego non solum illius condolens petitioni, verum etiam ad omnes qui per diversas peraguntur provincias montesque ac valles, necnon et qui per flumina discurrent et maris, timentes periclitari, ut ait scriptura, “periculis in flumine, periculis in mari, periculis in civitate, periculis latronum, periculis in solitudine,” et caetera, cupientes eripi, et a Deo gubernatore salvari; hoc opusculum parvitatis meae, veluti ex inmanissimo prato summatis breviatimque studui psalmorum carpere flores.’ MGH Epistolae, t. III, p. 323.
able to complete the whole Psalter, nor even have the strength to sing the canonical hours, it should not be painful for these little verses to be turned over in the heart and on the mouth. . .

But so that no one, heaven forbid, preoccupied with active affairs should lose the whole, while he is unoccupied and able, he should not be slow to recite in prayer these verses of the Psalms. In these, as it is written, the whole for the part and the part for the whole, with Christ helping, one is able to perform the one hundred and fifty psalms. And so that one should not be heedless, at threefold and fourfold times for the hours, committing oneself to seven times each day, he should make praises to the omnipotent God, as the same blessed David says, “Seven times in the day have I said praise to you, God,” (Ps. 118:164) and the rest. And so now I have undertaken this work, grafting the beginning together with the end thusly: “Blessed is the man who meditates on the law of the Lord day and night” (Ps. 1:1) and “whose Spirit praises the Lord in the highest” (Ps. 148:1) and, at last, “every soul praises the Lord” (Ps. 150:6).

In this way Prudentius set about “grafting” the numerous voices of the ancient and particularly Hebrew Psalmist(s) into the single prayer of a contemporary Christian supplicant, prepared specifically to bring comfort to those undergoing trials of various kinds. The resulting psalter was designed to represent all of the Psalms, while focusing specifically on the theme of divine aid and comfort amidst trying circumstances. It was to be a Psalter that could be read quickly but prayerfully, “so that no one, heaven forbid, preoccupied with active affairs should lose the whole [psalter].” The preface to the text suggests the image of an anxious layperson, traveling “through diverse provinces, mountains, and valleys,” unable under such circumstances to recite the Office. Such a person would have no time and little inclination to wade through the historical materials embedded in many of the Psalms. Thus, our author’s abbreviation was designed to purge the Psalter of all “material that pertains to the Jews and to the other infidels.”

474 ‘Et licet sint plures imitantes sanctorum patrum exempla, quod experimento didicimus, qui omni videlicet die in divinis laudibus totum complent psalterium, tamen hi qui hoc petunt opus et qui in diversis sunt periculis constituti, nec totum queunt explere psalterium, etiam nec horis valent psallere canonis, hos non pigeat in corde et ore revolvi versiculos . . . Sed ne quis totum, quod abit, perdat in rebus preoccupatus activis, hos, dum vacat et potest, non tardet orando recitare psalmorum versiculos. In his, ut scriptum est, totum pro parte et partem pro toto potest iuvante domino Christo centum quinquaginta perficere psalmos. Et ne inmemor sit, ternis quaternisque horarum temporibus, septies in die Deo omnipotenti persolvens efficiat laudes, ut idem beatus David ait: ‘Septies in die laudem dixi tibi, Deus,’ et caetera. Sed iam coeptum aggrediar opus inserens primum cum ultimo ita: ‘Beatus vir qui in lege Domini meditatur die ac nocte,’ et cuius spiritus in excelsis laudat Dominum de caelis; nam “omnis spiritus laudat Dominum.”’ MGH Epistolae, t. III, p. 323-24.

475 ‘. . . remotis cunctis, in quibus ex parte Iudeorum vel caeterorum perfidorum apertissime lucideque patuli manent versiculi.’ MGH Epistolae, t. III, p. 323. The idea that certain elements of the Psalms pertain to the Jews only is already seen in Diodore, the fourth century Antiochene exegete, in his Commentary on the Psalms. For brief commentary on this topos, see Frances M. Young, Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997 [reprint, Hendrickson, 2002]), 173-4.
namely those details rooted in the particular world of the ancient near east: place names and personal names, the names of ancient peoples, including the enemies of Israel. These materials were excised in order for “the obvious verses most clearly and lucidly [to] remain.” Yet, even among the most “lucid” verses there would have remained materials inconsistent with our author’s theme. Psalms 2, 3, 5, 13, 21, 68, and 69, for example, though “they are harmonious in their meanings, nevertheless do not pertain to those afflicted with worries.” Thus, these Psalms and others had to be altered, so that they might be brought into line with the theme of consolation for the anxious and imperiled.

How then did the paraphrast approach his work? What is the character of the text he produced? As we have already seen, the text was described by its author as a “florilegium”: “I have undertaken to pluck briefly and concisely the flowers of the Psalms, as if from an immense meadow.” Thus, the Flores include extracts, ranging from short phrases (of as few as three words [Ps. 2]) to several lines of direct quotation (Ps. 16:5, Ps. 17:51), from each of the 150 Psalms. But once selected and arranged, none of the extracts was left entirely unaltered. While the author might have begun with flores, in the process of knitting his extracts into a coherent prayer around a unified theme, he altered the words of his source material – primarily by rearranging words or phrases, by introducing new words, or by substituting synonyms. The most frequent modification of the text was applied to the tense and mood of the verb. Our paraphrast has reduced the variety of verb forms in the full Psalter to create a consistent mood of direct address in the present tense. Imperative and jussive subjunctive forms predominate, so that, for example, “He heard me from his holy mountain,” (Ps. 3:5) becomes in the Flores Psalmorum: “Hear me from your holy mountain.” “For how long will you forget me Lord?” (Ps. 12:1) becomes “may you not

---

476 ‘Toutefois, il ne s’agit plus d’une simple compilation, mais à raison d’un texte pour chacun des 150 psaumes, Prudence cherche à déveloper une prière plus personnelle. On y trouve peu de trace des psaumes historiques ou prophétiques, encore moins des malédictions contre le impies; les psaumes messianiques ou ceux du règne de Yahvé ne semblent pas non plus l’avoit beaucoup intéressé.’ Cottier, “Psautier abrégés,” 223.
477 MGH Epistolae, t. III, p. 323; see n. 475 (above).
478 ut psalmus continet secundus vel tertius, quintus, tertius decimus, vigesimus primus, necnon et tricesimus quartus, tricesimus quintus et tricesimus sextus, vel ‘Quid gloriariis,’ seu sexagesimus septimus, sexagesimus octavus et sexagesimus nonus atque ‘Deus laudem meam’ vel caeteri, qui licet in suis sunt congrui sensibus, tamen in his non pertinent flagitari anxietatibus.’ MGH Epistolae, t. III, p. 324.
479 ‘Tu enim es gloria mea, tu susceptor meus, tu exalta caput meum et exaudi me de monte sancto tuo; ne timeam insidias malignantium ac circumdantium me; exsurge salvum me fac, quia tu es salus et benedictio populorum tuorum.’ Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 94.
forget me."¹⁴⁸⁰ “I will bless the Lord, who gives to me understanding” (Ps. 15:7) is reduced to “Give me understanding.”¹⁴⁸¹ The emphatic focus on alleviating the anxiety of those physically or spiritually imperiled led the bishop to heighten his attention to images of divine aid. As a result, the most frequently used verb forms are:¹⁴⁸²

1. exaudi (31x) 5. spero (12x)
2. miserere (24x) 6. confiteor (12x)
3. libera (20x) 7. intende (9x)
4. salva (14x) 8. eripe (9x)

Six of the eight most common forms are imperatives. Five are appeals for divine aid. “Hear me.” “Have mercy on me.” “Free me.” “Save me, Lord.” “I confess you.” “Stretch forth your ear and rescue me.” “I put my hope in you.” The distinctiveness of Prudentius’ text can be appreciated when this list is compared to the most often recurring verb forms of the complete text of the Gallican Psalter:

1. fecit (42x) 5. clamavi (22x)
2. exaudi (33x) 6. miserere (20x)
3. laudate (28x) 7. fecisti (20x)
4. confitebor (27x) 8. dedit (19x)

“He has made safe his anointed one.” “Hear me.” “Praise the Lord.” “I have shouted.” “Have mercy upon me.” “You have made your people great.” “The Lord has given mercy to his people.” The latter list clearly represents the more diverse range of materials found in the complete text of the Psalter. It includes third person singular forms (fecit, dedit) from those numerous Psalms, written in the third person, attesting the mighty works of the Lord; imperatives (laudate) addressed to the people of Israel, rather than Yahweh, as well as personal expressions of praise (clamavi). The only verbs appearing on both lists are exaudi, confiteor, and miserere (though even here it should be noticed that confitebor of the Psalter, has been pulled back into the present in the Flores). Prudentius has retained every occurrence except two of

¹⁴⁸⁰ ‘Ne obliviscaris me in finem et ne exaltentur inimici mei super me, respice et exaudi me Domine Deus meus; illimina oculos meos ne obdormiam in morte, non praevaleant super me inimici mei quia in misericordia tua semper sperabo atque in salutari tuo exultans cantabo, et qui bona tribuis mihi, psallam altissimo nomini tuo.’ Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 95.
¹⁴⁸¹ ‘Conserva me Domine, quoniam speravi in te, tu es Deus meus et pars hereditatis meae, tribue mihi intellectum nec derelinquas animam meam in inferno neque absit videam corruptionem.’ Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 95.
¹⁴⁸² The following analysis was performed using the online word frequency analysis tool at textalyzer.com.
the imperative *exaudi*, yet eliminated every instance of the verb *fecit*. Out of the 42 instances of ‘fecit’ in the Gallican Psalter, 18 have been replaced with the imperative and 8 have been changed to the present indicative and made second person singular. It is not surprising that the refrain, “have mercy upon me!” (*miserere mei*), appears more often in the *Flores* than in the full Psalter. This cry of the strained soul of the penitent would surely have resonated equally well with the anxious voice of the imperiled.

Next, it should be noted that the most significant alterations, apart from the elimination of proper names, places names, and other details of the ancient near eastern context, is the explicitly Christological reorientation of the text of the Psalter. Many of the Hebrew Psalms are addressed to Yahweh. But the *Flores* of Prudentius are addressed to Christ. This explicitly Christological focus begins in the initial line with the invocation (which also functions as the paraphrase of Psalm 1):

```
Lord Jesus Christ, most high King, son of the blessed Father, make me a friend of blessed men, who meditate on your law day and night.

Domine Iesu Christe rex altissime, Filius benedicti Patris, fac me sociari inter viros beatos, qui meditantur die ac nocte.
```

This Christological orientation continues throughout the text, with the name Christ appearing five more times in the vocative case. The word *christus*, a transliteration of the Septuagint’s rendering of the Hebrew *messiah*, or “anointed one,” had appeared twelve times in the Gallican Psalter as a reference to David or the anonymous author of the Psalm, usually appearing in appeals for divine aid (as in “make safe thine anointed one”). In at least two instances, it is clear that Prudentius has been inspired by the appearance of *christus*, to convert the Psalter’s “anointed one” into an invocation (in the vocative) of the Lord Christ. Psalm 19 provides an example of the ways in which these subtle shifts serve to reframe the Psalter as an explicitly Christian text:

```
Psalm 19

1 In finem. Psalmus David.
2 *Exaudiat* te Dominus in die tribulationis ; Exaudi me et in die tribulationis
  *protegat* te nomen Dei Jacob. protege me,
```

---

483 Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 94.
484 In the paraphrase of Psalms 19, 90, 109, 114, and 131. See Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 96, 107, 111, 112, and 115.
3 Mittat tibi auxilium de sancto,
et de Sion tueatur te.
4 Memor sit omnis sacrificii tui,
et holocaustum tuum pingue fiat.
5 Tribuat tibi secundum cor tuum,
et omne consilium tuum confirmet.
6 Laetabimur in salutari tuo;
et in nomine Dei nostri magnificabimur.

By switching the person and mood of the verb and exchanging the second person pronoun for the third person (vv. 3, 5-6), Prudentius has converted this prayer on behalf of the people of Israel into a personal address of the reader to Christ. “May the Lord hear you” and “may the name of Jacob protect you” have become “hear me, Lord, and protect me on the day of tribulation.” “Make safe your anointed one (christum)” (19:7), has become an appeal to “Christ the most high king,” which, with much of verses 7-9 omitted, takes the place of “Domine” in verse 10. In order to strengthen and build upon this mounting Christological emphasis, the paraphrast has elsewhere inserted the name “Christ” where it does not appear in the text of the Psalm. For example, Ps. 90:16, in which Yahweh speaks of the psalmist who cries out to him on the day of tribulation: “I will rescue him and will glorify him. I will fill him all the length of the days and I will show to him my salvation.” Here Prudentius has reframed the verse as a petition to Christ: “Rescue me, fill me with your mercy and reveal to me your salvation, Christ.”

485Ps. 90: ‘Longitudine dierum replebo eum,et ostendam illi salutare meum.’
Flores ‘erue me; reple me misericordia tua et ostende mihi salutare tuum, Christe.’
occur in the *Flores*’ rendering of Ps. 109: 4, 114:9, and 131: 18. Having explicitly identified the “Lord God” of the Psalter as “the Lord Christ,” these insertions have the effect of transforming each instance of “Dominus” or “Domine” thereafter into a Christological reference.

As might be expected in a prayer designed to fortify and console the reader, the emphasis of the *Flores* is on Christ the Lord Triumphant, the protector and sustainer of his church, not on the suffering Christ. This particular focus is brought into relief when we consider the text’s treatment of those verses that would usually be read in remembrance of the agony of the crucifixion. In the accounts of Matthew and Mark, Jesus had cried out in his moment of abandonment: “My God, my God, why hast though forsaken me?” This moment of desolation is a quotation of Psalm 21: 2, forming the first in a litany of cries of bereavement originally uttered by the psalmist. It should be remembered that this Psalm (21) was also one of the seven Prudentius had specifically identified as “agreeable in meaning” but inconsistent with the purpose of consoling those “afflicted with anxieties.” Thus, when the paraphrast comes to 21:2, a line directly quoted by Christ in the gospels, he elides the cry of desolation, focusing instead on those words and phrases more easily refashioned into a message of hope and of liberation.

### Psalm 21

1 In finem, pro susceptione matutina. Psalmus David.
2 Deus, *Deus meus*, respice in me : quare me dereliquisti ?
   longe a salute mea verba delictorum meorum.
3 Deus meus, clamabo per diem, et non exaudies ;
   et nocte, et non ad insipientiam mihi.
4 Tu autem in sancto habitas, *laus Israel*.
5 *In te speraverunt patres nostri* ;
   speraverunt, *et liberasti eos*.
6 *Ad te clamaverunt, et salvi facti sunt* ;
   *in te speraverunt*, et non sunt confusi.
7 Ego autem sum vermis, et non homo ;
   opprobrium hominem, et abjectio plebis.

### Flores Psalmorum

11 In finem, pro susceptione matutina. Psalmus David.
2 Deus meus, respice in me : quare me dereliquisti ?
   longe a salute mea verba delictorum meorum.
3 Deus meus, clamabo per diem, et non exaudies ;
   et nocte, et non ad insipientiam mihi.
4 Tu autem in sancto habitas, laus Israel.
5 In te speraverunt patres nostri ;
   speraverunt, et liberasti eos.
6 Ad te clamaverunt, et salvi facti sunt ;
   *in te speraverunt*, et non sunt confusi.
7 Ego autem sum vermis, et non homo ;
   opprobrium hominem, et abjectio plebis.

---

Although the paraphrast is here working almost entirely with words drawn from the verses of the Psalm, the meaning of the original is transformed. The Psalmist had lamented that God, the glory of Israel, the hope of his fathers, had abandoned him (vv. 4-8). But the paraphrase of the *Flores* arrives at the opposite meaning. Now the Psalm reads:

> My God and the glory of Israel, our fathers hoped in you and you freed them, they shouted to you and were made safe; but I also hope in you. Save me, since you are my God and my hope from my youth. Look to my defense and free my soul from the mouth of the lion. With my prayer may I return to the sight of those who fear you and may I praise you, Lord, in the midst of your assembly.

The phrase ‘spes mea a iuventute mea,’ “you are my hope from my youth,” which has been imported from Psalm 70:5, completes the transformation from abandonment to hope of salvation. This message of hope in Christ the Lord of salvation is continued throughout the *Flores*.

‘*Quaedam nobilis matrona*’

In sum we have in the *Flores Psalmorum* an original prayer, crafted out of words and phrases drawn from each of the one-hundred and fifty Psalms of the Gallican Psalter. Our paraphrast has gone well beyond a simple abridgment or reduction of the original text (though several abridged Psalters of this type would have been known to him). Instead, he has broken the verses of the Psalms into pieces and reconstituted them as a new work. The author was surely a man who had himself known anxiety and fear. His paraphrase was offered as comfort to a noble woman in the midst of her own trials, beset on all sides by enemies and dangers and snares. Read aloud, the *Flores Psalmorum* would provide for her a means of ascent from the disorder and dislocation of the present to the eternal and unchanging presence of her Savior. It was not a prayer of penance; nor was it a handbook of compunction. Materials of this kind already existed in abundance. Rather, the *Flores* was designed to be a way of prayer out of the storm.

Now it is left to consider the identity of the ‘nobilis matrona’ for whom this text was written. Dümmler had supposed that the *Flores* could have been composed for the Empress Judith, during the difficult years of 830-33, which saw the rebellion of her stepsons and deposition of her husband. Dümmler presents no
evidence, whether internal or external to the text of the Flores, to support this position, nor does Salmon. Before I propose evidence that may support the traditional association of this text with Judith, let it first be suggested that there are other noble women for whom the Flores might have been written. Dhuoda, the wife of Bernard of Septimania and mother of the young son William, is perhaps as likely a candidate as Judith. Tasked with overseeing her husband’s possessions in and around the city of Uzès, Dhuoda clearly had ties to the region of Prudentius’ birth. Local aristocracies were small cliques, among whom all the principal families and their allies were well known to one another. Even if Prudentius did not know Dhuoda through native ties to the region over which she and her husband had become protectors, he would surely have known her from his residence at court. Dhuoda and Bernard had been married in a lavish ceremony celebrated at Aachen in 825, during the time Prudentius is known to have served in the palace chapel. As we have already seen, Dhuoda was also deeply committed to a program of private devotion based upon the Psalter. She knew the De laude Psalmorum attributed to Alcuin, and had commended certain passages from this work to her son William in the closing book of the Liber Manualis. Dhuoda’s somewhat precarious situation in Uzès also suits the context of a work written for a woman “reduced by various chance tribulations” and “very much afflicted by sadness.”

487 ‘Hanc matronam Iuditham imperatricem fuisse vix dubito, ideoque hoc opusculum vel anno 830., vel 833. a Prudentio nondum episcopo, sed capellano palatino, conditum esse necesse est.’ MGH Epistolae, t. III, 323, n. 4.

488 Salmon, who reports the judgment of Dümmler, accepts a date of composition of c. 830-33, which depends on a commission from Judith, “Psautier abrégés,” 88.

489 On Dhuoda’s political role in the maintainence of the Spanish frontier, see Thiébaux, “Introduction,” Liber Manualis, 6-9.

490 It should also be remembered that there were close links between the court of Louis the Pious, where Prudentius served as palace chaplain, and the aristocracies of southern France and Spain. As Noble has reminded us (“Frontiers of the Frankish Realm,” 341-42), Louis himself was a southerner, having been sent to Aquitaine at the age of 3. One suspects that among the local aristocrats of Aquitaine, Gothia, and the Spanish March who served in Louis’ administration, the Frankish world was indeed a small world after all.


493 For additional commentary on Dhuoda’s exposition of the Psalms, see Marie Anne Mayeski, “A Mother’s Psalter: Psalms in the Moral Instruction of Dhuoda of Septimania,” in Nancy van Deusen, ed., The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages (Albany: State University of New York, 1999), 139-151.
Bernard, her husband, had suffered numerous political setbacks beginning with the accusations of spring 830 of his adultery with the empress Judith. Though he had won a modest political rehabilitation under Louis the Pious, his position was again tenuous in the civil war of 840-43. His betrayal of Charles the Bald, capture, and execution in 844 had been recorded by Prudentius himself in the *Annals of St. Bertin*. The execution of young William, Dhuoda’s son, followed only six years later. Amidst these trials, Dhuoda could very well have requested some verses of the Psalms from an aging bishop of Troyes, whose family might have been linked to her own through ties of feudal obligation. The prospect of Dhuoda as the intended recipient of the Psalter is raised here to illustrate only that the identity of Prudentius’ *quaedam nobilis matrona* is far from self-evident.

The traditional view, however, identifies the anonymous woman with Dhuoda’s contemporary, the empress Judith. The empress is known to have commissioned a number of works of exegesis, prayer books, Psalters, verse letters, and other works of a literary nature, written by some of the leading scholars of the ninth century. Judith was deeply involved with the social world of the Emperor’s household and knew his palace chaplains by name. She had hired Walahfrid Strabo (and possibly Lupus of Ferrières) to tutor her young son Charles. And though the dominant contemporary sources were deeply hostile to her, there is some evidence that Judith was a pious woman of deep learning. Elizabeth Ward has drawn attention to contemporary poetic representations in which Judith is celebrated as a devoted mother (by Ermoldus Nigellus) and compared in learning to Sappho (by Walahfrid Strabo). In his preface to a world chronicle, specifically prepared for the instruction of her son Charles, Freculf of Lisieux had

---

495 *Annal 844* (Nelson, *AB*, 57).
497 Bernard of Septimania controlled the Spanish frontier, as well as the southernmost counties east of the Pyrenees that constituted the region then known as Gothia. It would be reasonable to conclude that any of Prudentius’ relatives of military age, still living in these regions, would have been compelled to take Bernard (or one of his kinsmen) as lord.
commended Judith for her wisdom and for her command of both divine and liberal studies. These intimations of learning and piety “would be pointless unless Judith wanted to see herself in this light.”

Judith is also the most visible noble woman whose trials and tribulations can be charted in some measure of detail. The accusations made against her of infidelity with Bernard of Septimania, the constant rebellions of her stepsons, her brief confinement (on two occasions) to a monastic imprisonment, and the uprisings that threatened the political fortunes of her son Charles are all dated to the period 830-833, during which Prudentius served as palace chaplain. In addition, hints of Judith’s embattled political situation may still be observed in the lines of our author’s text. As we have already noticed, Psalm 19 is framed as an appeal for divine aid addressed directly to Christ:

Hear me and protect me on the day of tribulation. Send me help from your holy place and protect me from Zion. Give to me according to my heart and make certain my every plan for the good. May I rejoice in your salvation and may I be magnified in your name, for you are Christ, the king most high. Make safe your king and hear me and your people on the day when we will have called upon you.

In the last line of the paraphrase, Prudentius has written, echoing the Psalmist: “salvum fac regem” — “Make safe the king.” Unless the reader were a queen, such a petition would be unusual to utter in the middle of a personal prayer. Though it could be said that our author was simply careless, the argument of this chapter has been to contradict such a suggestion. The interpolations and subtle emendations on either side of the quotation show that our paraphrast was alert to the significance of the words he was shading.

“Tu enim rex altissime Christe, salvum fac regem et exaudi me et populum tuum in die qua invocaverimus te.” It is quite possible that this line was written to be prayed by an empress, in the midst

501 Igitur indita a Deo vobis sapientia et naturalis ingenii scientia adtonitum me reddit inter ceteros auditores, quoniam in divinis et liberalibus studiis, ut vestrae eruditionis novi facundiam, obstipui, mecumque deliberans, ut aliquod manusculem meo labore congestum vestrae offerrem almitatis flagrantiae, igitur ab Octaviano augusto et Domini nativitate salvatoris nostri secundum addressum sum scribendo opus . . .” MGH Epist. 3. For commentary, see Elizabeth Ward, “Caesar’s Wife,” 224. For Freculf’s Chronicon, see Chester F. Natunewicz, “Freculphus of Lisieux, his Chronicle and a Mont St. Michel Manuscript,” Sacris Erudiri 17 (1966), 99-134.


503 19. Exaudi me et in die tribulationis protege me, mitte mihi auxilium de sancto et de Sion tuere me; tribue mihi secundum cor meum et omne consilium meum in bono confirma; laeter in salutari tuo et in nomine tuo magnificer, tu enim rex altissime Christe, salvum fac regem et exaudi me et populum tuum in die qua invocaverimus te.” Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 96.
of the turmoil of the period 830-33, who feared not only for her own life but also for the safety of her husband.\footnote{125}

The identification of Judith also offers an explanation for the subsequent link between the Flores Psalmorum and northern Italy. Six of nine extant manuscripts of the Flores were written in Italian scriptoria, between the late eleventh and thirteenth centuries.\footnote{504} The oldest witness to both the preface and the full text of the Flores is a late eleventh-century manuscript (Vatican, Lat. MS. 84 (ff. 251-274)), possibly written at the abbey of Nonantola.\footnote{505} The psalter without the preface also appears in three prayer books, two of which were used at (and possibly written at) San Vincenzo al Volturno (Chigi D V 77)\footnote{507} and San Domenico di Sora (Vat. Reg. Lat. 334),\footnote{508} respectively, and a third, of unknown provenance, was written in the Beneventan script, which suggests a southern Italian origin.\footnote{509} Such a relatively obscure text would not have found its way into eleventh- and twelfth-century Italian prayerbooks unless someone had first brought it to Italy. Along with the prospective association of the text with Judith come three potential channels of diffusion. The first is the abbey of San Salvatore, Brescia, which Judith was given by Louis as a morning gift, upon her marriage to the emperor in 819.\footnote{510} Little is known of the empress’ subsequent patronage of this abbey, but the house could have been the recipient of correspondence, manuscripts, and even literature of private devotion, in which context the Flores may have first come to the abbey, whence it then became disseminated more widely in other Italian houses. A second possible connection between Judith and Italy is the marriage of her daughter Gisela to Eberhard, count of Friuli. Eberhard’s position as something of a lay intellectual is well known and the contents of his library well documented.\footnote{511} The Flores Psalmorum could have gone from mother to daughter and then have been taken by Gisela to northern Italy, where they would resurface several centuries later. The third and final

\footnote{504} Also see the paraphrase for Psalm 20 (Psautier abrégés,“ 97). All other instances of ‘rex’ in the Flores apply the title to Christ or to God (as in ‘meus Deus et rex’).

\footnote{505} Vatic. Lat. MS 84, s. XI (ff. 251-274); Chigi C VI 173, s. XI (ff. 11v-16v); Chigi D V 77, s. XI, (ff. 1-43v); Vat. Reg. Lat. MS 334, (s. XI-XII, ff. 1-30v); Vatic. Archivio S. Pietro G 49, s. XIII, ff. 130r-187r.; Subiaco, monast. Ms. 176, s. XIV (f. 60v). See Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 75; Brown, “Flores Psalmorum,” 424-28.


\footnote{507} Salmon, “Psautier abrégés,” 75.

\footnote{508} Ibid.


\footnote{510} Ward, “Caesar’s Wife,” 207.

\footnote{511} See, most recently, Paul Kershaw, “Eberhard of Friuli, a Carolingian lay intellectual,” in Wormald and Nelson, eds., Lay Intellectuals, 77-105.
connection is, of course, the empress herself. In November of 833, following the dramatic deposition of her husband at St. Mary’s, Soissons, Judith had been brought to the northern Italian city of Tortona, about 50 km east of Pavia, where she remained imprisoned for the next several months. By this point Judith had been “reduced by various chance tribulations and, as many know, very much afflicted by sadness.” It is possible that she had with her, as consolation amidst dark times a little book of prayers drawn from the Psalms, composed for her by her friend, the palace chaplain Prudentius, future bishop of Troyes.

**Text of the Flores Psalmarum**

The foregoing analysis has proposed a general account of the more obvious ways in which our author has transformed the text of the Psalter for use in a private devotional context. To offer a sense for the character of the Flores, a translation of the paraphrase of Psalms 1-17 is supplied here, followed by the Latin text prepared by Salmon. The words of the Latin text which are found in the text of the full Psalter will appear in bold. Changes in verb form, the addition of prefixes, and other modest alterations are not indicated typographically.

Lord Jesus Christ, most high King, son of the blessed Father, make me a friend of blessed men, who meditate on your law day and night, and [make me] worthy to be with all of those who believe in you. For you are my glory, you are my sustainer. Lift my head and hear me from your holy mountain, so that I may not fear the treachery of the evil doers surrounding me. Rise up, keep me safe, because you are the safety and the blessing of your people. I call upon you. Hear me and deliver me in my distress. Have mercy on me and give joy to my heart, so that I, restored, may have the strength to rest in peace. For you are my king and my God. Give heed to my cry and listen with ears to my words. I pray to you in the morning and ever lift my voice, since I put my hope in the multitude of your mercy. Lead me in your justice and direct my path in your presence. Delight in those who hope in you, and boast in all who love your name, seeing that you bless and crown the just man.

Lord, may you not blame me in your anger, nor correct me in your wrath. Have mercy on me since I am weak and my spirit disturbed. Rescue [my soul], make it whole, on account of your mercy.

May it not be! Let not the roaring lion ravage [my soul], while there is no one who would redeem or save it, except you who make safe the righteous in heart – You, righteous Judge, strong and patient – You, who are gentle and merciful. You are marvelous and your name is wondrous in all the land, O Lord, our God.

---

512 For a thorough synthesis of the sources on this event, see De Jong, *Penitential State*, 48-49.
513 There is some precedent for treating these verses as a unit. A manuscript of the late eleventh century, possibly written at San Vincenzo al Volturno, preserves the prayer of these Psalms only, as part of a larger prayerbook. See Salmon, “Psautiers abrégés,” 75.
9I confess you, I praise you, and I magnify you, You, who are seated on the throne, who judge the earth in equity and its people in justice. You are the refuge of the poor. You are the strength for the weak. You are the consoler of those in the midst of trials and those who grieve. You alone observe [our] labor and pain and do not ignore those who seek you. Look upon my humility and rescue me from the hand of mine enemies, so that I may announce your praises in Jerusalem and your mercies in the gates of Zion; may you rule eternally and into the age the ages. Listen to the longing of the needy and hear with your ears their prayers. 10For I put my trust in you, since you are just and you love justice and equity -- your face sees and your eyes observe the sons of men.

11But You, O Lord, must save me from a depraved generation that wanders in circles. Keep me and guard me forever. 12May you not forget me in the end, nor allow my enemies to exalt over me. Look upon and hear me, Lord, My God. Brighten my eyes, lest I should fall asleep in death. Let not my enemies prevail over me, since I will always place my hope in your mercy and, exulting [in you], I will sing of your salvation, and will sing your name most high, You who give good things to me. 13May I boast and rejoice in you in whom Jacob and Israel boasted and rejoiced!

14Lord, make me to approach [you] blamelessly, so that by speaking your truth and working your justice, I may deserve to dwell in your tabernacle and rest in your holy mountain, so that I might not be moved in eternity. 15Keep me, Lord, since I have hoped in you. You are my God and the portion of my inheritance. Give to me understanding and do not abandon my soul in the abyss, lest -- heaven forbid -- I should see destruction. But make known to me the paths of life and the paths of justice, and fill me up with joy and spiritual exultation, in your right hand, until the end.

16Hear me in your justice, listen to my supplication and sense with your ears my cry. Incline your ear and listen to my words; perfect my steps in your ways, so that my footsteps may not be moved; and You who make safe those hoping in you, magnify your mercies in me; guard me like the pupil of [your] eye, so that I may be protected under the shadow of your wing, surrounded by your hedge, enveloped in the custody of the holy angels, so that when your glory appears, your right hand may protect me. 17You are my courage and my foundation, you are my refuge and my liberator. I love you and in you I hope -- You who are the horn of my salvation and my sustainer. Praising you, I call upon you -- save me from my enemies, for You save the humble and You humble the eyes of the proud. Kindle my lamp, Lord and illuminate my shadows, My God. May I deserve to be rescued by you from my temptation, since you, Lord, are my liberator and my sustainer, and the protector of all those who hope in you. May your discipline teach me. Perfect my steps so that they may not become weak. Gird me about with your virtue, cause those who rise over me to fall under me and scatter those who hate me, and wipe them out, like mud out of the streets. You are blessed, my God, and the strength of my salvation. I confess you, I magnify you and I sing to your name, you who have mercy on David, your anointed one, and on his seed, even into the ages.
1. Domine Iesu Christe rex altissime, Filius benedicti Patris, fac me sociari inter viros beatos, qui meditantur die ac nocte
2. Et dignum esse cum omnibus qui confidunt in te.
3. Tu enim es gloria mea, tu susceptor meus, tu exalta caput meum et exaudi me de monte sancto tuo ne timeam insidias malignantium ac circumdantium me; exsurge salvum me fac, quia tu es salus et benedictio populorum tuorum.
4. Te invoco exaudi me in tribulatione mea dilata me; miserere mei et da laetitiam cordi meo, ut in pace valeam quiescere constutitus.
5. Tu enim es rex meus et Deus meus, intellige clamorem meum et auribus percipe verba mea; ad te oro mane et semper exaudi vocem meam, quia in multitudine misericordiae tuae spero; deduc me in tuam iustitiam et dirige in conspectu tuo viam meam; exsurge salvum me fac, quia tu es salus et benedictio populorum tuorum.
6. Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me, neque in ira tua corripias me; miserere mei quia infirmus sum et anima mea turbata est valde, eripe illam, salvam eam fac propter misericordiam tuam.
7. Ne quod absit leo rugiens rapiat illam, dum non est qui redimat eam nec salvet, nisi tu qui salvos facis rectos corde; tu iustus iudex, tu fortis, tu patiens, tu mitis et misericors.
8. Tu mirabilis et in universa terra mirabile est nomen Domine Deus noster.
9. Te Confiteor, te laudo, teque magnifico qui sedes super thronum, qui judicas orbem terrae in aequitate et populosis in iustitia; tu refugium pauperum, tu virtus debilium, tu tribulantium ac moerentium consolator; tu solus laborem et dolorem consideras nec derelinquis quaerentes te; vide humilitatem meam et erue me de manu inimicorum meorum, ut annuntiem in Ierusalem laudationes tuas et in portis Sion miserations tuas; tu regnas in aeternum et in saeculum saeculi, tu desiderium exaudis pauperum et deprecationes eorum audit auris tua.
10. In te enim confido quia tu es iustus et iustitias diligis aequitatemque videt vultus tuus et oculi tui super filios respicientium hominum.
11. Sed tu Domine salva me et a generatione prava, quae in circitu ambulat, serva me et custodi in perpetuum.
12. Ne obliviscaris me in finem et ne exaltetur inimici mei super me, respice et exaudi me Domine Deus meus; illumina oculos meos ne obdormiam in morte, non praevaleant super me inimici mei quia in misericordia tua semper sperabo atque in salutari tuo exultans cantabo, et qui bona tribuis mihi, psallam altissimo nomine tuo.
13. In te exultem et laetor in quo exultat Iacob et Israel laetatur.
14. Domine fac me ingredere sine macula, ut loquendo veritatem et operando iustitiam merear habitare in tabernaculo tuo et requiescere in monte sancto tuo, ita ut non movear in aeternum.
15. Conserva me Domine, quoniam speravi in te, tu es Deus meus et pars hereditatis meae, tribue mihi intellectum nec derelinquas animam meam in inferno neque absit videam corruptionem; sed fac mihi notas vias vitae et vias iustitiae, adimple me laetitia et exultatione spirituali in dextera tua usque in finem.
16. Exaudi me in tua iustitia, intende deprecationi meae et auribus percipe orationem meam; inclina aurem tuam et exaudi verba mea; perfice gressus meos in semitis tuis ut non moveantur vestigia mea; et qui salvos facis sperantes in te mirifica misericordias.
tuas in me; custodi me ut pupillam oculi ita ut sub umbra alarum tuarum sim protectus, tuoque munimine saeptus, sanctorumque angelorum custodia circumdatus, ut cum apparuerit gloria tua protegat me dextera tua.

17. Tu fortitudo mea et firmamentum meum, tu refugium meum et liberator meus, te diligo et in te spero qui es cornu salutis meae et susceptor meus; laudans invoco te, ab inimicis meis salva me, tu enim humiles salvas et oculos superborum humilias; tu accende lucernam meam Domine et tu illumina tenebras meas Deus meus, a tentatione etenim mea per te merear eripi, quia tu es liberator meus et susceptor meus Domine et protector omnium sperantium in te; disciplina tua doceat me, perfice gressus meos ut non infirmentur; praecinge me virtute, supplantla insurgentes in me subitus me et odientes me disperde, atque ut lutum platearum dele illos; tu es benedictus Deus meus et virtus salutis meae; te confiteor, te magnifico et nomini tuo psallam, qui facis misericordiam David christo tuo et semini eius usque in saeculum.
Chapter 5

Authorizing Augustine in the Epistola ad Hincmarum

In autumn 849, six years into his tenure as bishop of Troyes, Prudentius found himself a reluctant participant in what was to become, over the next decade, the most contentious and protracted theological controversy of the ninth century. The debate over predestination began as a disagreement surrounding the teachings of Gottschalk, a Saxon-born oblate to the monastery of Fulda, who, after contesting the terms of his oblation, had left Fulda in the 820s first for Corbie then for Orbais in the diocese of Rheims. By 840, Gottschalk was to be found in Northern Italy preaching a doctrine of double predestination: the elect to blessedness and the condemned to perdition. Though he claimed support for his teachings in the works of Augustine, Prosper, Isidore, and Bede, Gottschalk’s immoderation in preaching and unwillingness to submit to correction soon attracted the ire of churchmen in Italy and northern Europe. Recalled to Mainz by Rabanus Maurus, his former abbot, the errant monk was arraigned before a body of northern bishops, condemned in the presence of Louis the German for “noxious doctrine” and “novas supersticiones,” and sent to Western Francia to be tried under Hincmar, in whose archdiocese he had been ordained. At the synod of Quierzy in spring 849, the accused was publicly flogged, stripped of his clerical status, and condemned to a monastic imprisonment at Hautvillers. Despite these drastic measures, evidently designed to silence heterodoxy, the Council produced no official condemnation of Gottschalk’s teachings.

---


516 The proceedings at Mainz are known chiefly through the letter which Rabanus sent with Gottschalk to Hincmar, in Hartmann, ed. MGH Concilia, t. III, p. 184. ‘... de Italia venit ad nos Moguntiam novas superstitiones et noxiam doctrinam de praedestinatione dei introducens et populos in errorem mittens. ... Hanc ergo opinionem nuper in synodo apud Moguntiam habita ab eo audientes et incorrigibilem eum referientes, annuente atque iubente piissimo rege nostro Hludowico, decrevimus eum cum perniciosa sua doctrina damnatum mittere ad vos.’

517 The full proceedings of the Council of Quierzy are known through the Historia Ecclesiastica of Flodoard, the third work De praedestinatione (859) of Hincmar, the Annales Bertiniani, and a letter of Florus. All four of these agree that Gottschalk was flogged and his writings burned. Florus characterized Gottschalk’s treatment, in the ablative, as: ‘inaudito irreligiositatis et crudelitatis exemplo.’ The sentence itself is preserved in the De praedestinatione of Hincmar and, independently of Hincmar, in Berlin, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Phill. 1765, a MS of the Collectio Dacheriana, Form B. All of these accounts are printed in Hartmann, ed., MGH, Concilia, t. III, pp. 194-99.
In the months following Quierzy, it emerged that Gottschalk’s teaching had attracted widespread support in western Francia. Hincmar, who detected popular sympathy for the monk in his own diocese, worked to preempt the spread of his ideas by writing a letter addressed to the “cloistered and simple brothers” of Rheims (ad simplices et reclusos). Soon after the publication of Hincmar’s letter, Gottschalk’s doctrines attracted qualified support from several respected scholars in western Francia, of whom Prudentius, Lupus of Ferrières, Ratramnus of Corbie, and Florus of Lyon were the most important.

Over the next decade, the debate over predestination grew to involve churchmen from all three of the Carolingian kingdoms and several ecclesiastical provinces and, before its resolution at Tusey in 860, it had fostered more than twenty theological works of varying degrees of sophistication and originality and commanded the agenda of four well-attended regional councils. Though it is challenging to summarize accurately the voluminous corpus of texts produced by this debate, a few observations may be made. First, despite the rhetoric of Hincmar and Rabanus, both of

518 Ecclesiastica sententia in pertinacissimum Gotescalcum, propter incorrigibilem obstinationem illius, in sinodo apud Carisiacum habita a XII episcopis ecclesiastico vigore prolata. Frater Gotescalc, sacrosanctum sacerdotalis misterii officium, quod irregulariter usurpasti et in cunctis moribus ac pravis actibus atque perversis doctrinis eo hactenus abuti non pertimuisti . . .’ See MGH Concilia, t. III (194-99 [quote at 198]).


520 One need only survey the six volumes of Migne’s Patrologia Latina that contain the works of Gottschalk’s contemporaries to gain an impression of the energy (and prolixity) with which they responded to the controversy over his doctrines. Excluding the many letters (at least those without longer works appended to them) and several conciliar statements devoted to predestination, the extant works engendered by the debate, listed by author, are as follows: Gottschalk: Confessio prolixior (Lambot, Godescalc d’Orbais, 55-78), De praedestinatione (Lambot, 180-258), De diversis 8 (Lambot,130-179), Opuscula theologica XXIV (Lambot, 338-346); Rabanus Maurus: Epistola ad Noutingum de praedestinatione (PL 112, 1530-53); Epistola ad Eberhardem (PL 112, 1554-62); Epistola ad Hincmarum (PL 112, 1519-30); Hincmar: Epistola ad simplices et reclusos (Gundlach, “Zwei epistolae,” 258-307), De praedestinatione (856) (lost); De praedestinatione (859) (PL 125, 65-474); Lupus of Ferrieres: De tribus quaestitionibus (PL 119, 619-48), Collectaneum de tribus quaestitionibus (PL 119, 648-66); Ratramnus of Corbie: De praedestinatione (850) (PL 121, 13-80); John Scottus Eriugena, De praedestinatione (Goulven Madec, ed., CCCM 50); Prudentius of Troyes: Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum (PL 115, 971-1010); De praedestinatione contra Joannem Scottem (PL 115, 1009-1366); Florus of Lyon, Lyon Ms. 608 (unedited); Libellus adversus cuiusdam qui cognominatur Johannes inceptias (PL 119, 101ff); Libellus de tribus epistolis (PL 121, 985-1068); Absolutio cuiusdam quaestionis (PL 121, 1067-1084); Libellus de tenenda . . . Scripturae veritate (PL 121, 1083-1134).

521 Quierzy (849); Quierzy (853); Valence (854); and Tusey (860). This is not counting the several local and provincial councils dedicated to the debate.

522 Though the theology of the debate has been treated extensively in the great surveys of Christian doctrine (by Schaff, Harnack, inter alia), the most incisive recent treatments are chapters 2-3 in Devisse, Hincmar, t. 1, 115-280; Chazelle, The Crucified God, 165-208 (by far the most thorough and most sophisticated treatment of the
whom described Gottschalk’s doctrine as “noxious,” “impudent,” and “pertinacious,” it should be noted that no views expressed during the course of this controversy went beyond the broad boundaries of the catholic tradition on grace and human freedom. All positions could be accommodated within the parameters of the western church’s teaching following the council of Orange (529), which had emphatically affirmed that the grace required for salvation is a gift of God, based in no respect on any human work. Secondly, while this ninth-century debate can be treated as a revival of an earlier fifth-century controversy between Augustine and his critics in southern Gaul, this convenient framework (which the disputants themselves would adopt) obscures the extent to which both the arguments of Gottschalk and of his opponents could all be described as broadly Augustinian. One is hard pressed to find in the writings of Gottschalk’s opponents an affirmation of the great Gallican doctors who had opposed Augustine in the fifth century. Even Gottschalk’s detractors drew their theological ideas primarily from Augustine himself and from Prosper of Aquitaine, the defender of Augustine’s views against John Cassian.

Still, even within these largely Augustinian parameters, there remained substantial room for disagreement, owing to the divergent philosophical (and bibliographical) starting points that motivated the logic of the interlocutors. Gottschalk maintained a vision of God as an all-powerful sovereign of the theological views which animated this debate) and Nineham, “Gottschalk of Orbais,” 1-18. For the social and political contexts, David Ganz, “The Debate On Predestination,” remains unsurpassed.


For the use of Prosper by Hincmar and Rabanus, see Chazelle, Crucified, God, 183-89.

On the context for this early controversy between Prosper and Cassian, see Alexander Y. Hwang, Intrepid Lover of Perfect Grace. The Life and Thought of Prosper of Aquitaine (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2009), 146-67; and Weaver, Grace and Agency, 106-115, 117-130.
universe,\textsuperscript{528} whose grace enables the salvation of some but not others. Humankind had fallen in the first parent and the freedom of the individual to will the good had been lost.\textsuperscript{529} In bestowing the gift of salvation on an elect, whose number was fixed “before the ages,” divine grace had necessarily passed over others.\textsuperscript{530} Thus, it could be maintained that predestination, which is unified in God, works in a “twofold” manner with respect to humankind. For Gottschalk, the phrase “double predestination” (\emph{gemina praedestinatio}) was simply a linguistically elegant way of expressing the church’s established teaching on the Fall, divine grace, and human freedom.\textsuperscript{531} The phrase had not been used by Augustine, but it did have ample support in Isidore and Bede.\textsuperscript{532} Beyond the phrase \textit{gemina praedestinatio}, a simple convenience of language, for which Gottschalk was accused of novelty, he did espouse, with great persistence, two rather more extreme positions: (1) First, he seems to have asserted that, if God willed only the salvation of the elect, then the sacrifice of Christ likewise had been limited to those predestined for salvation.\textsuperscript{533} That is, he proposed a limited atonement. For Gottschalk it was impious to suggest that Christ’s sacrifice was effective for some but not for others.\textsuperscript{534} Such a position, which issued from Gottschalk’s dialectically determined insistence that the will of an omnipotent God cannot fail to achieve its designs,\textsuperscript{535} was anathema to Hincmar and his allies. It was a direct contradiction of the Apostle Paul,

\textsuperscript{528} See opening lines of the the \textit{Confessio brevior} for Gottschalk’s most concise statement of his position on predestination. Lambot, ed., \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, 52, ll. 3-9. In my navigation of Gottschalk’s writings, I have been aided immeasurably by the recent translations of Genke and Gumerlock, \textit{Gottschalk and a Medieval Predestination Controversy} (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2010). All references to Gottschalk’s writings will be to the Latin text of Lambot.

\textsuperscript{529} \textit{Responsa de diversis}, Lambot, ed., \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, 146-48.

\textsuperscript{530} \textit{Confessio prolixior}, Lambot, ed., \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, 56.


\textsuperscript{532} Though Augustine had never used \textit{gemina} or “double” to describe God’s election, the word reflects accurately the logical implications of his doctrine. Isidore, explaining Augustine’s views, had taught a “double predestination.” Isidore, \textit{Sententiae} 2.6.1, (Pierre Cazier, ed. CCSL vol. 111, p. 103): ‘Gemina est praedestinatio siue electorum ad requiem siue reproborum ad mortem. Utraque diuino agitur iudicio, ut semper electos superna et interiora sequi faciat, semperque reprobos ut infima et exteriora delectentur deserendo permittat.’ Gottschalk quotes this passage from Isidore frequently. See Lambot, ed., \textit{Oeuvres de Godescalc}, pp. 38, 54, 67, 154.

\textsuperscript{533} \textit{De praedestinatione}, Lambot, ed., \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, 231, 247-249.

\textsuperscript{534} \textit{De praedestinatione}, Lambot, ed., \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, 214.

\textsuperscript{535} For Gottschalk’s use of dialectic see his excursus on the definition of a syllogism in his miscellany (to which modern editors have assigned the title) \textit{De praedestinatione}, Lambot, ed., \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, 206-207.
who had stated that God “wills all men to be saved” (I. Tim. 2:4).\textsuperscript{536} (2) Secondly, Gottschalk appears to have insisted that the predestination of God, as an instrument of his just judgments, prepares both the punishment for the reprobate and the reprobate for their punishment. That is, the reprobate were “vessels of wrath” (\textit{vasa irae}), prepared in advance for destruction (Rom. 9:22).\textsuperscript{537} Though this rhetorically terrifying corollary of Gottschalk’s doctrine could find ample support in scripture and in Augustine,\textsuperscript{538} it came as a great shock to Gottschalk’s contemporaries.

To Hincmar and Rabanus Maurus, Gottschalk’s doctrine implied a fatalism that left the world seeming coldly determined.\textsuperscript{539} Rabanus had been concerned that the monk’s teaching was “leading many into despair.”\textsuperscript{540} The simple-minded were beginning to ask: “Why is it necessary for me to work for my salvation and eternal life? For if I do good but I have not been predestined to life, it profits me nothing. But if I do evil, it is in no way an obstacle to me. For the predestination of God causes me to come to eternal life.”\textsuperscript{541} Echoes of Rabanus’s concern can be found in a letter of Hincmar to his diocese, written three years later.\textsuperscript{542} Against what they regarded to be Gottschalk’s determinism, both Hincmar and Rabanus wished to protect the possibility of human freedom. Though they affirmed that no man could will salvation apart from the grace of God, both prelates maintained that predestination does depend to some extent on divine foreknowledge of human action. Hincmar and Rabanus envisioned an all-benevolent and merciful God, whose perfect justice had provided the church, the sacraments, and penance as instruments of regeneration in a fallen world, making God’s salvation available to all who would willingly partake of the gift.\textsuperscript{543} Whereas Gottschalk began with “metaphysics,” Hincmar and Rabanus started with ecclesiology.\textsuperscript{544} 

\textsuperscript{536} On the use of this passage by Hincmar and Rabanus, see Chazelle, \textit{Crucified God}, 188-189.
\textsuperscript{537} \textit{Confessio prolixior}, Lambot, ed., \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, 60-61.
\textsuperscript{538} This will be explored more thoroughly below, but see Nineham, “Gottschalk of Orbais,” 3-4, 10-12.
\textsuperscript{540} From a letter (c. 846) addressed to count Eberhard of Friuli, the son-in-law of Judith.
\textsuperscript{541} ‘Quid mihi necesse est pro salute mea et vita aeterna laborare? quia si bonum fecero, et predestinatus ad vitam non sum, nihil mihi prodest; si autem malum egero, nihil mihi obest, quia predestinatio Dei me facit ad vitam aeternam pervenire.’ MGH \textit{Epistolae}, t. V, p. 481.
\textsuperscript{542} ‘. . . docens predestinatos ad poenam, quam nullus predestinatus, quicquid libet uel quantum libet boni agat, potest evadere, et nullus predestinatus ad gloriam, quicquid agat mali, potest decidere.’ \textit{Ad reclusos et simplices}, Gundlach, “Zwei epistolae,” 261.
\textsuperscript{543} See Devisse, \textit{Hincmar}, t., 120-24.
\textsuperscript{544} For an expansion of this argument, see Chazelle, \textit{Crucified God}, 205-208.
Despite their divergent starting points, it should be noted how relatively close the scholars who debated Gottschalk’s orthodoxy were in their own positions. The ninth-century controversy over predestination was not a simple case of “semi-Pelagians” confronting “Predestinationists,” however helpful such labels might have once been for the purposes of confessional polemics. The theological heritage under dispute was drawn from a continuum of positions all occupied at some point in his long career by Augustine himself. Gottschalk, Hincmar, and Prudentius, as well as most of the other participants in the debate, were all “Augustinian” in outlook: all were avowedly anti-Pelagian. Whether or not they were familiar with Augustine’s considered views on predestination, all disputants wished to claim Augustine’s authority as the foundation for their own views. Thus, the circulation of manuscript witnesses to Augustine’s works became an important – sometimes decisive – factor in a given author’s ability to formulate and authorize (through quotation) his own interpretation of Augustine’s doctrine. By the mid-century Augustine’s corpus circulated widely but unequally in northern Europe, such that one could have an intimate familiarity with a number of important texts, yet nevertheless remain relatively uninformed about the Augustinian doctrine on grace and human freedom. A busy churchman like Hincmar might have recognized the authority of Augustine, and yet avoided his later teachings on predestination. As the debate over Gottschalk progressed into the 850s, it became increasingly clear that this was to be, among other things, a contest over who had read most widely in, and best understood, the writings of Augustine. In his letter addressed to Hincmar, written in the autumn of 849 (or early winter of 850), Prudentius set out to frame the debate in precisely these terms.

Epistola ad Hincmarum
Prudentius had not been present when the sentence over Gottschalk was pronounced at Quierzy, so Hincmar had written before Easter 849 to inform him of the sentence and to solicit his thoughts on the

545 In his study on Augustine’s later doctrines of divine grace and human freedom, Gerald Bonner notes that even for modern readers “it would be possible, though it would require careful selection, to read widely in Augustine without ever considering his doctrine of Grace,” Freedom and Necessity. St. Augustine’s Teaching on Divine Power and Human Freedom (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2007), ix.

546 The list of bishops and other clergy in attendance at Quierzy is taken from a passage in Hincmar’s second treatise De predestinatione (c. 853), in which he appears to be drawing on a (now lost) subscription list (MGH, Concilia, t. III, p. 195). Prudentius’s description in the AB of the proceedings at Quierzy likely came from the letter of Hincmar to Prudentius described below. Alternatively, as suggested in chapter 3, elements the AB account may be interpolations from Hincmar’s years as annalist.
condemned’s confinement at Hautvillers. A description of this correspondence, preserved by Flodoard of Rheims in his tenth-century Historia Remensis Ecclesiae, suggests that as late as 849 Hincmar could still write to Prudentius as a friend and adviser. Concerned to gain the latter’s approval of the proceedings at Quierzy, the archbishop had requested Prudentius’ thoughts on aspects of Gottschalk’s confinement involving ecclesiastical practice, as well as his opinion of a passage in Ezekiel that would later appear in his own Epistola ad reclusos et simplices. He also wanted to know whether Gottschalk should be permitted to partake of the Eucharist or celebrate Easter while imprisoned. Either here or in a subsequent letter unknown to us, Hincmar must also have invited our subject’s thoughts on the doctrine of predestination. Prudentius likely began his reply sometime before November 849, when he submitted a collection of excerpts from the Fathers for the approval of his colleagues at the Synod of Paris. By February, at the latest, his work would have been complete. Rabanus acknowledged before Easter 850 having read “a letter of bishop Prudentius,” along with “opuscula” of Gottschalk and Ratramnus of Corbie, all of which by then had been forwarded to him by Hincmar.

547 Flodoard of Rheims, who had direct access to the his cathedral’s tenth-century archives, preserved verbatim in his Historia Remensis Ecclesiae some of Hincmar’s letters, as well as shorter indirect fragments of his correspondence. The fragment which describes Hincmar’s correspondence with Prudentius is dated to spring 849, after the Synod of Quierzy but before Easter in April, since the letter will ask Prudentius whether Gottschalk should be permitted to participate in Easter services. See the text of Flodoard’s description of the letter supplied below.

548 MGH, Epistolae, t. VIII, p. 24: ‘Prudentio Trecasino scribens queritur, quare sibi presentiam suam subtrahat; significans se ab eo consilium quaerere velle de statu et compressione Gothescalci; intimans, quid de ipso actum vel iudicatum fuerat in sinodo, quo eum reclusum tenebat iudicio et quia multis modis eum converti temptaverit, et de moribus ac superbia ipsius; et si coena Domini vel in pascha debit illum admittere ad audiendum sacram officium vel accipiantam communionem; et quid sibi videatur de sententia Ezechiels prophetae, qua dicitur: In quacumque die ceciderit iustus, omnes iustitiae eius in oblivione tradentur, et quacumque die peccator conversus fuerit, omnes iniquitates eius tradentur oblivioni. Sed et de consuetudine coenae Domini celebrandae.’

549 See Gundlach, “Zwei Schriften,” 20. Prudentius refers in his letter to “the proposed questions” (the full text of greeting, supplied below), which suggests that he was responding to questions earlier put to him by Hincmar.

550 Prudentius would later chasten Eriugena for his ignorance of catholic teaching on this matter, since even if he had not read the Fathers himself, he would have known a florilegium that Prudentius had prepared, ante biennium, from their works. ‘Nam eti nusquam eorum scripta legisses, satis ea te poterant de his omnibus informare, quae ante biennium ex illorum libris, deflorata quibusdam fratribus consensu synodi mittere curavi, quae ad te pervenisse si nosse aliter nequissessem, iustissimustus liber tuus, cui largiente Domino respondimus, probabiliter nos instruere poterit. In quo earumdem deflationum pleraque interposita atque ad tuas pravitates detorta violenterque inflexa reperimus.’ PL 115, 1156C.

552 Cappuyns (Eriugene, 104) and Devisse (Hincmar, t. 1, 133) both suggest Prudentius’ letter would have reached Hincmar by November 849.

The letter, which reflects careful preparation on the part of its author over the course of several months, is actually a theological tract of some length, consisting of approximately 15000 words, comprising an epistolary prologue, a theological excursus on the topic of predestination, and a *collectaneum* of eighty excerpts from patristic texts on the same topic. Addressed both to Hincmar and to his suffragan, Pardulus of Laon, the work is our first opportunity since the *Flores Psalmorum* to glimpse our author’s personality in his surviving writings. Eager to entreat his colleagues, Prudentius proposes “a discrete and amicable conversation.” He intends only “to make public in scribblings” what he has already “understood in prayer.” The tone is overtly conciliatory, though not without occasional hints of irony. Here our subject was addressing powerful acquaintances with whom he apparently disagreed but, perhaps for reasons of political and ecclesiastical unity, he chose to proceed with great care.

*Authority, Authorization, and Augustine*

In its earliest pages the *Epistola ad Hincmarum* sets to the side the immediate occasion for disagreement between Hincmar, Rabanus, and Gottschalk. It begins instead with an earlier conversation, held in the fifth and sixth centuries by such learned doctors as Jerome, Hilary, Prosper, and Fulgentius, among others. It was in the writings of these earlier doctors of the church that St. Augustine’s teachings on predestination had first become authoritative. Therefore, Prudentius will undertake first to remind his readers of the process through which those teachings had been accepted, authorized, and defended by the church catholic.

---

554 PL 115, 975D-79A.
555 PL 115, 979C-1010B.
556 PL 115, 972-973: ‘Dominis praedicabilibus, doctrina et sanctitate praestantibus, honorabiliter nominandis, Hincmaro et Pardulo pontificibus, Prudentius, Beatitudinis Vestrae amator cultorque fidissimus, aeternam in Domino salutem. Optaveram quidem, mi Patres admodum venerandi, fratresque in Deo et Domino nostro Jesu Christo plurimum diligendi, de propositis quaestionibus secreto amicabilique vobiscum tractare colloquio; et quidquid supernae gratiae dono sanius salubriusque videri posset, remota penitus vincendi perversacia, propulsaque sua cuique studia tuedi libidine, diligenter exquirere. Verum obliquatis in diversa rebus, adeo aversus resilii, ut ne voluntatem meam saltem exponendi facultas suppeteret. Unde quoniam colloquendi libertas tantopere denegata est, coactus sum eo sincerissimae charitatis affectu, quem vestrae unanimitati peculiariter debeo, litterarium, quantulacunque est, operam exhibere et quid votis conceperim, scriptis edicere.’

557 Most notably the author’s allusion to Caesar, *De bell. gall.* in his account of the fifth-century debate among Gallican churchman over Augustine’s doctrine: “The Gauls, about whom a certain author says that they are always hasty in their counsel.”
I would admonish and warn Your Sincerity about this first and especially: that you should not permit to be impugned by any comment whatsoever during the time of your pontificate the teaching of the most blessed Augustine; everything, without any doubt and in every respect, of this most learned man is in all things in most full agreement with the authority of holy scripture. Indeed, none of the doctors, when his more abstruse [teachings] have been scrupulously examined, will have sought out more diligently, discovered more correctly, advanced more truthfully, clarified more brilliantly, held more faithfully, defended more powerfully, disseminated more widely. Since he stands out by such a great gift of heavenly grace (as he is not able to be dislodged, in any respect, by the exertion of anyone), [and] since the sublimity of the Apostolic See and the unity of the whole Catholic church have, by the most harmonious authority, approved and reinforced him, and, to the extent that no one is able to stand against him, he is truly with and in that universality of the church catholic.  

Augustine had been approved repeatedly by the Roman see and his doctrines received by a number of catholic doctors of the fifth century. Popes Innocent (d. 417), Zosimus (d. 418), and Boniface (d. 422) had corresponded with him and openly embraced his opinions against the heresy of Pelagius. Augustine’s colleagues had used his writings to combat later heresies. Celestine (d. 432), for example, placed an endorsement of Augustine among his decretal letters. Leo (d. 461) had used Augustine’s opinions alongside those of other Catholic doctors, “when he wrote to build up the faith against the heretic Eutyches.” Even Gregory (d. 604) had likened his own *Moralia in Iob* to “husks of wheat” compared with the “delicious food” found in Augustine. Fulgentius, Prosper, and Hilary of Arles had defended the doctrines found in the *De praedestinatione sanctorum* and *De dono perseverentiae*. St. Jerome, though he had argued with him in his letters, could elsewhere be found to praise and honor Augustine.

It may be wondered why such a chorus of authoritative witnesses was necessary to assemble in a letter to colleagues who readily acknowledged the unique authority of Augustine, “after the apostles the master

---

558 ‘Hoc primum praecipue vestram sinceritatem monens et postulans, ut doctrinam beatissimi Patris Augustini, omnium absque ulla dubitatae undecunque doctissimi, sanctorum Scripturarum auctoritati in omnibus concordissimam (quippe nullus doctorum abstrusa earum scrupulosius rimatus, diligentius exquisierit, verius invenerit, veracius protulerit, luculentius endodaverit, fidelity teneuerit, robustius defenderit, effusius disseminaverit), vestri pontificatus tempore, commento quilibet impugnari non permittatis; quando tanto coelestis gratiae munere donata existit, ut nullo cujusquam conamine ualatenus evelli possit: cum eam et Apostolicae sedis sublimitas, et totius Ecclesiae catholicæ unitas auctoritate concordissimam approbarint ac roborarint; adeo ut nullus ei singulariter, verum universitati Ecclesiae catholicæ cum ea et in ea quen obniti.’ PL 115, 973C.

559 PL 115, 975A-D.

560 ‘. . . præsertim cum eum in quadam epistolarum suarum redarguerit, et vestigioque correctum susceperit, ac deinceps multis laudibus persaepe extulerit, amorique semper et honoris habuerit.’ PL 115, 975C.
of the church.”

Hincmar himself, in his letter to the simple and cloistered of the church of Rheims, had already grounded his own views on predestination in the authority of Augustine’s works. Lupus, Ratramnus, and Eriugena would all claim to draw on the opinions of Augustine in their own responses (still to come) to the controversy over Gottschalk’s condemnation. Yet evaluations of Augustine’s authority, not unlike the one offered here, are found in a number of texts written by these same authors, in works addressed to readers whose views explicitly claimed Augustine’s authority as their own. Similar arguments are found in the writings of Lupus, Florus of Lyons, Eriugena, and even Hincmar. If not to authorize an authority already widely accepted, then what might such evaluations and reevaluations of Augustine’s catholicity and authority be calculated to achieve? At this early stage in the controversy, it is indeed possible that Prudentius genuinely wished to address Hincmar’s relative ignorance of Augustine’s writings. In his extensive work on Hincmar’s theological corpus, Jean Devisse has shown how his subject’s repeated contributions to the debate over predestination (including three longer works, written between 849 and 859, and several letters and short tracts) reveal a vast research program that involved Hincmar acquiring texts (mostly of Augustine) and exploring his subject over the course of a decade. But in the months following Quierzy, Hincmar had not yet benefited from such an extensive program. Thus, Prudentius’ attempt to survey the fifth- and sixth-century reception of Augustine by the Roman church might have been intended as a genuine lesson in the history of the tradition.

561 Though this epithet was applied to Origin and Jerome, among others, by the ninth century, it belonged to Augustine. For a survey of this topos (concluding with Gottschalk, who used it of Augustine), see Gustave Bardy, “‘Post Apostolos ecclesiariarum magister,’” Revue du Moyen Age Latin 6 (1950): 313-16.

562 Lupus, for example, in his De tribus quaestionibus (PL 119, 642D) and in his Collectaneum de tribus quaestionibus (PL 119, 647D) will argue for Augustine not only on the basis of ecclesiastical authority but also based on the rigorous quality of self-examination found in his writings. The church should appeal to Augustine, Lupus argues, because both Celestine and Gelasius approved of him, but also because he is a model of Christian learning – one “imbued with secular letters” without “embracing their errors out of love for learned things.” And because, at the end of his life, he examined all of his writings in light of scripture and cast aside what he found wanting. Thus, for Lupus, the argument for Augustine is grounded both in tradition and in the particular rigor of Augustine’s mind. Eriugena, in his De praedestinatione, will focus on the qualities in Augustine’s writings that make him trustworthy rather than on the papal certification of his authority (See De praed. 11.4, Madec, 69-70). Hincmar, however, will adopt (I suggest he takes it from Prudentius) the technique of the demonstration of historical erudition in his third and final treatise on predestination (see c. 1 of his De praedestinatione PL 125, 69B-83A). Here, the bishop of Rheims summarizes the entire history of debates over predestination from the time of Augustine to the end of the fifth century.

Even more importantly, however, a survey such as the one offered here could have functioned as a rhetorical demonstration of erudition, used to authorize Prudentius as a faithful reader and accurate interpreter of the author whose writings he was about to quote. Detailed knowledge of Augustine’s writings, of the authorities who approved him, and of the sequence and contexts in which his works were written, reinforced Prudentius as a fitting heir of Augustine and of the Fathers who had approved his words and first made them authoritative. By invoking other learned and catholic readers of Augustine, the bishop of Troyes placed himself within an authoritative interpretive tradition. Now he could stand alongside the bishops of Rome up through Gregory and the learned defenders of orthodoxy, such as Jerome and Hilary, as both heir and interpreter of Augustine’s teachings. In teaching the uninformed Hincmar, Prudentius simultaneously legitimized himself as one in a long succession of authoritative readers of an authoritative source.

In order to authorize himself as a knowledgeable and, thus credible, reader of Augustine, Prudentius placed the opinions of Augustine within a matrix of other authoritative authors and texts, drawing (directly or indirectly) upon a variety of materials: the letters of six popes, the letters of Jerome, Caesar’s *Gallic Wars*, the *Responsiones* of Prosper, and the letter *Ad Monimum* of Fulgentius. The reader will discover later in the *Epistola* large excerpts quoted from the works of Prosper and Fulgentius, thus, given his extensive use of these two texts, it can be concluded that our bishop had access to these authors in his cathedral library or perhaps in a personal collection. The correspondence of Jerome likewise could have been known either through a compilation of Jerome’s letters or through a collection of Augustine’s letters.

---

564 This ancient analogue to the *status quaestionis* bears resemblance to the doxographical traditions of second-century philosophers and Jewish and Christian apologists. Here it could be argued that Prudentius practiced the enumeration of ‘positions’ in conscious imitation of late antique manuals of Heresiology, in which the doxographic technique is used to catalogue and show relationships among heretical groups. The term “doxography,” the neologism used to describe this practice, was the invention of Hermann Diels, a German philologist of the nineteenth century, who first identified the rhetorical or historiographical practices of describing historical schools, “tenets,” and “opinions” of intellectual predecessors and their opponents as a distinctive literary genre. On the variety of forms of doxography and uses to which the technique is put in ancient medical writings, see David T. Runia, “What is Doxography?” in Philip J. Van der Eijk, ed., *Ancient Histories of Medicine. Essays in Medical Doxography and Historiography in Classical Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 33-55.

565 It has long been suggested (at least since Pertz’ edition of the *AB* [see chapter 3]) that Prudentius was drawing on Caesar for his command of classical toponymy of Gaul. His quotation of the *Gallic Wars* in reference to the intellectual uncertainty of Gallican opponents of Augustine (‘sicut quidam de eis ait, ‘quod eorum sint semper repentina consilia,’” PL 115, 975A), makes it almost certain that he knew Caesar well.
Repeated references to the decretal letters of fifth- and sixth-century Roman bishops, however, appears to represent a more troublesome, thus more impressive, marshaling of source materials. Of the six Roman bishops of the fifth and sixth centuries whom Prudentius consulted to support his case for the authority of Augustine, the letter to Hincmar quotes directly from or characterizes in sufficient detail to allow for identification of at least five of the references:

1. Innocent: “addressed Augustine both in a private and official capacity”
2. Zosimus: mentioned by name but no specific reference to his relationship with Augustine
3. Boniface: “sent to Augustine the work of Pelagius and invited his response in two books”
4. Celestine: endorsed Augustine openly in his decretal letter (from which the author quotes verbatim)
5. Leo: “did not hesitate to use the works of Augustine” in his letters against Eutyches
6. Gregory: recommended Augustine over his own *Moralia* in a letter to Bishop Innocent (which the author quotes verbatim)

Several of these authorities might have been known independently through their registers or letter collections; others required more specialized source collections. The register of Gregory the Great (in its R text), for example, circulated widely in the ninth century as an independent collection. The references to Zosimus and Boniface could have come from Augustine’s *Contra Pelagium*, which Prudentius cites at length later in his letter. But the remaining three references – to the correspondence of Innocent, Celestine, and Leo, respectively – point to the author’s use of a canonical collection that would have contained the official correspondence of the Roman see together with authoritative documents from ecumenical as well as regional councils of the fourth and fifth centuries. Though it is customary to view such collections as the sources of early medieval canon law, it can also be argued, as Rosamond McKitterick has recently done, that such canonical collections should be considered primarily as “history books”: chronologically arranged source-books for the preservation and memorialization of the Christian

---

566 For example, Marburg, Hessisches Staatsarchive, Hr 3, 5a-b [now Kassel, GHB, 2° Ms. theol. 283], which Bischoff dates to the end of the ninth century (Bischoff, *Katalog*, 2697) contains the letters of both Augustine and Jerome.

past. McKitterick’s characterization fits well the way in which Prudentius might have consulted such a “history book” to recall the story of Augustine’s reception by the Roman see.

A number of early medieval canonical collections, several of which circulated in northern Francia in the Carolingian period, contain at least one or more of the sources required to piece together Prudentius’ narrative of Augustine’s reception by Rome.

The Collectio Quesnelliana, for example, a late fifth-early sixth-century collection used by Dionysius Exiguus in the Collectio Dionysiana, includes a full list of North African councils and other materials related to the Pelagian controversy. Since Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, lat. 3848A contains an early ninth-century manuscript of the Quesnelliana, written near Metz, which came later to reside at Troyes, it is tempting to posit this collection as a possible source for Prudentius’ letter. The Quesnelliana, however, does not include the one source characterized by Prudentius as a “decretum,” a letter of Celestine, written to opponents of Augustine in southern Gaul, and quoted verbatim by our author:

For his life and merits we always held Augustine, the man of holy memory, in our fellowship; and never did the gossip of sinister suspicion defile [that fellowship] in the least. We have remembered him, formerly of such great knowledge, so that he should be held by my predecessors (decessoribus) among even the best teachers. Therefore, all in common have felt this about him, inasmuch as he was both loved and honored everywhere and by all.

This excerpt from Celestine, though not found in the Collectio Quesnelliana, is quoted in a number of other collections then circulating in northern Francia. Its ringing endorsement of Augustine had originated in a letter, the Apostolici verba, addressed to six bishops of Gaul rumored to have allowed in their dioceses opposition to Augustine’s teaching on nature and grace. Prosper of Aquitaine had

568 McKitterick, History and Memory, 245-264.
569 PL 56, 359-746.
570 Lotte Kery, Canonical Collections, 27.
571 ‘Augustinum sanctae recordationis virum, pro vita sua, atque meritis in nostra communione semper habuimus, nec unquam hoc sinistrae suspicionis saltem rumor aspersit. Quem tanta scientiae olim fuisse meminimus, ut inter magistros optimos etiam a meis decessoribus haberetur. Bene ergo de eo omnes in commune senserunt, utpote qui ubicue cunctis et amori fuerit et honori.’ Epistola ad Hincmarum, PL 115, 947B.
572 Lupus cites the same decretal letter in his De tribus quaestionibus (PL 119, 642D) and in his Collectaneum de tribus quaestionibus (PL 119, 647D).
573 Celestine, Epistola 21 [Apostolici verba], Ad episcopos Galliarum, PL 50, 528. On the circumstances of this letter, see Hwang, Perfect Grace, 142-43.
included this same excerpt from Celestine in his *De gratia Dei et libero arbitrio* (c. 432), written against John Cassian.\(^{574}\) Prudentius, however, is unlikely to have known this text from Prosper. He will later quote from the *Responsiones* of Prosper, but not from the *De gratia Dei* against Cassian (nor will this latter work appear in the subsequent treatise written against Eriugena). Instead, Prudentius more likely knew the letter from one of the canonical collections descending from the *Collectio Dionysiana*, such as the *Dionysio-Hadriana* or the *Collectio Hispana*. Of these two, the *Dionysio-Hadriana* was the more widely available.\(^{575}\) In addition to its probable availability to Prudentius, the *Hadriana* includes possible sources for two of the three remaining references to papal approbation of Augustine: (1) the text of Celestine’s decretum\(^{576}\) and (2) at least one letter of Innocent co-addressed to Augustine and Aurelius, the bishop of Carthage.\(^{577}\) Still, it could not have been deduced from the *Hadriana* that Leo had used Augustine in his letter against Eutyches. For this, our author required another source.

Given his Spanish origins and likely education under Theodulf of Orleans, it is possible that Prudentius knew the *Collectio Hispana*.\(^{578}\) This collection, which circulated in Spain and in southern France, includes a number of the letters of Leo the Great not found in the *Hadriana*, among them a letter from Pope Leo to the priest Leo that invokes the authority of Augustine against Eutyches. The collection also contains at least one letter of Innocent addressed to Augustine,\(^{579}\) as well as the aforementioned decretal letter of Celestine.\(^{580}\) The argument could be made that it required only the *Collectio Hispana*, the *text* of Gregory’s correspondence, and the epistolary prologue to Augustine’s *Contra Pelagium* to produce the narrative of papal endorsement of Augustine found in Prudentius’ *Epistola ad Hincmarum*. The *Hispana*, however, is still an imperfect fit. In characterizing the relationship between Augustine and


\(^{575}\) No complete, modern edition of the Dionysio-Hadriana exists. The Cochlaeus edition (Mainz, 1525) is available online through the Carolingian Canon Law Project (http://ccl.rch.uky.edu/). All subsequent references are to this edition.

\(^{576}\) Cochlaeus, fol. 120v.

\(^{577}\) Cochlaeus, fol. 109r.


\(^{579}\) PL 84, 657A.

\(^{580}\) PL 84, 681D-82A.
Innocent, Prudentius’ *Ad Hincmarum* had clearly stated that Innocent addressed Augustine “both in a private and in an official capacity.” The *Collectio Hispana*, like the *Hadriana*, includes only a single, very brief letter of Innocent addressed to Augustine, while the phrase “*suarum epistolarum communiter privatimque officiis*” suggests the exchange of multiple letters, both of an official and personal nature, a criterion against which the *Hispana* fails as the most plausible source for our author’s letter.

If Prudentius was using a canonical collection to read the history of papal approbation of Augustine, the most likely fit (among published collections) is the collection of the Pseudo-Isidore. This compilation, attributed to an otherwise unattested “Isidore Mercator,” interpolates a number of forged decretal letters, ascribed to popes of the second through eighth centuries, into authentic materials drawn from the *Dionysiana*, the *Quesnelliana*, and other collections. Beyond its notoriety as one of the most audacious forgeries of the period, the Pseudo-Isidorian collection has the distinct advantage of its near comprehensive collection of legitimate materials. For anyone who wished to explore the authoritative canons of the Roman church, it was “the most extensive collection of canon law arranged in a historical, chronological order.” Like the *Collectio Hispana*, the Pseudo-Isidore includes both the decretal letter of Celestine and the letters of Leo against Eutyches. To the letters of Innocent, however, the Pseudo-Isidorian collector added a number of (authentic) texts, likely drawn from the *Quesnelliana*, which better fit Prudentius’ claim that Innocent had corresponded with Augustine ‘*communiter privatimque officiis*.’

In addition to the short letter of Innocent addressed to Augustine and Aurelius, the Pseudo-Isidore collects seven distinct pieces of correspondence between Innocent and Augustine, a mixture of personal letters, letters of councils subscribed by Augustine, and their papal rescripts.

---

581 PL 115, 973 ‘Innocentius cum totius orbis episcopis suscepisset; neque praedictum Patrem memorabiliem suarum epistolarum communiter privatimque officiis affecisset.’


585 Letter of the Council of Carthage to Innocent (co-subscribed by Augustine) (Hinschius, 533-35); Rescriptum of Innocent to the Council of Carthage (“to the above signed (suprascripto)”) (Hinschius, 535-37); Letter of the Council of Milan to Innocent regarding the heresy of Pelagius and Celestine (co-subscribed by Augustine) (Hinschius, 537-38); Rescript of Innocent to the Council of Milan (Hinschius, 538-39); Letter of North African Bishops to Innocent against the doctrines of Pelagius and (subscribed by Augustine, Aurelius, Alypius, Evodius, and Possidius) (Hinschius, 539-543); Rescript of Innocent to North African Bishops (Aurelius, Alypius, Augustinus, Evodius, and Possidius) (Hinschius, 543-44); Letter of Innocent to Aurelius and Augustine (Hinschius, 545).
If Prudentius did indeed use the Ps.-Isidore, he might have been among the very first authors to have done so. Difficulty in documenting the collection’s reception arises from the fact that the many legitimate materials in the collection circulated independently in other canonical collections. Thus, secure references to the Pseudo-Isidorian Collection can only be those in which the inauthentic or forged materials (or other materials unique to the collection) were used. The first such citation of the forged materials was by Hincmar, in his diocesan statutes of 852, then again in his De ecclesiis et capellis of 857, and again in his third and final work on predestination, the De praedestinatione of 859. Hincmar was assuredly not the author of the collection, since the forged decretals could be used to argue in favor of the local jurisdiction of chorbishops and suffragans against their metropolitanans, as they would later be used by Hincmar of Laon against his uncle, the bishop of Rheims. It is almost impossible to say with any certainty who the author of this collection was, but the more widely recognized theories as to the identity and milieu of the forger(s) include clerics working in the bishopric of Le Mans, in the ecclesiastical province of Tours, a circle of clerics (including Wenilo of Sens) connected to the court of Charles the Bald, or a group in the diocese of Rheims working to generate legal support for priests ordained by the deposed Ebbo of Rheims in their case against Hincmar. Recently, it has been argued by Klaus Zechiel-Eckes that the forger(s) (or at least the compilers of the collection) would have used the library of Corbie, which was also located within the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Rheims. All theories of the collection’s authorship involve ecclesiastical provinces and persons well-known to Prudentius. Lupus will later question a fabricated decretal of Melchiades, drawn from the collection, in his correspondence with Pope Nicholas (858). Rothard of Soissons, whom Prudentius knew from his time at court and whose diocese bordered Troyes, is believed to have introduced the Pseudo-Isidorian collection to Rome in

---

587 In the 860s, the work was used in precisely that manner against Hincmar by his nephew and namesake Hincmar of Laon, Jasper and Fuhrmann, *Papal Correspondence*, 177-181.
the early 860s. Thus, by the time of his death in 861, Prudentius almost certainly knew the Pseudo-Isidore. By then knowledge of this collection would not have been particularly noteworthy. However, if our author can be shown to have used it in autumn of 849, at the time of his letter to Hincmar, he must have been very close to the circle of clerics responsible for its production.

The strong possibility always remains that Prudentius drew his knowledge of fifth-century papal opinion from multiple collections, from another, as yet unpublished, collection, or from some other source (or collection of sources) altogether. Yet as a tutorial in the bibliographic forms in which ninth-century authors came to know and appropriate the ecclesiastical past, the possible case for his acquaintance with this and other canonical collections illustrates well the nature of the intellectual context in which the bishop worked. When he wished to make an argument concerning the authority of Augustine, Prudentius looked first to the reception of Augustine by the Roman see. His ability to document that reception was made possible by the type of collection of which the Dionysio-Hadriana, the Collectio Hispana, and the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals are all examples. His readers had the same kinds of collections to hand in their own cathedral libraries. But among the many authors who wrote to address the issues raised by Gottschalk’s condemnation, Prudentius was the first to use such a collection to address the historical contexts in which Augustine’s views on predestination were accepted and defended by the church catholic. Nearly a decade after reading Prudentius’ letter, Hincmar began his own detailed examination of the history of the fifth-century debate over Augustine’s doctrines. By then the bishop of Rheims enjoyed the vast learning, acquired over years of contesting the history of authorization first written, in the present letter, by the learned bishop of Troyes.

Prudentius and Gottschalk Compared

Having established the reliability of Augustine’s doctrines on grace and free will, the Epistola ad Hincmarum next turns directly to an exposition of those doctrines. Though Gottschalk was never mentioned by name, it would soon become apparent to Hincmar (as it will to us) that Prudentius was reading Augustine in a manner consistent with the views of the recently condemned monk.

---

593 Jasper and Furhmann, Papal Letters, 186-190.
594 For a full list of the many local collections that survive from the Carolingian period, most of which remain unedited (and in most cases, unremarked in print), see the website of the Carolingian Canon Law project, directed by Prof. Abigail Firey, University of Kentucky: http://ccl.rch.uky.edu/sigla-list.
595 For canonical collections likely available at Laon, see Contreni, Cathedral School of Laon, 174.
596 See Hincmar’s third and final treatise De praedestinatione (859), PL 125, 69C-79D.
For Prudentius the predestination of God was only one aspect of a larger, cosmic drama involving creation, the fall, redemption, and human salvation. God had created man good and just and endowed him with a rational soul, through which he might exercise the freedom of choice (libertas arbitrii). Yet, after impiously rejecting this gift, humankind had fallen in the sin of the first parent:

God perfectly and incommunicably, most decently adorned man good and just, man who was made from the mire of the earth by the abundance of His goodness alone, endowed with a rational soul, indeed with the liberty of choice (arbitrii), so that by using it well and freely, with his helper, the grace of his Creator, he could not die. But after defiantly and wrongly wasting it, he, having been most justly sentenced, was by choice (arbitrio) now able to die. And in the mass of the whole human race who were condemned on account of disobedience in the first progenitors, he foreknew and predestined, that is he foreordained by his omnipotence, which ones . . . he would lead back to eternal life, glory, and [heavenly] reign. He both foreknew and he predestined, that is he foreordained, that whomsoever he did not separate by the grace and blood of his own son, our God and Lord Jesus Christ, from the aforementioned mass of the miserable, he most justly would cause to suffer eternal punishment. He predestined, that is, he foreordained, not that they might sin, but that on account of their sin that they might be condemned to everlasting punishment; he predestined, that is, he foreordained, not to guilt, but to penalty; not that one might wish or commit a certain evil thing, but on account of the evil, which the will had committed, he rightly condemned him to eternal punishment.

Like Gottschalk, Prudentius has grounded both foreknowledge and predestination in Divine foreordination of human events. "Et praescivit et praedestinavit, id est praeordinavit." In God, both foreknowing and predestining were equivalent (id est) to foreordaining. In his Epistola ad simplices et reclusos, Hincmar had chastened Gottschalk for the error of “confusing foreknowledge and

597 Deum summe atque incommutabiliter bonum et justum hominem, sola bonitatis suae abundantia de terrae limo conditum, anima rationali donatum, libertate quoque arbitrii decentissime decorasse, ut eo bene et liberaliter cum adjutrice Conditoris gratia uten, non mori posset; contumaciter vero perperamque abutens, justissime addictus mori posset arbitrio. Quo miserrime intumescentis, qui prius gratiam bonitatem liberalitatemque senserat, mox acquitatem justissimam, rectissimse plexus, expertus est; damnataque ob culpam inobedientiae in primis propagatoribus totius humani generis massa, et praescivit, et praedestinavit, id est praeordinavit ejus omnipotentia quos per gratiam et sanguinem proprii Filii sui, Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi, ab eadem perditionis massa misericorditer secretos ad vitam, gloriam regnumque reduceret sempiternum; et praescivit, et praedestinavit, id est praordinavit, ut quoscumque gratiam et sanguis ejusdem proprii Filii ejus, Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi, ex memorata miseriabilis massa non secererent, justissime poenis afficeret sempiternis. Praedestinavit, inquam, id est praordinavit, non ut peccarent, sed ut propter peccatum poenis perpetuis interirent; praedestinavit, id est praordinavit, non ad culpam, sed ad poenam; non ut malum quoddam vellet sive admitteret, sed ut propter malum, quod volens faceret, eum poena sempiterna juste damnaret.’ PL 115, 975D-976B.

598 PL 115, 976B.
predestination.” Against this error, he had argued that God’s predestination was informed by his foreknowledge of human action, such that the predestination of the elect is a divine reward for human merit. Gottschalk, however, had maintained that to draw a real, temporal distinction between the divine actions would compromise the immutability of God. God foreknew the elect precisely because he had predestined them to salvation: his willing, foreknowing, and predestining were all one simultaneous action.

In making foreknowledge, predestination, and foreordination nearly equivalent, Prudentius thus placed his understanding of the mystery of predestination closer to Gottschalk than to Hincmar. Yet, unlike Gottschalk, our author seems to have allowed for a real distinction between the divine actions. From his reading of Prosper, whom he would later cite, Prudentius knew that the monks of southern Gaul had accused Augustine of making God responsible for human failing, arguing that if no real distinction exists between predestination and foreknowledge, then God must predestine his human creation to sin simply by foreknowing sinful human action. Linking divine foreknowledge and foreordination, in other words, eliminated human freedom. Thus Prosper had allowed a distinction between the divine actions, such that one could say that God only foreknew but did not predestine sin: God simultaneously foreknew and predestined the elect to salvation; he both foreknew and predestined the punishments that awaited the condemned; but he only foreknew, and thus did not predestine, the sins for which the condemned were punished. If Gottschalk was aware that Prosper had made this distinction between foreknowledge and

599 Gundlach, “Zwei Schriften,” 261: ‘. . . confundens prescientiam et praedestinationem Dei.’ Hincmar is accurately representing Gottschalk’s position in this respect. Gottschalk repeatedly identifies foreknowledge and predestination in his Confessio Prolixior, which was likely written in the weeks following the Synod of Quierzy. He grounds his position in the immutability of God, for whom to do and to will is the same.

600 Gundlach, “Zwei Schriften,” 270-286. The Hypomnesticon, attributed to Augustine was likely the work of Prosper. The De obduratione pharaonis attributed to Jerome might have been a work of Pelagius. See D.G. Morin, “Un traite pelagien inedit du commencement du ve siecle,” Revue Bénédictine 26 (1909), 163-88.

601 ‘Igitur cum sempiterna sit domine cum præscientia voluntas tua sicut hic ait Augustinus, et apud omnipotentiam tuam de operibus duntaxat tuis hoc sit præcrire quod uelle secundum quod ad eundem Augustinum scribit Orosius, et ipsum quoque uelle tuum fecisse sit iuxta quod dicit Ambrosius, manifestum est procul dubio quicquid foras futurum est in opere iam factum esse a te in prædestinatione iuxta quod audet et dicit docet et scribit papa Gregorius. Absit ergo ut inter præscientiam et praedestinationem operum tuorum uillum uel momenti quilibet catholicorum tuorum suspicetur interiullum fuisset, dum omnia quae uoluisti te legit uel audit creditque simul fecisses, praesertim cum prius omnino nihil in effectu feceris quam incomparabiliter futura praescieris et ea sempiterno consilio praedestinando disposueris.’ Confessio prolixior, Lambot, ed., Oeures de Godescalc, 57.

602 ‘Qui præscientiam Dei in nullo ab ipsius praedestinatione discerni, quod tribuendum est Deo de bonis, hoc ei etiam de malis conatur ascribere. Sed cum bona ad largitorem cooperatoremque eorum Deum, mala autem ad voluntariam rationalis creaturae nequitiam referenda sint: dubium non est, sine ulla temporali differentia, Deum et
predestination, he did not choose to highlight it. Prudentius, however, would later cite Prosper’s distinction in the *collectaneum* appended to his letter.603

Prudentius and Gottschalk also disagreed regarding the nature of predestination to punishment. Though he did not predicate the word *gemina*, or “twin,” of God’s predestination, Prudentius clearly asserted that predestination had a dual effect in a fallen world. His letter presented to Hincmar a picture of humankind, drawn from Augustine, as a *massa perditionis*, already condemned to death based on the collective misuse of human freedom in the sin of the first parent.604 In electing to save some and not others, God’s predestination to salvation had a double effect: it rescued the elect from the punishment that justly awaited all humankind, but it also condemned to perdition those who remained among the reprobate. Prudentius, however, was careful to maintain that predestination was “not to guilt, but to penalty.”605 Predestination might have caused the punishment of sinners to be applied but it did not create the sinner for the purposes of damnation or in any other way compel the sinner to sin. Though Gottschalk had used the Pauline metaphor, “vessels of wrath,” to speak of God as a craftsman who intentionally crafted sinners, *vasa irae*, for the purpose of being punished,606 Prudentius did not choose to dwell on the more terrifying implications of this image. God has prepared the punishment. The condemned freely choose it. And God’s grace does not save them from their choice.

This divergence, though slight, between Prudentius’ views and Gottschalk’s did not go unnoticed by the imprisoned monk. Felix Rädle has shown that an undated, unaddressed verse epistle, long attributed to Gottschalk, might have been written to a sympathetic but not entirely supportive Prudentius of Troyes.607

---

praescisse simul et praedestinasse, quae ipso erant auctore facienda, vel quae malis meritis justo erant judicio retribuenda; praescisse autem tantummo, non etiam praedestinasse, que non ex ipso erant causam operationis habitura.’ The passage from the *Responsionibus ad Capitula Gallorum* is found in Prudentius’ compilation of patristic sources appended to the end of his letter. PL 115, 1001B.

603 PL 115, 1001B.

604 ‘Id est praeordinavit ejus omnipotentia quos per gratiam et sanguinem proprii Filii sui, Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi, ab eadem perditionis massa misericorditer secretos ad vitam, gloriam regnumque reduceret sempiternum.’ PL 115, 976B.

605 ‘Praedestinavit, inquam, id est praeordinavit, non ut peccarent, sed ut propter peccatum poenis perpetuis interirent; praedestinavit, id est praeordinavit, non ad culpam, sed ad poenam.’ PL 115, 976B.

606 Gottschalk’s most explicit comments along these lines are found in his *Prolixior Confessio*, Lambot, *Oeuvres de Godescalc*, 66-67.

607 The poem had been attributed to Gottschalk by Bernhard Bischoff in “Gottschalks Lied für den reichenauer Freund,” *Mittelalterliche Studien: ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte* II.
The letter is addressed to an ecclesiastical superior, probably a bishop. And since the recipient seems to have maintained views that agreed mostly but not entirely with those of the author, the poet had appealed to his correspondent to change his opinions, emend his little book (libellus), and defend the true doctrine of predestination against its heterodox opponents. In working to identify the recipient of the poem, Rädle looked for a figure of elevated ecclesiastical office whose theological views were consistent with the doctrines criticized in the verse. Among the four mid-century authors whose views were most sympathetic with Gottschalk’s (Ratramnus of Corbie, Lupus, Prudentius, and Florus of Lyons), Rädle settled on Prudentius as the most likely candidate. Prudentius is the only bishop among the group. And the poem, while not necessarily addressed to a bishop, does seem directed to an ecclesiastical superior well positioned to influence those under his pastoral care. A particular point of doctrine raised in the poem clinched for Rädle the identification of Prudentius as the recipient. Gottschalk was concerned that his reader had (1) allowed too much distinction between foreknowledge and predestination and (2) emphasized too much that predestination prepares the penalty for the damned but not the damned for the penalty:

But I confess those divinely foreknown to be evil
Wish to do shameful things of their own will:
For this they fell into the abyss foredamned
By the just and good judgment of the heavenly king.
You, however, contrarily assert that for them such
Torments are only prepared, as if the [wicked] do not exist
Predetermined, prefixed and prepared ahead for these [punishments],
When they are plainly believed to be, manifestly understood to be,
Clearly proven to be and openly convicted as
Damned, sent for and ordained ahead of time.
Whoever has this vision, not only discerns it,
[But] above all exclaims it so and not otherwise,
Protests, repeats, testifies and shows it thus,
As if nothing could ever be more certain to him.

The form of the letter is playful, even if genuinely concerned that its addressee was guilty of erroneous doctrine. Clearly, Gottschalk was writing here to a friend. And even so, he was sounding a persistent refrain that had repeatedly drawn the ire of Hincmar. In his *Epistola ad reclusos*, the bishop had excoriated Gottschalk for the error of suggesting that a good God would predestine his creation to evil. In response to this criticism, Gottschalk would later clarify, in his *Prolixior Confessio*, that God’s predestination does not cause sinners to commit their sins. The sins are committed of human volition and sinners are, indeed, responsible for their guilt. But God, nevertheless, does decide whom he will punish. And in this sense, he “prepare[s] the condemned for the penalty” and not the other way around, as even Prudentius would have it.\(^6\)\(^0\)\(^9\) Certainty about this letter’s addressee eludes us. Nevertheless, the tantalizing possibility remains that Gottschalk himself had recognized Prudentius’ approximate position but refused to agree to the content of his precise formulation.

Despite his slight disagreement with Gottschalk over the predestination of the reprobate, Prudentius clearly agreed with Gottschalk that Christ’s atonement was limited to the elect. Hincmar had earlier complained that Gottschalk was misappropriating the words of Christ: “This is the cup of my blood, which will be shed for you and for many (*multis*)” to argue that the sacrifice of Christ applied not to the whole world (as specified in Jn. 6.52) but only to “the many.” Yet, according to I Tim. 2:4, “God wills that *all* would be saved.” Thus, in his letter to Hincmar, Prudentius addressed the exegetical problem already noticed by his reader. For all or for many? *Omnibus* or *multis*? Here the tools of the grammarian could be used to demonstrate how biblical texts that appeared to make competing claims were in fact speaking the one, unified Truth. Regarding the question for whom Christ died, the Eucharistic formula says ‘*multi,*’ “This is my body, given for many (*multis*).” But the apostle Paul had clearly stated ‘*omnes,*’

\(^6\)\(^0\)\(^8\) Gottschalk, *Quo ne tu missus*, ll. 39-63, Rädle, “Gottschalks Gedicht,” 317: ‘Ast ego prescitos fateor divinitus ipsos/ Ad facienda malos proprio probra velle futuros:/ Hinc predamnatos in abyssum precipitatos/ Regis iudicio superi probo sat quoque iusto:/ Tu tamen econtra peribes, his esse parata/ Tantum tormenta, existant quasi et in ipsa/ Hii prefiniti, prefixi preque parati,/ Cum predamnati, premissi, precipitati/ Credantur plane, cognoscantur manifeste,/ Probentur clare seu convincantur aperte./ Quisquis habet visum, non tantum cernit id ipsum,/ Insuper exclamat, quod sic est nec secus extat,/ Incrpat, ingeminat, testatur et hoc ita monstrat,/ Certius esse quasi nil uquam quiverit ipsi./ At tu, qui summa specialiter esse sophia/ Praeditus effereris, minime sic esse fateris.’ Translation from Gillis, “Gottschalk of Orbais,” 328-29.

“God wills that all would be saved” (Tim. 2:4). For Prudentius, the solution to this perceived disagreement in scripture was to observe the ability of language to signify *generaliter* or *specialiter*, that is, “from the genus” or “from the species.” When Paul wrote that God wills the salvation of everyone, “Omnès should be understood generally and not specially,” in the same sense in which God wills everything into existence.610 That is, Paul had intended *omnibus* generally, to mean “for all of those whom he has elected to be saved.” The application to theological debate of grammatical theory drawn from Priscian was but one way to harmonize apparently discordant authorities. Dialectical theory, drawn primarily from Boethius’ translations and commentaries, combined with categorical theory, drawn from Aristotle via Priscian (as a linguistic distinction) or via the pseudo-Augustinian *De decem categoriis* (as ontological categories) provided another set of tools. Our author’s application of dialectic will be discussed in the next chapter. Here, it suffices to note that he was aligned with Gottschalk in maintaining that the atonement of Christ was limited to those eternally elected by God to be saved. And in this regard he would not change his mind, or otherwise moderate his opinion over the next decade, despite the subsequent claims of Hincmar that he had done so.

In sum, there clearly existed a strong correspondence between the views of Prudentius and Gottschalk, specifically regarding the twin effect of predestination, the identification of foreknowledge and predestination, and the limited atonement. But in what may seem a negligible distinction in the mechanics of predestination to perdition, Prudentius and Gottschalk parted ways. Prudentius preferred to explain predestination of the lost as a penalty prepared in advance for the damned. Gottschalk, however, did not hesitate to say that it was the damned who were prepared for the penalty. The distinction was more than semantic. Prudentius had recognized and subscribed the full Augustinian position, but refused to revel in its more rhetorically terrifying implications. However, because he never mentioned Gottschalk directly in his letter to Hincmar, we cannot know how much the bishop made of his slight disagreement with the imprisoned monk. Hincmar later observed that his colleague had “at first resisted the predestinationist Gottschalk.” Whether Prudentius could have justified endorsing Gottschalk’s imprisonment over the narrow distance between their positions is unlikely. It is more likely that he already recognized the complete Augustinian teaching to be represented more accurately by the accused

---

heretic than by Hincmar. Clearly, by 849 he had arrived at the views he would defend later, at great length, in his *De praedestinatione contra Eriugena* and in his *Epistola Tractoria* addressed to the Council of Sens (856).

**Collectaneum on Predestination**

Next the author directed his readers to the lengthiest section of the *Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum*, a compilation of eighty distinct excerpts from twenty-eight texts by eleven authors of the patristic period. “We subject [our] opinion so as ultimately to agree with that of the catholic doctors, to whom you should studiously and diligently turn.”

The practice of excerpting and compiling authorities in the context of theological argument was, already by the ninth century, an ancient one. Though Carolingian era authors have been characterized by (and often misunderstood for) the practice of compiling bulky dossiers in the place of argument, the collecting of “testimonia” had its roots in the literary cultures of Greek and Roman antiquity. Prosper and Fulgentius (both sources much used by Prudentius) had made extensive use of the practice, which first appeared extensively in early Christian apologetic literature and was a characteristic technique of fourth-century patristic authors like Eusebius, Jerome, and Rufinus. In his early debates with Pelagius, Augustine himself had turned to the practice of quotation, as a rhetorical construction of his own authority, when he did not yet have the more solid backing of the conciliar condemnation of his opponent.

---

611 ‘Quibus studiose ac diligentem animadversis, tandem catholicorum doctorum qualiter eis consentiunt, sententias subjungamus: non omnium quae praemissa sunt expositiones, sed quemadmodum eorum sensa his vel verbis vel sensibus congruant, continentes.’ PL 115, 979C.


613 The classic statement of this more pessimistic appraisal of Carolingian intellectual activity is Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (South Bend: Notre Dame, 1941; 1978), 38.


615 For a survey of the practice among early Christian authors, see Sabrina Inowlocki, *Eusebius and the Jewish Authors. His Citation Technique in an Apologetic Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 33-73.


Elsewhere, Prudentius had employed the well-worn topos of the *flos* or flower "plucked as it were from an immense meadow," to explain and to rationalize his selection of quotations from the Psalms.\(^{618}\) No such metaphor, however, is used to introduce the patristic materials appended to the *Epistola ad Hincmarum*.\(^{619}\) Perhaps it is more fitting to describe this compilation as a literary mosaic: each tessera tinted by the particular authority of its individual author to produce, in concert with the others, an orthodox image.\(^{620}\) Augustine’s words form the dark, heavy lines upon which Prudentius has drawn most often and at the greatest length. Rich hues are extracted, less frequently and by sometimes laborious extraction, from the works of Fulgentius, Prosper, Cassiodorus and Gregory. Exotic dashes of color, used to outline and set in relief the image, have been taken from Augustine’s critics and opponents, with words quarried from the remains of neighboring edifices, not unlike the statuary and treasures of antiquity unearthed in Italy and Provence and laboriously transported by Charlemagne and Louis the Pious over the Alps to adorn their own palaces and cathedrals.\(^{621}\) In this case, the literary spoils likely derived from found materials, available in the Cathedral library of Troyes and in Prudentius’ personal collection.\(^{622}\)

The texts quoted in the letter to Hincmar, listed in the order in which they first appear in the attached collection, are as follows:

1. Ps. Ambrose (Ambrosiaster)  
   *In expositione Epistolae ad Romanos*
2. Augustine

---

\(^{618}\) PL 115, 1449. Later, in his *De praedestinatione* against Eriugena, Prudentius will refer to this collection as ‘deflorata.’

\(^{619}\) For a discussion distinguishing the literary form of the florilegium from other forms of compilation and antholigization, see M. A. Rouse and R. H. Rouse, “Florilegia of Patristic Texts,” in *Les genres litteraires dans les sources theologiques et philosophiques medievale, Definition, critique et exploitation. Actes du colloque international de Louvain-la-Neuve, U.C.L.*, Institut d’études medievales (Brepols, 1982), 165-80.

\(^{620}\) The metaphor of the mosaic has been applied to Bede’s compilations by Paul Meyvaert, “Bede the Scholar,” in Gerald Bonner, ed., *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Century of the Birth of the Venerable Bede* (London: SPCK, 1976), 44.

\(^{621}\) The most famous example of which are the equestrian statue of Theodoric, reused at Aachen, and the Red Sea sarcophagus of Louis the Pious, likely transported from Arles to Metz. See Robert Melzak, “Antiquarianism and the Art of Metz,” in Collins and Godman, *Charlemagne’s Heir*, 629-640. For a similar comparison of literary to architectural spolia see John Cavadini, “The sources and theology of Alcuin’s ‘De fide sanctae et individuae trinitatis,’” *Traditio* 46 (1991): 123-146 (p. 132).

Selection of Texts and Varieties of Appropriation

Though he doubtless intended this collection to supply documentation and support for the argument of his letter, such a collection is also a document of the sources available to Prudentius at a specific moment in the history of the cathedral library of Troyes. Given the expensive and time consuming nature of manuscript reproduction, it is unlikely that the author had an opportunity to acquire new texts before
responding to Hincmar. While a prompt reply did not preclude borrowing books from neighboring libraries (one thinks of the relatively close proximity of Fleury-on-the-Loire, the cathedral library of Sens, or of Lupus’s library at Ferrières), Prudentius’ compilation was made primarily from the materials available to him in his own library collection.\textsuperscript{623} Any perceived theological expertise of our author would have been closely associated with his access to volumes of the Fathers, and, in fact, it might have been the relative richness of the cathedral library of Troyes that motivated Hincmar to consult Prudentius in the first place. The reader may envision the bishop pulling codices from the cupboard of the library, marking passages for reproduction, following references, like slender threads, from one text to the next.\textsuperscript{624} Not all of the texts he has selected would be quoted in the same fashion. Some authors have been excerpted carefully and at great length, so as to preserve the original meaning of their words. Others have been pulled, perhaps more hastily, from existing anthologies and florilegia. Others still have been violently dismembered and reassembled into new texts to fill out the authoritative capital on which the author would draw to underwrite his own arguments.\textsuperscript{625} But this last technique was rarely deployed. The most common practice, the most scrupulous by modern standards, was the careful quotation of lengthy selections from relevant authorities. Longer selections from patristic authors were designed to show that the author had read, understood, and was representing accurately the texts under discussion. Of this practice Ratramnus of Corbie later explained: “it seemed better that we were diligent concerning [the author’s] overflowing verbosity, than face the accusation of not completing the meaning of [his] thoughts.”\textsuperscript{626} Excerpts from the works of Ambrose, Augustine, Fulgentius, and Gregory contained in the

\textsuperscript{623} Consider the frequent borrowing and copying of books by Lupus as witnessed in his correspondence with Einhard. Dünnler, MGH, \textit{Epistolae}, t. IV, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{624} For careful study of the creation of a florilegium out of a monastery library, as witnessed in the manuscript of the author, see the study of the Collectaneum of classical texts by Hadoard, in Charles Beeson, “The Collectaneum of Hadoard,” \textit{Classical Philology} 40 (1945): 201-204.

\textsuperscript{625} Later, Prudentius will accuse Eriugena of writing on his own “little account” (tuis feneis . . . ratiunculis) rather than under the authority of the Fathers (PL 115, 1025B).

\textsuperscript{626} ‘Totius capituli textum ponere libuit, ne quis nobis calumniam intorqueret, si partem excerpere, partem vero voluissesemus omissere, tanquam corrumpentibus auctorum sententias, et ad nostrae seriem adinventionis detorquentibus. Cujus quoque calumniiae denotationem vitare volentes supra positorum sententiarum auctoritatis, Augustini videlicet et reliquirum longiori circulo, ac pene superfluo adnotare maluimus; deligentes potius superflui de loquacitate videri, quam reprehensionis crimine de sententiarum violatione contrahere. Si quis tamen hujus sententiae voluerit diligentius verba sensumque perpendere, fortassis ad praesentis causam negotii nihil in ea superfluum nos posuisse judicabit.’ Ratramnus of Corbie, \textit{De praedestinatione}, PL 121, 61D-62A.
first half of Prudentius’ compilation are consistent with this approach: large blocks of text, aptly chosen to represent well the “complete meaning” of a given author’s thought.

Among the authors whom Prudentius quoted at greatest length, the works of Augustine predominate. Over 42% of the roughly 12,100 words of patristic authors found in the collection were taken from the works of Augustine.627 This heavy reliance on Augustine was by no means exceptional for the period, despite a traditional hypothesis, maintained by historians of doctrine, that many of Augustine’s works were unavailable to mid-century readers in northern Francia. It was once assumed that Gottschalk first read the works of Augustine in Italy. During his travels to the south, to the cathedral of Verona and during his stay at the court of count Eberhard of Friuli he must have “gained a detailed acquaintance with the writings of Augustine, then comparatively little studied in the north.”628 Adherents to this older view generally assumed that Augustine circulated more widely and more evenly in the libraries of the Mediterranean basin, particularly in southern Gaul and northern Italy. While little evidence exists to reconstruct the full range of texts available to Gottschalk during his stay in Verona and later at the court of count Eberhard, with the posthumous publication of the first two volumes of Bernard Bischoff’s catalogue of ninth-century MSS, we can at last dismiss the claim that Augustine circulated more widely in Italy than in Francia.629 Of the more than three hundred MSS of Augustine’s works listed in volumes I-II of the projected three volume catalogue, Bischoff located the origins of roughly 79% of the MSS of Augustine in regions lying to the north of the Alps, with over 33% in the scriptoria of Frankish heartlands (here defined broadly as the regions situated between the Rhine and the Loire valleys).630 Bischoff’s

---

627 These numbers were reached using the electronic (Chadwick) version of the Patrologia Latin edition. The text was imported to a Microsoft word document, then, with all editorial sigla and interpolations removed, the Microsoft word count tool was applied to the remaining text.

628 D.E. Nineham, “Gottschalk of Orbais,” 2. The same general assumption appears in Devisse (Hincmar, t. 1, 269), who suggests that Prudentius’s Spanish origins had something to do with his familiarity with Augustine: ‘De 850 à 856 au moins, deux traditions intellectuelles se sont opposées. L’une, au Nord, est fondée sur l’héritage insulaire, à quelques exceptions près dont Gottschalk et Prudence; le premier, au cours de ses voyages probablement, a beaucoup lu saint Augustin; l’origine espagnole du second explique peut-être son appartenance à l’autre tradition. Celle-ci, au Sud, est fondée sur l’héritage méditerranéen, très riche en textes augustiniens. Beaucoup moins riche sur ce point, le Nord connaît, lui, une inflation d’apocryches qu’ignore le Sud.’

629 Katalog der festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts, t. 1-2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1998, 2004). Regrettably, I have not been able to consult t. III, which was published in August 2014.

630 Bischoff’s Katalog, vols. 1-2, were published without an index, thus my numbers are based on my own provisional list of MSS of Augustine, compiled from these volumes. Since my list does not include volume 3 (which would include the libraries of Paris and of Rome), it can only offer an impressionistic account. I have not
catalog includes only manuscripts written in the ninth century, thus it omits the many manuscripts of Augustine already available in Italy and southern Gaul prior to the Carolingian reforms of the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Nevertheless, it can no longer be claimed that Augustine’s full corpus could only be found in the Mediterranean basin. J. J. Contreni’s work on the library of the Cathedral of Laon and David Ganz’s work on Corbie have revealed two extensive collections of Augustine available within Hincmar’s own archdiocese. Indeed, it was quite possible that Gottschalk first encountered Augustine’s doctrine on predestination at Corbie, where he is believed to have studied in the 830s. Still, the role of local and highly idiosyncratic collections of Augustine in the libraries of the north cannot be entirely discounted. “Local Augustines,” drawn from the unique collection of a particular cathedral or monastic library, might have given rise to local, and somewhat divergent, interpretations of Augustine’s doctrine on predestination. And, in some centers the campaign to acquire and copy works of Augustine only began in earnest at mid-century. Thus, while it cannot be said that Augustine was read more widely in Italy and southern Gaul, it can certainly be said that local collections of Augustine varied considerably from center to center. This local variation in the availability of Augustine’s writings was no doubt evident to Prudentius as he considered the earlier Epistola of Hincmar to his diocese. If Hincmar had access to the works of Augustine most relevant to his topic, he had neglected to cite them. Thus,

distinguished between manuscripts Bischoff could place with certainty and those that were likely or probably (Wohl) to be associated with a center or a geographical region: 104 MSS in Bischoff’s catalog (vols. 1-2) were likely written in Belgium, northern and central France (the area roughly corresponding to the Western Frankish kingdom as far south as the Loire); 131, in the Rhineland, Germany, Switzerland, and Western Austria (that is, the area roughly corresponding the Eastern Frankish kingdom). Only 24 MSS of Augustine were written in France, south of the Loire, or in Spain; and only 31 MSS, in Italy. Of the 23 remaining MSS listed by Bischoff, 4 were placed in “Lotharingia” and the remainder were of uncertain origins.

Ganz’s study does not include lists of authors, but the extent to which Augustine was studied at the abbey can be ascertained by examining the sections on annotations of Corbie manuscripts in the theological works of Corbie authors (Corbie in the Carolingian Rennaissance, 68-102) and in the index under “Corbie MSS of Augustine” (174). Contreni has identified at least 33 works of Augustine available at Laon, between c. 850 and c. 930. Not all of these would have been in Laon at the outbreak of the controversy over predestination. See Contreni, Cathedral School of Laon, 171-72.

For example, Bernice Kaczynski’s study of the copying of patristic texts at St. Gall makes clear that priority was given to MSS of Jerome and Gregory prior to c. 840, after which the works of Augustine predominate. Between 840-883 at least 34 separate works of Augustine were copied in the scriptorium of St. Gall. See “The Authority of the Fathers: Patristic Texts in Early Medieval Libraries and Scriptoria,” Journal of Medieval Latin 16 (2006): 1-27.
Prudentius’ *collectaneum* functioned not only as a compilation of prooftexts to support his own views. It was also a bibliography of the most important texts to be considered: a *status quaestionis* that traced the parameters within which subsequent discussions of the topic could develop.

Out of the vast corpus of Augustine’s works where should a reader with limited time and resources turn first to acquaint himself with the bishop’s considered views on the topic of predestination? Prudentius had already provided an answer to this question when he had especially recommended to Hincmar the *De praedestinatione sanctorum* and *De dono perseverentiae*.633 These two works had earlier been singled out by Pope Hormisdas (d. c. 523) in a letter to the African bishop Possessor as particularly useful for exploring Augustine’s considered views on predestination and grace.634 The letter of Hormisdas points to a tradition, as early as the sixth century, of finding Augustine’s definitive treatment of this topic in Augustine’s later works. How available were these two texts to Carolingian churchmen when the controversy over Gottschalk again made them especially pertinent? If Bischoff’s catalogue of ninth-century manuscripts is any indication, we should conclude that they were both relatively rare. Both works survive in a single manuscript of Corbie (now Paris, BNF Lat. 12210) that bears the marginal notations of Ratramnus.635 And the *De praedestinatione sanctorum* is found in a second manuscript of the mid ninth century (Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Patr. 34) likely written, according to Bischoff, in western Germany or northeastern Francia.636 But neither of these two works circulated as widely as other works of Augustine, such as the exegetical works, *De civitate Dei*, and *De doctrina christiana*. Before the


633 PL 115, 975A.
635 No modern critical edition of the *De praedestinatione* and *De dono perseverentiae* exists, nor (to my knowledge) has any comprehensive treatment of the manuscript traditions of these works yet been published. Because the published volumes of Bischoff’s catalogue (vols. 1-2) only cover libraries in cities beginning with letters A-O (omitting, inter alia, the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), it is likely that additional manuscripts of these texts survive from the ninth century. Corbie had (in Paris, BNF Lat. 12205) a Merovingian era copy of Augustine, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* and *De correpitione et gratia* (Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 126), as well as the copy of *De praed. sanct. and De dono persev*. in BNF Lat. 12210. Still, it is fair to say that, among the many works of Augustine copied by Prudentius’s contemporaries, these two tracts were not among the most widely available.
controversy over Gottschalk ended in 860, Hincmar, Eriugena, Amolo, Lupus, and Florus would all quote extensively from these tracts. But in the earliest stage of the debate, only Prudentius and Gottschalk (and possibly Rabanus) appear to have known well these two works of Augustine. Prudentius’ letter to Hincmar indicates that as early as 849 he knew and had access to both the *De praedestinatione* and the *De dono perseverentiae*. In sharp contrast to our author’s evident familiarity with these later works of Augustine, Hincmar had demonstrated no knowledge of these texts, nor of the other tracts Augustine had written in the 420s in reply to his critics in southern Gaul. Instead, the bishop of Rheims had cited the Pseudo-Augustinian *Hypomnesticon* and the *Responsiones* of Prosper to support his view that God predestines based on his foreknowledge of human action. Both the *Hypomnesticon* (which may also be a work of Prosper) and the *Responsiones* had been written in support of Augustine, against the arguments of the so-called “semi-Pelagians.” Both works are especially concerned to explain why Augustine’s tendency to make divine foreknowledge and predestination the

---

637 Hinckmar clearly did not know (or care to cite) these two works, when the controversy first arose over Gottschalk. By the time of his third and final treatise on predestination (859), he had acquired a copy of both texts and would cite them extensively (see Devisse, *Hincmar*, t. 1, 224-43; 276-77).

638 Madec, ed., *De praedestinatione*, 11-12.

639 Amolo of Lyon excerpts from both texts in *Sententiae B. Augustini de praedestinatione et gratia dei*, PL 116, 134A-140D.

640 Lupus, *De tribus quaestionibus* (850), PL 119, 641C.

641 Florus clearly knew both of these texts from the outset. Both are quoted in succession in the *Liber Adversus Joannis Scotti Erigenae erroneas definitiones* (c. 853), PL119, 113A-D. In *Libellus de tenenda immobiliiter scripturae veritate* (*De praed. Sanct.* at PL 121, 1096C, 1102B, 1107C and *De dono pers.* at 1107C); and the *De praed. Sanct.* in the *De tribus epistolis* (PL 121, 1047B-48C), a work printed in Migne under the name of Remigius of Lyon, but now widely believed to be the work of Florus (On Florus’ authorship of *De tribus epistolis*, see Jean-Paul Bouhot, “Le Sermo Flori sur la predestinatione,” *Revue bénédictine* 119:2 (2009), 383.)

642 Rabanus quotes 7 lines from *De praedestinatione sanctorum* in his letter to Eberhard, dated c. 846-47, (MGH *Epistolae*, t. V, p. 482.), though it is not clear whether he is working from a complete text or from a florilegium.

643 Despite his reputation for a command of Augustine’s later writings, Gotchalk himself does not quote extensively from either of these. See Lambot, ed., *Godescale d’Orbais*, 546.

644 PL 115, 985C-986A.


646 For Hincmar’s Augustine, see Devisse, *Hincmar*, t. 1, 214-235.

same eternal action need not make God responsible for human sinfulness. Hincmar had used them to argue that God’s foreknowledge is temporally prior to his predestination, which, in turn, allowed him to maintain that predestination is based upon divine foreknowledge of human action. The Hypomnesticon was likewise used to argue that human freedom plays a role in the initial turning of the will to God. With judicious excerpting from this pseudo-Augustinian text, Hincmar managed to articulate an alternative Augustinian vision, in which the human will plays a more essential role in salvation.

Thus, it seems that Prudentius’ compilation of Augustine was designed to counter and to refute the weak, or even false, Augustine conjured by Hincmar in his Epistola ad reclusos. Our author recognized the fundamental incompatibility of Hincmar’s more synergistic views with the doctrines advanced by Augustine toward the end of his life. The weight of Augustine’s later writings, especially those written in conversation with the monks of southern Gaul, had fixed salvation firmly in the initiative of God’s grace, such that the elect were chosen prior to any merit of their own and then empowered by God’s grace to act meritoriously. Our author’s collectaneaum, therefore, was organized so as best to reveal this inconsistency between the positions of the later Augustine and the version of Augustine that Hincmar had derived from the Father’s earlier works and from pseudepigraphic texts. To do this, Prudentius’ collection needed to make clear to Hincmar that the very authors whose authority he claimed held opinions contradictory to his own. Thus, the bishop of Troyes had gathered a wide range of authentic texts of the later Augustine that suggested a close identification between foreknowledge, predestination, and foreordination in God.

The majority of these excerpts came from the texts of two works: the letter of Augustine to the priest Sixtus, written in 418, just after the condemnation of Pelagius at the council of Carthage, and the Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum, written in 421. Augustine’s letter to Sixtus is a concise and aggressive restatement of his doctrine of grace, written to a former Pelagian sympathizer and future bishop of Rome.

648 It is interesting that one of the passages in which Augustine makes this distinction was included in the Excerpta ex operibus Augustini of Eugippius (PL 62, 999A-D). Thus for those in the ninth century who knew their Augustine primarily from Eugippius, as Gorman argues so many did (“The Manuscript tradition of Eugippius’ Excerpta ex operibus sancti Augusti,” Revue Bénédictine 92 (1982, 7-32 [reprint in Gorman, ed., Manuscript Traditions, 105-166]), one of the few passages in Eugippius excerpted from Augustine’s later works on grace and free will gave the impression that Augustine had emphasized a distinction between foreknowledge and predestination in a manner that could be shown to fit the argument of Gottschalk’s opponents.

This was the famous letter which, nearly a decade after its composition, had come to the attention of a certain Florus of the abbey of Hadramentum whose subsequent questions about it initiated a new round of discussions of Augustine’s views of grace and free will.650 Perhaps the judgment of Peter Brown, that this “had been a manifesto of unconditional surrender written in the heat of controversy,”651 overstates the degree to which the letter was written in an intemperate moment. Two years later, Augustine affirmed the substance of the letter in his Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum, which Prudentius also cited extensively in his collection. If one were to look for a concise but representative view of Augustine’s arguments against Pelagius, one could hardly do better than these two works. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that both texts emerged, as Brown observes, “in the heat of controversy,” and, as such, they are given to moments of rhetorical excess. Thus, to remove any uncertainty about the representative nature of these two works, Prudentius was careful to frame his excerpts from these works with quotations from twelve additional works of Augustine, ten of which were also written between 415 and 430, in the context of the ongoing debates with Pelagius, Julian of Eclanum, and Augustine’s later critics in southern Gaul.

Adaptation and Manipulation
To collect, excerpt, and adapt for one’s own purposes requires a certain level of mastery of the texts at one’s disposal. We have already seen one aspect of this mastery in the ways in which Prudentius distinguished his positions from Gottschalk on the one hand and Hincmar on the other using excerpts quoted from the texts of Prosper and Augustine. In both of these instances, lengthy quotations were used to summarize and to reinforce arguments original to the authors quoted. Such extensive excerpting from patristic authority, while perhaps more scrupulous by modern standards, suggests only one technique among a range of forms of reappropriation and adaptation available to Carolingian era authors. Consider, as an example of another technique, Prudentius’ adaptation, or rather manipulation, of Cassiodorus’ Expositiones Psalmorum.652 Under the editorial guidance of Prudentius, the longer Expositiones, could now become the “De praedestinatione” of Cassiodorus.

---

650 On Augustine’s exchange with the monks of Hadramentum over this letter, see Weaver, Grace and Agency, 4-16.
651 Brown, Augustine of Hippo, 401.
652 The full collection from Cassiodorus runs to 2 full columns of the Patrologia Latina (PL 115, 1002D-1004D). I have quoted only a selection below.
Cassiodorus on Ps. 81: ‘It remains only for you, in shunning the treatment of salvation, not to prepare for yourself eternal destruction. Cassiodorus on Ps. 82: *And let them be apprehensive, and perish.* The meaning is identical with what he said before. It avails them nothing to be apprehensive in the next world, ‘for those destined for eternal punishment perish.’ Cassiodorus on Ps. 88: ‘The Divinity often cleanses those whom He whips, so that He may welcome the person when cleansed whom He rejected when befouled with sins. Those whom He sundered or removed from cleansing He now determined to condemn.’ Cassiodorus on Ps. 92: ‘Thy throne, O God, is prepared. . . *Prepared* denotes predestination, for all that happens to occur in the dispensation of the world lies in that truth.’ 653

Here Prudentius has taken quotations from lengthier expositions of the Psalms (81, 82, 88, 92, and 103), all of which were originally separated by many folios in the full text of Cassiodorus’s *Expositiones*. Rent from their various and disparate contexts, these lines, which had originated as commentary on the biblical text, were now formed into a new composition on the theme of divine providence. The method used to compile these proof texts from Cassiodorus suggests a departure from the careful reading used to select the lengthier quotations from Augustine’s anti-Pelagian works. Rather than approach the text of Cassiodorus comprehensively, the bishop seems to have completed a lexical scan of passages likely to contain key words and phrases (such as, “eternal destruction,” “predestination,” “dispensation” “forbearance of the Lord,” and “the Lord’s secret decrees”), then copied out the commentary, with only a moderate concern for the context from which the exegetical lines were taken.654 Intimate familiarity with the Psalter doubtless aided the author’s search for the most productive passages in Cassiodorus’ commentary. But the assignment could also have been productively delegated to an assistant.

---


654 For manuscript evidence revealing the practice of a “lexical scan” as a principal technique in this debate, and one particularly used by Prudentius, see the recent study by Warran Pezé, “Deux Manuscrits Personnels,” 144-150, whose work came to my attention too late to be used here.
Elsewhere, the practices of excision and adaptation become the manipulation of texts drawn from Augustine’s critics and detractors, used now to buttress and ornament the positions their authors once opposed. The presence in the collection of Gennadius of Marseilles (d. 496), for example, is striking, since Gennadius, along with Faustus of Reiz (c. 495), had been a harsh critic of Augustine. Gennadius had used Proverbs to highlight (what he considered to be) the hubristic tendency of Augustine toward prolixity in his writings on predestination: “‘In much speaking you will not escape sin.’” But here we find Gennadius witnessing that our salvation is a heavenly gift, for which we cannot labor under our own power. In this way, the words of a vocal opponent of Augustine’s later views on predestination were made to find new meaning in support of a theological vision their original author had vigorously opposed.

Omissions

Omissions are also instructive. Nowhere in the florilegium are found the sermons of Caesarius of Arles or the canons of the Council of Orange (529). As one of the last great authors since the death of Augustine in the fifth century to write at length on the later Augustinian position on divine grace, Caesarius had presided over the Council that provided a tentative settlement over Augustinianism. The canons of Orange would have formed an important precedent for the ninth-century churchmen who debated afresh many of the same topics earlier addressed by their Gallican predecessors. Gottschalk, for example, quoted extensively from the council’s canons in a tract on predestination written from his confinement at Hautvillers. But Prudentius, neither here nor in his later work against Eriugena, makes any reference to the Council of Orange. It is unlikely that our author was unfamiliar with Caesarius, or with the council

---

655 Gennadius, De viris illustribus (ed. E. C. Richardson, Texte und Untersuchungen 14 (1896), 57-97). Quoted in Pollmann and Lambert, “After Augustine,” 18, n. 55. The criticism seems only to have appeared in some manuscripts of Gennadius, so it is possible, that even if Prudentius had known the De viris illustribus, he might have been unaware of his criticism of Augustine.

656 ‘Initium ergo salutis nostrae Deo miserante habemus, ut acquiescamus salutiferae inspirationi nostrae potestatis est; ut adipiscamur quad acquiescendo admonitioni cupimus, divini est muneris: ut non labamur in adepto salutis munere, solitudinis nostrae est coelestis pariter adjutorii: ut labamur, potestatis nostrae est et ignaviae.’ PL 115, 1010B.

657 See Weaver, Divine Grace and Human Agency, 199-239.

658 De praedestinatione, Lambot, ed., Godescalc of Orbais, 189-191. The De praedestinatione is one of the texts fortuitously recovered by Germain Morin in 1931 in the Municipal Library of Bern. Morin had recognized that a manuscript (Berne, Bibliothèque de la Ville, MS. 83), written at Rheims in the second half of the tenth century, contained a miscellany of theological and grammatical works written by Gottschalk. See Morin, “Gottschalk retrouvé,” Revue Bénédictine 43 (1931), 303-312.
over which he had presided. Petitmengin has caught silent allusions to Caesarius in the text of Prudentius’ letter to Hincmar. But neither Caesarius’ sermons on predestination nor the canons of the Council of Orange were cited directly by Prudentius in his patristic dossier. Fulgentius of Ruspe, the older contemporary of Caesarius, however, was cited extensively and included among the list of those to whom Prudentius extended the title “catholic doctors.” Could it be that the great bishop of Arles, though a useful and orthodox author, did not rank as a “Father”? Given the care (both here and in his later work against Eriugena) with which our author cited those sources he deemed authoritative, it seems that Caesarius was afforded a lesser rank in the bishop’s mental hierarchy of patristic authority.

The most relevant works of Jerome are also strangely absent. Since the few excerpts of Jerome included in the Epistola derive from sources only indirectly related to the topic of predestination (his commentaries on Isaiah and Ezekiel), it may be that Prudentius did not have access to more appropriate Hieronymian texts on this topic. There is some reason to suggest that the bishop recognized this omission and sought to acquire more relevant texts of Jerome in the months following his letter. The fortunate survival of a mid ninth-century manuscript witness to Jerome's commentaries on Romans and Ephesians, as well as Augustine’s Enchiridion and commentaries on Galatians and on Romans. Of these five texts, only a brief quotation from the Enchiridion (possibly drawn from a florilegium?) appears in Prudentius’ Epistola to Hincmar (849). But in the later De praedestinatione against Eriugena (852), four of the five texts in TYP495 appear, with the Enchiridion quoted extensively. Because the Harvard codex can be dated on

---

660 PL 115, 979C.
662 Prudentius quotes a short passage from the Enchiridion (less than a single paragraph in Migne, PL 115, 989C). It is the same passage that seems to inform the text of his letter to Hincmar (PL 115, 976A). Given its appearance in the dossier within a larger string a brief quotations (De baptismo parvulorum, De civitate Dei, De perfectione hominis, Rescriptum ad Hilarium, and Enchiridion [PL 115, 988C-989D]), this short passage could have been known to our author through a florilegium.
663 Augustine, On Galatians (PL 115, 1249B); Jerome, On Ephesians (PL 115, 1216A-B; 1299A; 1337C-D); Jerome, On Galatians (PL115 1054D; 1324D-1325B); Augustine, Enchiridion (PL 115, 1032B-1035B; 1049D; 1059A-1060B; 1070B-1071A; 1087C; 1090A-D; 1091A-C; 1173A-B; 1212B-1213C; 1250A-C; 1254D; 1255B-D; 1259B-D; 1326B; 1326C-D; 1334C-D).
palaeographical evidence to the mid ninth-century and has markings and marginalia that indicate an interest in the topic of predestination, Michael Gorman has suggested that the manuscript could have been prepared for Gottschalk, Lupus, Ratramnus, or Prudentius.\footnote{Gorman, “Harvard’s Oldest Latin Manuscript,”310-11. Though Gorman notes Prudentius’ incorporation of three of these texts, he omits to notice the use of Augustine, \textit{On Galatians} at PL 115, 1249B. Nor does he note that these texts had been absent in an earlier work on predestination, for which they would have been especially fitting to quote if the author had had access to them. Gorman also notes (p. 309) that in the margins of the TYP495 one finds ‘omnes,’ which he suggests is a reference to I Tim. 2:4, a prooftext that could be used against the doctrine of limited atonement, with which Gottschalk will repeatedly deal (Lambot, \textit{Godescalc d’Orbais}, pp. 16, 40, 44, 46, 203, 237, and 239). To Gorman, it may be replied that Prudentius also dealt with this text in his \textit{Epistola ad Hincmarum} (PL 115, 976D) and in his \textit{Contra Eriugenam} (at PL 115, 1014C and 1034A). Contra Gorman, I do not regard interest in this passage to be particularly important evidence (one way or the other) for the origins of a manuscript clearly written in the context of a debate over predestination, in which II Tim. 2:4 would be cited repeatedly, by numerous authors.} Though Gorman, in the end, argued for the text’s association with Gottschalk, Prudentius is the only author of these four who can be shown to have little familiarity with the texts of this manuscript in an earlier work (c. 849), only to cite them extensively later (851/52). Unremarked by Gorman, but nevertheless a potentially crucial clue to the owner of TYP 495, is the presence of the Chi-Rho siglum written on several folios of the commentary of Augustine on Ephesians.\footnote{TYP495, fol. 65v and fol 69v. [The recent article by W. Pezé, “Deux Manuscrits Personnels,” has confirmed my suggestion that this manuscript was copied for Prudentius.]} As we will see in the next chapter, Prudentius made extensive use of the Chi-Rho, to mark off his words from the words of his opponent in his \textit{De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam}. Without additional investigation, it is impossible to say for certain whether the Harvard manuscript was written for our author. But the survival of TYP495 does demonstrate the extent to which those who debated the issues surrounding Gottschalk sought out manuscript copies of materials germane to their discussion. Prudentius’ acquisition of Jerome and his increasing familiarity with Augustine’s \textit{Enchiridion} in the roughly two years that separated the \textit{Epistola ad Hincmarum} from the \textit{Contra Eriugenam} illustrate well this fascinating aspect of the debate.

Cleary, the letter to Hincmar was written prior to any later campaign to seek out and copy new texts, such as those described above. In composing his epistle, our author would have made do with the patristic sources already present in his cathedral library, as well as any texts he might have held in his own personal collection. Thus, it is clear that the selection and organization of his patristic dossier was shaped, to some extent, by the sources available to him. These available sources, drawn from materials ready to hand, were collected, adapted, manipulated and repurposed in creative ways, to represent a vision
of God and his purposes that comported well with the views for which Gottschalk had recently been condemned at Quierzy. Gottschalk had been accused of “perverting” the works of the Fathers. Without his conservative disposition, his reputation for deep erudition, and long years of faithful service at the imperial court, Prudentius too might have opened himself to accusations of perverting – literally turning and distorting – the words of patristic authority. Instead, his letter to Hincmar and Pardulus simply went unanswered.

The Politics of Predestination

Why, it may be asked, did this particular debate, which had so occupied the western church in the fifth and sixth centuries, reemerge with such vigor in northern Francia in the ninth century? And what factors, besides a close and careful reading of the patristic evidence, worked to determine the competing stances adopted by Prudentius and Hincmar?

As we have seen, all participants, on both sides of the debate, agreed that the works of their fifth-century predecessors were authoritative, particularly the works of Augustine. Why, then, did so much room remain for disagreement over the articulation of church doctrine? No single explanation can account for the manifold causes and concerns that surrounded Gottschalk’s prosecution, but in addition to the issues I have raised above regarding the circulation of books and the composition of local libraries, much of the particular shape of the controversy, especially in its later stages, was grounded in existing personal feuds and political divisions within the ninth-century episcopate. It is worth taking note of the nature of such feuds and divisions as they relate to this particular moment in Prudentius’ biography.

Why was Hincmar unable to accept our author’s gentle reproach? The answer might have as much to do with the emerging fault lines beneath the northern Frankish episcopate as it did with the deeply held theological commitments of the bishop of Rheims. In aligning himself loosely with Gottschalk, Prudentius had put himself on the wrong side of a quarrel among prominent personalities within the circle of the imperial court that dated back to the reign of Louis the Pious. Gottschalk’s personal feuds with Rabanus and Hincmar went back to the 820s and 30s. Well before preaching predestination in northern Italy, Gottschalk, as a monk of Fulda, had attracted the ire of his powerful abbot, Rabanus, when he

666 The following paragraph is inspired by similar discussions in Chazelle (Crucified God, 170-71) and Ganz (“Debate on Predestination,” 283-88, 298-301). It is hoped that my focus on Prudentius may add an additional layer to their exemplary treatments of the social and political dimensions to this debate.
openly challenged the practice of oblation at Fulda and sued to have restored to him his inheritance. Likewise, Hincmar’s distaste for Gottschalk was interconnected with the tumultuous political history of Rheims. After leaving Fulda in the late 820s, Gottschalk had lingered at Hautvillers and Orbais, where he formed a relationship with Ebbo, the archbishop of Rheims who would lead in November 833 the ecclesiastical censure and public penance of Louis the Pious, which (as we saw in the last chapter) had sent the empress Judith into exile in Northern Italy. Hincmar’s early pontificate had been preoccupied with his ongoing campaign against the legacy of Ebbo, and here was Gottschalk, a key early supporter of his rival, in a vulnerable position. This is not to suggest that both Rabanus and Hincmar did not also find Gottschalk’s ideas genuinely repugnant. But, in the early years of the debate (848-49), one searches in vain for a substantive critique from either of these men of Gottschalk’s theology. Their first response was to take for granted Gottschalk’s heterodoxy, on the basis of his long history of opposition to

667 The occasion for Rabanus’s tract *De oblatione puerorum*, edited in Migne, PL 112. It is hard to know what precisely was the original cause of the dispute between Gottschalk and Rabanus over oblation. When Flaccius Illyricus produced his massive *Ecclesiastica historia* in 1574, much of the correspondence of Fulda remained intact. Thus, Illyricus and his coeditors were able to use fragments of correspondence between Hatto, Rabanus’s successor at Fulda, and Otgar, Rabanus’s predecessor at Mainz, to suggest that Rabanus had forcibly tonsured Gottschalk “against his will.” The fragments of this conversation were edited by Dümmler and appended to his MGH edition of Rabanus’s letters (*Epistolae Fuldensium fragmenta*, c. 29, p. 529). For a discussion of this episode, with full bibliography, see Mayke de Jong, *In Samuel’s Image. Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 73-91.


669 Cyril Lambot has demonstrated that Gottschalk is the author of a letter addressed to Ebbo, “Lettre inédite de Godescalc d’Orbais,” *Revue Bénédictine* 68 (1958): 41-51. It has long been suspected that the Saxon, well known for his skill in Latin poetry, was the masterful author of the Ebbo Gospels’ dedicatory epistle. See Traube, ed., MGH *Poetae Latini*, t. III (p. 711); Traube’s opinion is affirmed by Bernard Boller, *Gottschalk d’Orbais de Fulda à Hautvillers: une dissidence.* (Paris: Société des Écrivains, 2004) (I have not been able to consult this source). On the likelihood that friction between Hincmar and Gottschalk preexisted the predestination debate, see Celia Chazelle, “Archbishops Ebo and Hincmar of Reims and the Utrecht Psalter,” *Speculum* 74:4 (1997): 1055-1077 [at 1069-71].


672 Devisse observes that Hincmar did not know Gottschalk prior to the council of Quierzy, but he doubtless would have been aware of the history of the accused’s association with the faction of Ebbo. See *Hincmar*, t. 1, 118-132.

673 The letters of Rabanus to Noting of Verona (c. 840) (MGH *Epistolae*, t. 5, p. 428) and to Eberhard of Friuli (MGH *Epistolae*, t. 5, p. 481-87) catalog the pernicious effects of Gottschalk’s teaching on the simple minded, and compile numerous patristic quotations. But there is little direct engagement with the substance of Gottschalk’s teaching. The same description applies to Hincmar, *Ad reclusos et simplices*, Gundlach, ed., “Zwei Schriften,” 258-309, though by his third and final treatise *De praedestinatione* (859), Hincmar had become deeply read in the issues.
ecclesiastical authority. The longstanding personal feud between Gottschalk's patron and Hincmar made even more repugnant the prospect of Hincmar having to reverse the decisions of Quierzy in response to the concerns Prudentius had expressed in his Epistola ad Hincmarum.

Likewise, Prudentius and the other theological opponents of Hincmar and Rabanus were not just careful readers of Augustine; they were also longtime friends and acquaintances of Gottschalk himself. Lupus and Gottschalk had known one another as young men, when Lupus visited Fulda to study for a time under Rabanus. Walahfrid, who died in 849 before he was able to make a written contribution to the debate over predestination, was another early friend of Gottschalk, the two men having studied together under Wetti at Reichenau and later under Rabanus at Fulda. After leaving Fulda, the Saxon monk had spent time at the powerful abbey of Corbie, where he had studied under Ratramnus and Paschasius Radbertus. Indeed, it might have been under Ratramnus that Gottschalk first encountered the strong Augustinian views for which he was later condemned. In Italy, he had stayed with Eberhard, the son-in-law of Louis the Pious, who by the 840s was a fidelis of Lothar, and thus a potential ally of his lord against the young king Charles, Hincmar’s patron.

As we saw in chapter one, Prudentius was a friend and correspondent of both Lupus and Walahfrid. It is not improbable that the bishop of Troyes likewise knew Gottschalk, if not directly, at least through the witness of his friends. Rädle’s argument that Prudentius was the recipient of at least one verse letter from the condemned monk suggests that there was an association between the two men that preexisted

---

675 Gottschalk had already left Fulda by the time Walahfrid arrived there in 827 to study under Rabanus. For the biography of Walahfrid, see Harting-Correa, Walahfrid Strabo’s Libellus, 6-12.
676 Ratramnus is the recipient of a verse letter from Gottschalk (MGH Poetae, t. III, pp. 733-77), likely written c. 849. David Ganz maintains that Ratramnus was one of Gottschalk’s teachers. After his condemnation at Quierzy, Gottschalk continued to write to Ratramnus and Gislemar, another monk of Corbie, see Ganz, Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance, 87. Hincmar would later recall that Gottschalk had sent multiple communications to Gislemar of Corbie and would quote extensively from one of these works in his third treatise on Praedestination (PL 125, 370-72). For a partial translation and brief introduction to this text see Genke and Gumerlock, Gottschalk of Orbais, 69-70.
their correspondence.\footnote{Rädle, “Gottschalks Gedicht an seinen letzten Freund,” 315-325.} As we have observed in this chapter, Hincmar too valued his association with the learned bishop of Troyes. The tone of his letter to Prudentius, written in the weeks following the council of Quierzy, suggests a longstanding friendship between the two men, and the respectful, if occasionally playful, tone of the latter’s dissenting reply likewise suggests an (at worst, uneasy) harmony between the two prelates. Thus, between his old associations at court and new friendships and professional associations in the Troisin, Prudentius found himself, in the autumn of 849, in the process of renegotiating friendships and political alliances.\footnote{For role of the social networks of elites in ecclesiastical and doctrinal controversy in late antique Gaul, see Ralph Mathisen, Ecclesiastical Factionalism and Religious Controversies in Fifth-Century Gaul (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989). We must also consider the potential involvement of Prudentius, discussed in chapters one and two, with the group of clerics and secular magnates who supported the invasion of Louis the German into western Francia in 858. Hincmar was a loyal supporter of Charles throughout the insurrection and its aftermath.}

The personal and political factors that came so obviously to bear on Gottschalk’s situation, might equally have colored Prudentius’ worsening relationship with Hincmar, who began to complain that Prudentius had changed his mind about predestination. As I have demonstrated in this chapter, Prudentius held views as early as 849/50 that agreed with Gottschalk’s more controversial teachings. Thus, we should be suspicious of Hincmar’s later claims that Prudentius, “excited by bitter feelings,” had changed his mind. The rift so obnoxiously belied by Hincmar’s obituary of his colleague would have begun in the mid-850s, and not exclusively over the matter of predestination. The two men later quarreled in 856 over revenues from churches historically belonging to Rheims, but located in the diocese of Troyes.\footnote{Hincmar von Reims, Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis, Stratmann, ed., MGH Fontes iuris (Hanover: 1990). Philippe Depreux et Cécile Treffort, “La paroisse dans le De ecclesiis et capellis d’Hincmar de Reims. L’enonciation d’une norme à partir de la pratique?” Médiévales 48 (2005). See chapter one for a fuller discussion of this controversy.} By 859 the tone of Hincmar’s exchanges with Prudentius concerning predestination began to reflect the increasingly oppositional nature of relations between the two men over the issue of ecclesiastical jurisdiction.\footnote{Even in the worsening relations between Hincmar and Prudentius’, one looks in vain for anything approaching the rancorous tone of Hincmar’s denunciations of Gottschalk or of Prudentius’ polemic against Eriugena (to be discussed in the next chapter).} This open disagreement over both doctrine and property coincided with the growing identification of Prudentius with the politics of his metropolitan, Wenilo of Sens, and perhaps as well with his natural sympathies with the church of Lyon. Ties to Lyon are suggested first in Prudentius’
connection with Florus, the great canonist and theologian, to whom he later sent his *De praedestinatione* against Eriugena. Secondly, our bishop’s short tract on predestination, produced in preparation for the council of Sens (856), might have been designed to affirm the 855 canons of Valence, authored chiefly by Lyon. Thus, whether in a dispute over ecclesiastical property or in the complex relations of rival episcopal sees, one may locate the origins of the growing rift between Prudentius and Hincmar in fissures that formed independently of, but coincided with, the disagreements over doctrine. In 849, Hincmar had written to Prudentius as an independent arbiter of theological and ecclesiological questions, whose views, however much they diverged from his own, were to be respected. But by the time of his death in 861, the bishop of Troyes had become an opponent of Hincmar, whose divergent views, though unchanged from the days in which the two men could be counted friends, were now to be roundly condemned.

Pastoral Concerns

One may also discern in the debate over predestination the recurring concern of pastoral responsibility, especially among those churchmen tasked with the care of souls. As Eriugena conveyed to Hincmar – “Your attention is partly drawn upwards in contemplation towards the exploration of truth and partly faced downwards in the activity of governing the church.” The subtleties of doctrine were complicated by the duties of the concerned pastor and busy administrator. Rabanus and Hincmar, as we have seen, had feared that the simple-minded might use Gottschalk’s teachings to reject good works. But even those who wrote in support of Gottschalk shared in the concerns that motivated his condemnation. Amolo of Lyon, for example, had chastised Gottschalk for preaching the correct doctrine in an inappropriate manner: “... we denounce and loath what you have provoked against those who are destined for eternal destruction. . .” For his part, Prudentius feared that the faithful could draw bad conclusions from

---

682 See specifically Canons I-IV, Hartmann, ed., MGH *Concilia*, t. III (pp. 352-55).
684 ‘Studium quippe uestrum partim sursum uersus contemplatiue erigitur ad speculandam ueritatem, partim uero deorsum uersus actiue reprimitur ad regendam ecclesiam.’ *De praedestinatione*, Madec, 3; Brennan, 3.
686 In a letter to Gottschalk, dated c. 851-52, Amolo will take issue with several points of Gottschalk’s doctrine, but his primary concerns are pastoral. ‘Quinto loco non minus detestamur et horremus quod ita exarsisti aduersus eos qui aeterno interitu sunt digni, ut dixeris eos tam inreucabiliuer et incommutabiliter perditioni esse praedestinatos sicut deus ipse incommutabilis et inconvirtibilis est.’ Lambot, ed., *Godescalc d’Orbais*, 17. Lambot has excerpted from MGH, *Epistolae* t. III, p. 368-78.
Hincmar’s weak view of divine grace: “May it be kept from all the hearts of the faithful that one who preaches omnipotence is arguing for impotence.” The laity who confess God the Father omnipotent in the creed, must not be taught a God whose power fails when willing the salvation of the damned. “Your Prudence, will see how imprudent this is.”

This pastoral impulse, in turn, was fueled by a peculiar sense of immediacy, drawing its force from the larger anxieties of Frankish society: in the midst of northern invasion, crop failure, famine, and pestilence, doubt emerged over whether God still heard the prayers of the Franks. Thus, competing views on predestination could also reflect – and refract – competing responses to more immediate and material threats. In his Annals Prudentius had feared that “God in his goodness and justice, so much offended by our sins, had thus worn down the lands and kingdoms of the Christians.” His worry is echoed in the historiography, exegesis, and theological writings of so many of his contemporaries, whose concerns found official expression in a call for repentance issued at Meaux-Paris (845).

For Hincmar, Rabanus, and their allies, the noxious doctrines of Gottschalk represented yet another offence to the justice of God, at a time when the Franks could ill afford his swift and just punishment.

Whether as direct causes or merely as irritants, these political, pastoral, and social contexts clearly contributed to the particular drama of the debate over Gottschalk. In this chapter, I have tried to highlight some of the ways in which bibliographical and ideological factors shaped the debate. The composition of local libraries, the widespread but uneven circulation of the works of Augustine, competing views on the nature of Augustine’s authority, and divergent ideas on how to read and interpret him determined the parameters within which this controversy would be fought and established the contours of its discourse. But it must be remembered that whatever the proximate and efficient causes of the debate over predestination, whatever personal and political factors that contributed to the tone in which it was conducted, there remained a real and persistent disagreement over ideas. In the months following

---

687 *Et ubi erit quod jugiter diurnis nocturnisque confessionibus nos credere in Deum Patrem omnipotentem fidelissime dicimus? Si aliqua vult, et non facit, quod absit ab omnium salvandorum cordibus, impotentiae arguitur qui omnipotens praedicatur. quod quantae sit imprudentiae vestra prudentia viderit.’ PL 115, 977B.
689 Levillain and Grat, *Annales*, 50-51. (See chapter three above)
690 The preface of the council cites the invasions of Northmen, those ‘inmanissimos christianitatis persecutores,’ as an instrument of divine justice. See MGH Concilia, t. III (pp. 81-84; reference to Northmanni at p. 82, l. 20).
Prudentius’ letter to Hinemar, these ideas would be debated more directly and more forcefully. The bishop of Troyes would continue to play a very active role in modeling for his ecclesiastical province an appropriate method for pious questioning, as the conversation surrounding Gottschalk shifted in 850-51 to consider the striking and unconventional arguments of John Scottus Eriugena. Undaunted by the philosophical sophistication of his new interlocutor, the bishop of Troyes would work to oppose the Scot’s dialectic with his own deep and ever-widening erudition. The resulting Contra Eriugenam is the subject of the next chapter.
Chapter 6
Accumulating Authority in the Contra Eriugenam

As Hincmar began to digest the implications of Prudentius’ letter to him, several new challenges arose to confront the ongoing campaign to refute Gottschalk. At the request of Charles the Bald, Lupus had composed a treatise, which like Prudentius’ earlier letter to Hincmar, maintained views doctrinally proximate (if rhetorically dissimilar) to the teachings condemned at Quierzy the previous spring.\(^\text{691}\) The *De praedestinatione* of Ratramnus of Corbie soon followed.\(^\text{692}\) By spring of 850, Hincmar began to appeal to like-minded churchmen to defend the views expressed the previous year in his letter *Ad simplices*. In March he wrote to Rabanus, who had first written against Gottschalk in 840 and had presided over his condemnation at Mainz, attaching to his letter the *opusculum* of Prudentius, the *Confessio Prolixior* of Gottschalk (written the previous fall),\(^\text{693}\) and the *De praedestinatione* of Ratramnus. The letter of Hincmar to Rabanus has been lost, but it can be judged from Rabanus’ rescript, dated March 850, that Hincmar had invited his aged colleague, the bishop of Mainz, to reply to Gottschalk, Prudentius, and Ratramnus with a line by line refutation.\(^\text{694}\) Worn down by illness and perhaps by the administrative demands of his prelacy, Rabanus sent two short replies to Hincmar,\(^\text{695}\) then declined to comment further, satisfied that he had expressed amply his views in earlier letters written when Gottschalk’s teachings first came to the attention of ecclesiastical authorities in Italy.\(^\text{696}\)

Hincmar next turned to Pardulus of Laon, who was in conversation with a scholar of Irish origins, known for his vast erudition among the learned circles of northern Francia.\(^\text{697}\) The specific location of

\(^{691}\) *De tribus quaestionibus* (PL 119, 619-48), followed that year by a patristic florilegium, *Collectaneum de tribus quaestionibus* (PL 119, 648-66). For date and discussion of this text, see Devisse, *Hincmar*, t. I, 146.

\(^{692}\) *De praedestinatione dei* (PL 121, 13-80). On this work, see Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance*, 90-91.

\(^{693}\) Lambot, *Godescale*, pp. 54-78.

\(^{694}\) MGH Epistolae, t. III, pp. 487-489.


\(^{696}\) Devisse, *Hincmar*, t. 1, 144.

John Scottus Eriugena’s residence at this time – whether at a court school located at Compiègne or Quierzy, or in the cathedral school of Laon – remains unclear. But it is evident from the subsequent testimony of Florus of Lyon that it was Pardulus who first asked the Scot to write in support of Hincmar and Rabanus against Gottschalk. 698 The resulting work – nineteen chapters arguing for the logical necessity of a single predestination – dramatically shifted the focus of conversation away from Gottschalk and onto Eriugena. Likely made public by winter of 850/51, the Scot’s opinions were criticized by both supporters and opponents of Hincmar as “impudent blasphemy,” 699 “perversity,” 700 “Irish porridge.” 701 Wenilo of Sens immediately made excerpts from the work and had them sent to Prudentius, whom he invited to respond. 702 The resulting reply by our author, which took at least a year to produce, was a heavily polemical work that engaged a range of topics, from the singularity of the Divine essence, to the ontological states of the condemned and the blessed, to the nature of the resurrected body, among other doctrines. In this chapter, I will offer a summary and analysis of this variegated and wide-ranging performance of Carolingian era argumentation. Drawing on the evidence of Paris, BNF Lat. 2445, the sole manuscript witness to this treatise, I will focus especially on the text’s composition and on the force of its argumentation for a contemporary reader. The Contra Eriugenam was a forceful and effective response to a complicated work by a deeply learned author. After examining the most trenchant areas of Prudentius’ refutation, I will also consider the methodological implications of this work in light of its contemporary reception, particularly its reception by Eriugena.

[reprint, 1964]). Regarding Eriugena’s location in “the palace of the king” at the time of his De praedestinatione, see the letter of the church of Lyon, De tribus epistolis, quoted below, n. 698.

698 The involvement of the bishop of Laon in commissioning Eriugena to write is documented in a letter of Pardulus to the church of Lyon (now lost), quoted in the anonymous De tribus epistolis (now attributed to Florus): ‘Sed quia haec inter se valde dissentiebant, Scotum illum qui est in palatio regis, Joannem nomine, scribere coegimus.’ PL 121, 1052 A.

699 Prudentius, Contra Eriugenam, PL 115, 1011B.

700 Prudentius, Contra Eriugenam, PL 115, 1082A.

701 Though Eriugena is not specifically named, the condemnation of “Scottorum pultes” by the church of Lyon (at the Council of Valence, 853 [MGH Concilia, t. 3, 356]) is generally taken as a reference to Eriugena’s treatise. See Avital Wohlman, “Introduction,” in Brennan, trans., Divine Predestination, x.

702 In his epistolary preface to Wenilo, the author relates that his metropolitan had sent only excerpts, but that he had been able to obtain a complete copy (PL 115, 1011B). Madec confirms Prudentius was working from a complete text (Madec, ed., De praedestinatione, vii.)
The “Nineteen Chapters” of Eriuenga

The De praedestinatione of John Scottus Eriugena is striking in several respects. Methodologically, the treatise may be described as a work of philosophical theology, in which philosophy and religion are posited as two ways of exploring the same truth.703 “What else is the exercise of philosophy but the exposition of the rules of true religion by which the supreme and principal cause of all things, God, is worshipped with humility and rationally searched for?”704 Eriuenga had asserted that knowledge of God could be obtained through the tools of the liberal arts.705 Therefore, his treatise began not with the Church, the sacraments, or with the authority of the Fathers, but rather with a dialectical evaluation of the nature of Divinity, using a quadrivium of “division,” “definition,” “demonstration,” and “resolution,” which the author claimed to derive from “the Greeks.”706 This overtly rationalistic approach was then underscored in the chapter headings with which the Scot marked the contours of his argument (a mixture of aphorism, descriptive titles, and propositions to be proven):707 as in, "From the argument of Necessity it is concluded that there cannot be two predestinations" (c. 2) or, more directly, “Reason does not permit of two predestinations” (c. 3).708

---

703 On the intractable problem of distinguishing between "philosophy" and "theology" in Eriuenga, see Werner Beierwaltes, "Eriuenga's Platonism," Hermathena 149 (1990): 53-72 [53-54].


705 ‘Quae, dum multifariam diuersisque modis diuidatur, bis binas tamen partes principales ad omnem quaestionem soluendam necessarias habere dinoscitur, quas graecis placuit nominare ΔΙΑΙΡΕΤΙΚΗ, ΟΡΙΣΤΙΚΗ, ΑΡΟΔΙΤΙΚΗ, ΑΝΑΛΙΤΙΚΗ, easdemque latialiter possumus dicere diuisioriam, diffinitiuam, demonstratiuam, resolutiuam.’ Lib. praed. 1.1 (Madec, 6-7; Brennan, 8). Madec observes that this fourfold division is likely drawn from Boethius, Instituio arithmetica 1.1.


707 These chapter headings, with the exception of chapter one, which has been supplied from the text of Prudentius’ reply to Eriuenga, are all original to Paris, BNF Lat. 1386, likely written within the lifetime of the author. See Madec, “Introduction,” xiv-xv.

708 The full list of chapter headings is as follows:
‘Quadriuiuo regularum totius philosophiae quattuor omnem quaestionem solui."
Using this dialectical method, Eriugena had argued for the single predestination of the elect to blessedness only and had denied any predestination to punishment. His argument began with the assumption that the divine essence is singular and simple. Predestination and foreknowledge are identical to the divine will and to God himself whose simple essence cannot be divided into parts, operations, or distinctions. Therefore, there cannot be multiple predestinations in God (chapters 2, 3).\textsuperscript{709} Furthermore, there can be no predestination to evil, since evil does not participate in the divine being and, therefore, has no positive existence (chapter 10).\textsuperscript{710} The Being of God is ontologically identical to Divine goodness, in which all existing things participate to a greater or lesser degree. Evil is not an existing counterpoint to

---

Argumento necessitatis colligitur, duas praedestinationes fieri non posse.
De eo quod duas praedestinationes ratio non sinit esse.
De una uera solaque dei praedestinacione.
De eo quod praescientia et praedestinacione dei nemo compellitur, seu bene seu male facere.
De eo quod non aliunde sit omne peccatum, nisi libero proprie voluntatis arbitrio.
Quod liberum voluntatis arbitrium numerandum sit inter bona quae deus homini largitur, quamuis eo male utatur, quae est causa peccati et peccatum.
De differentia inter naturam hominis et liberum eius arbitrium.
De eo quod non proprie, sed temporalium rerum similitudine, praedicantur de deo praescientia et praedestinatio.
De eo quod a contrario intelligendum sit quando dicitur deus praescire aut praedestinare peccata, uel mortem uel poenas hominum uel angelorum.
Quod diuina humanaque auctoritate comprobari possit non esse dei praedestinare peccata, uel mortem uel poenas hominum uel angelorum.
Quod diuina humanaque auctoritate comprobari possit non esse dei praedestionemem, nisi de his qui praeparati sunt ad aeternam felicitatem.
De diffinitione praedestinationis.
Quid potest colligi ex praedicta sancti augustinini sententia.
Testimonia sancti augustinini simul collecta, quibus aperte conficitur non esse nisi unam praedestionem, camque solummodo ad sanctos pertinere.
Quo genere locutionum dicitur praescire deus peccata, cum nihil sint, aut praedestinare eorum supplicia, quae simuliter nihil sunt.
De eo quod nulla natura naturam punit et nihil aliud esse poenas peccatorum, nisi peccata eorum.
Cur deus dicitur praedestinasse poenas, cum eas non faciat, nec praedestinat.
Quod error eorum, qui aliter quam patres sancti sentiunt de praedestinacione, ex liberalium disciplinarum ignorantia inoleuit.
De igne aeterno.
Epilogus de diuina praedestinacione.

Though the chapter headings can be read in Madec’s edition and in Prudentius’ reply (PL 115, 1009-1366), for convenience, I have taken the above list from Cappuyns, Érigène, 112-113.

\textsuperscript{709} See especially, \textit{De praed}. 2.1-2 (Madec, 9-12).

\textsuperscript{710} \textit{De praed}. 10.3-4 (Madec, 63-65).
the Good, but rather an absence of the Good, a privation of the divine presence. Because God’s foreknowledge can only foreknow that which exists, the predestination of God, identical to his foreknowledge, is likewise only to existence. Thus, predestination is single, to the good or existence only, and not to damnation or non-existence.

Eriugena had also addressed the doctrine of free will within the broader framework of human salvation. He had argued that free will is an existing substance, which, like all existing things, is good (chapter 7). With the fall of humankind, however, the will lost its vigor and power and now lacked the strength necessary to fulfill the divine precepts, to the extent that the motion of the will (motus voluntarius) – a movement, not a substance, and therefore, not a created thing – could be toward evil, or rather, away from the good for which it was naturally predisposed. Under such conditions, the direction of the will away from the Good would become, in effect, its own punishment (chapter 16). For the Scot, the sinner was “set on fire within himself by the torches of his own disobedience.” This internal fire was caused by the tension of a will habituated toward evil, or non-existence, yet held into being by the eternal laws of an immutable and benevolent creator. The “predestination to ruin,” of which Augustine and other Fathers had sometimes spoken, was to be understood as a metaphorical description of the effects of God’s eternal laws, against which the corrupted will was habituated to act. This internal fire was to be manifested outwardly in a kind of fire, “which by virtue of the subtility of its nature is called incorporeal.” Eriugena had identified this outward, incorporeal fire with aether, the element by which spiritual bodies are simultaneously beatified and condemned, depending on the physical and moral proximity of the individual soul to the divine presence.

Eriugena, like Prudentius, Gottschalk, and Hincmar, tied his arguments to the authority of the Fathers, particularly to the authority of Augustine. However, he preferred the “metaphysical Augustine” and

---

711 De praed. 10.5 (Madec, 66).
712 De praed. 7.1 (Madec, 44-45).
713 De praed. 8.7 (Madec, 52-53).
714 De praed. 16.1 (Madec, 93-94).
715 ‘Quis autem recte iudicantium talis poenae auctoritatem iusto domino et non potius referat iniusto seruo, quoniam quidem intra se ipsum inobediensitiae suae facibus incenditur, priusquam a domino extrinsecus ad cumulum poenae tormentum aliquod addatur.’ De praed. 18.9 (Madec, 117; Brennan, 123).
716 De praed. 18.10 (Madec, 117-18; Brennan, 123).
717 ‘Ite, maledicti, in ignem aeternum qui praeparatus est diabolo et angelis eius, nulli dubitandum corporeum esse, quamuis pro subtilitate naturae incorporeus esse dicatur. .’ De praed. 19.1 (Madec, 117; 126)
718 De praed. 18.1 (Madec, 118-19).
quoted most frequently from such texts as the *Contra Manichaeum*, *De libero arbitrio*, *De vera religione*, *De trinitate*, *De Genesi ad litteram*, the *Confessions*, and the Ps.-Augustine, *Hypomnesticon*. The Neoplatonic ontology implied in these earlier works governed his interpretation of the later works of Augustine, with which he was also deeply familiar, especially the *De dono perseverentiae* and the *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, both works already singled out by Prudentius in his earlier letter to Hincmar. Eriugena’s arguments in support of a single predestination thus imply a profound familiarity with Augustine, but he had quoted comparatively little from other patristic authors.

*De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam*

For Eriugena’s contemporaries, the *De praedestinatione* was evidence of its author’s pride and deep impiety; and soon it became an impediment to the cause of Hincmar. The text immediately came under criticism from both the opponents and supporters of Gottschalk and later met with formal condemnation at the provincial council of Valence (855), convoked by the church of Lyon. Prudentius, who acknowledged Eriugena as a friend, whom he had “formerly embraced” and “used to love dearly,” first learned of the treatise from Wenilo, who had taken large excerpts from the Scot’s nineteen chapters and sent them to the bishop of Troyes, from whom he solicited a reply. It is clear from his rescript to Wenilo that Prudentius was soon able to acquire a complete copy of the work in order to conduct a full review. Engaging the resources of his cathedral library and scriptorium in the task of producing a response, the bishop then composed a chapter-by-chapter refutation of the Scot, using over 320 excerpts from patristic

---

720 For ‘testimonia’ from Augustine, see Chapter 14, entitled “Collected Attestations of Saint Augustine by which it is Clearly Proved that there is but One Predestination and it Refers Only to the Saints.” (Madec, 81-86).
722 Though he is not mentioned by name, Chapter IV, which condemns “inane fallacies” constructed using the “philosophical art” (MGH Concilia, t. 3, 355) and Chapter VI, which denounces “Scottish porridge” (*Scotorumque pultes*) (MGH Concilia, t. 3, 356), are generally taken as a references to Eriugena.
723 ‘. . . eo molestius accepi, quo te familiarius amplectebam, peculiarius diligebam.’ PL 115, 1013A.
Elsewhere, Prudentius recalls hearing (Memini . . . me . . . te . . . audisse) Eriugena himself expound upon his own idiosyncratic cosmological views (PL 115, 1093D).
724 See the epistolary prologue (PL 115, 1009C-1012D), contra O’Meara (*Eriugena*, 47-8) and Devissè (Hincmar, t. 1, 152), who suggests that Prudentius was only responding to excerpts. Madec, who edited the *De praedestinatione* of Eriugena, is certain that Prudentius had a full text. He quotes verbatim nearly a quarter of Eriugena’s text in his reply. (Madec, vii).
authority,\textsuperscript{725} with an appendix or ‘recapitulatio’ summarizing Eriugena’s principal errors, along with his own refutations.\textsuperscript{726} This otherwise untitled work, called here the \textit{De praedestinatione contra Eriugenam} or \textit{Contra Eriugenam}, was designed to identify the errors of Eriugena with the fallacies of previous enemies of orthodox teaching: Pelagius, Origen, Celestine, and Julian.\textsuperscript{727} Against such errors the author commended his own work as an antidote, in which the Fathers would respond, through the author, to each of the Scot’s errors.

In several places I have inserted the words of the same John as they were set out by him, also with his name in front, together with a sign preceding it, which in Greek is called Theta, which the ancients were accustomed to write in front of the capital sentences of condemned men. . . . But wherever the insertion of my own words demands the necessary space for them, lest I might attribute to myself any good thing that celestial grace through the organ of my tongue has spoken, I was careful to place over it a sign that is called \textit{crisimon} by writers on the art of rhetoric, because it is seen in a certain way to portray as it were the monogram of the name of Christ. [In this way], I might declare to be completely His whatever part of his bounty I had imbibed by means of his copious and gratuitous favors.\textsuperscript{728}

The Theta, described here as the sign by which “the ancients” signified condemned prisoners, was to act as a thanatizing siglum, designed to highlight and consign to oblivion each of the Scot’s “errors” – each erroneous doctrine, every instance of impiety or rhetorical overreach, as well as each logical contradiction. The Chi-Rho would identify the words of Prudentius and of his patristic allies. Perhaps

\textsuperscript{725} Devisse counts 315 (\textit{Hincmar}, t. 1, p. 152.) and Van Name Edwards counts “approximately 350” (“Prudentius of Troyes,” 1611); and I have identified 326 quotations in my Appendix III.
\textsuperscript{726} PL 115, 1351D-1366A.
\textsuperscript{727} PL 115, 1011B.
\textsuperscript{728} ‘Fidens igitur in ejus gratia quae praevenimur ut bene velimus, subseuimur ne frustra velimus, revolutis Patrum consonis per omnia paginis, quid quisque eorum antidoti contra eadem venena confecerit, decerpere fideliter curavi, praeviso cujusque doctoris nomine, libroque pariter intimato. Verba quoque ejusdem Joannis ut ab eo digesta sunt pluribus locis inserui, praeposito etiam nomine ipsius cum praeceedente illud nota quae Graece dicitur θητα quam sententiis capitalibus damnumdor aliqui praescribere solebant. In multis enim non verba ejus interposui, quae loquacitate nimia legentibus ingerunt, sed sensibus eorum pro capitu meae pusillitatis veraciter obviavi. Ubicunque autem mei sermonis interpositio necessarium locum expetit, ne quid mihi tribuerem, si quid boni superna gratia per meae linguae organum loqueretur, notam superponere studui, quae ab Astigraphis crisimon nuncupatur, quoniam velut monogramma nominis Christi effigiare quodam modo cernitur, ut ejus totum ostenderem quidquid benignitatis ipsius largifluis indebitisque muneribus imbibissem, illud etiam necessario credidi praemonendum. . . ’ PL 115, 1012A-C. For the epistolary introduction only, I have used the translation of Mary Brennan, “Materials for the Biography of Johannes Scottus Eriugena,” \textit{Studi Medievali} 27:1 (1986), 424-26. All other translations of Prudentius, \textit{Contra Eriugenam}, are my own.
inspired by late antique theological polemic, the bishop addressed his opponent in the second person – “your blasphemy,” “your impiety,” “your perfidious error,” etc. – and accused Eriugena of making assertions, “on the basis of your own little reason, and not by authority.” He called the Scot a “barbarian,” “distinguished by no degree of ecclesiastical rank,” and chastened him with the words of Proverbs wielded by Augustine against Pelagius (and by Gennadius against Augustine): “While you sweat with your speckmaking, in the end you can never evade the saying: ‘In much speaking you will not escape sin.’” Elsewhere, he complained that his opponent was “crazy,” “demented,” and “out of [his] mind.” He corrected the Scot’s sources, pointing out pseudepigraphic works, like the “false Hypomnesticon of Augustine,” which could be found nowhere in the list of Augustine’s works prepared by his disciple Possidius. He complained that Eriugena had drawn dubious opinions from pagan authors, like Martianus Capella, who had derived their doctrines from works explicitly refuted by the church Fathers.

---

[729] See especially the exchange between Jerome and Rufinus. Even the claim that Eriugena was formerly a friend whom the author dearly loved might be a topos drawn from the mode of direct address employed by Jerome in his Contra Rufinam. Prudentius will have occasion to quote this text when he refutes Eriugena’s chapter 19, on the resurrection of the body.

[730] ‘et hoc tuis feneis, ut ita dixerim, ratiunculis astipulari, non actoritate, qua nostrae fidei veritas solidatur atque defenditur, astruere maluisti.’ PL 115, 1025C.

[731] ‘Quamvis, sicut supra monstratum est, sanctorum Patrum venerabilibus scriptis, et geminae praedestinationis veritas approbetur, et tuae, id est solitariae praedestinationis, falsitas improbetur: quis enim te barbarum et nullis ecclesiasticae dignitatis gradibus insignitum nec unquam a catholicis insigniendum, adversus Romanae urbis et apostolicae sedis antistitem Gregorium, et ejus sicut doctrinae et fidei, ita dignitatis atque officii socium beatum videlicet Isidorum episcopum, audiat oblatrantem.’ PL 115, 1043A.

[732] ‘Dei unde tantis tertio vanitatum tuarum ludicro argumentorum superfluitatibus replicantibus scates, ut pudeat audire, nedum legere, quemlibet honestorum, qui dum multiloquio insudas, prorsus evadere nequivisti quod dicitur: In multiloquio non effugies peccatum.’ PL 115, 1039A.

[733] ‘Item quod argumentaris, ‘peccatum non esse ex veritate, esse autem nihil, perindeque nec ex praescientia, nec ex praedestinatione Dei, quis hoc vel demens existimaverit?’ PL 115, 1206A.

[734] ‘Unius quoque, ut desipis, ejusdemque divinae videlicet naturae non sunt . . .’ PL 115, 1205C; For all three of the above accusations (and more) in a single passage: ‘O insaniam inauditam! O vecordiam detestandam! O hebetudinem exhorrendam! O subtilitatem omni obtusione duriorem! O virulentiam omni abominatione extricandam! Quid est (o mortalium superbissime) quod ausus es tanta impudentia declamare?’ PL 115, 1293B.

[735] ‘Dein sententia qua id roborare nisus es, non est Augustini, neque ex ullo librorum, epistolorum, sermonumve ipsius excerpta; de qua cum ances diutius haesitarem, ubinam dictorum ejus reperihi posset, repente subiit in mentem recensendum quemdam pseudographum libellum qui falso Hypomnesticon Augustini inscribatur, quem non esse beatissimi Augustini plurima documenta sunt; videlicet quia nec cum caeteris libris suis ab ipso retractatus est, neque in indice sermonum, librorum, epistolorumque illius a S. Possidio episcopo, discipulo ejus, enumeratus inventur, neque quibusque ejus dictis concors facillime comprobatur.’ PL 115, 1199D-1200A.

[736] ‘Quin etiam cum legeres beati Augustini libros, quos De Civitate Dei adversus paganorum fallaciosse falsissimasque opiniones mirabili affluentia digestis, invenisti eum posuisse ac destruxisse quaedam ex libris
Though the bishop sometimes softened his rhetoric and struck the tone of an elder mentor chastening a younger friend, such moments of charity were rare. The forcefulness of Prudentius’ response suggests that he was already predisposed to suspect Eriugena of heterodoxy, even prior to the disagreement over predestination. His teacher Theodulf had been skeptical of both the learning and the orthodoxy of the Irish, and it is possible that the bishop of Troyes could have taken over such prejudices from his master. Moreover, Prudentius had personally heard the Scot postulating heterodox views about the afterlife. He had witnessed Eriugena saying (narrans) that the place “we usually call the Inferno” is really just the airy space between the earth and the moon, and “paradise or the kingdom of the saints” is that expanse from the moon up to the firmament of heaven. When the bishop complained “you drive the mind more to meditation on [Capella] than to the truth of the gospel,” he was striking the tone of one responding to an earlier conversation (Eriugena had not cited Capella in his De praedestinatione). The Contra Eriugenam thus seems to revisit an argument already in progress. Over one third of the work concerns precisely the issues of cosmology and eschatology to which this reference to Capella alludes.

However strident the tone affected by our author, his reply to Eriugena is a monumental work of Carolingian era scholarship. It implies intimate familiarity with some 80 works of 12 authors of the patristic period, in addition to deep competency in the logical and grammatical curricula of the Carolingian classroom. Yet, despite this considerable display of erudition, the Contra Eriugenam has

---

Varronis, quibus, quoniam Capellae tuo consona videbantur, potius assentiri quam veridici Augustini allegationibus fidem adhibere delegisti.’ PL 115, 1294B.

737 'Attamen Christiana te charitate admoneo ne verbis beati Augustini, quibus de poenis impiorum diverse in opusculis suis tam multis sentire videtur, eo usque inhaereas ut veritati tantopere contradicas.’ PL 115, 1280C.

738 See Bernhard Bischoff, “Theodulf und der Ire Cadac-Andreas,” in Mittelalterliche Studien, t. 1 (Stuttgart, 1966), 19-25. For Theodulf and his anonymous student, see J.J. Contreni, “The Irish in the Western Carolingian Empire,” 760, in Contreni, Carolingian Learning, IX; also see Contreni, “The Egyptian Origins of the Irish: Two Ninth-Century Notes,” 51, in Contreni, Carolingian Learning, XVII.

739 'Memini siquidem me olim, quod etiam passim jam rumor aspersit, quod ultra hoc visibile coelum, quod firmamentum Scriptura nuncupat, quodque Apostolus velamen tabernaculi, quod erat oppansom ante oraculum, interpretatur, nihil esse, et infra terram nihilominus nihil esse; sed in hac quasi domo coeli et terrae ambitus contineri omnia, esseque quem infernum dicimus a terra usque ad lunam, et deinde paradisum vel regnum sanctorum usque ad firmamentum, ibique tam angelos sanctos, quam sanctorum animas, et ipsum Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum corpore commorari.’ PL 115, 1293D-1294A (emphasis mine).

740 'Nam ille tuus Capella, exceptis aliis, vel maxime te in hunc labyrinthus induxisse creditur, cujus meditationi magis quam veritati evangelicae animum appulisti.’ PL 115, 1294A.
been largely neglected in the opinion of modern scholarship.\footnote{Two important exceptions, both of which take seriously the influence of Prudentius on Eriugena, are John Marenbon, “John Scottus and Carolingian Theology: From the *De praedestinatione*, its Background and Critics, to the *Periphyseon,*” in Gibson and Nelson, eds., *Charles the Bald*, 303-325; and Valery V. Petroff, “*Theoriae* of the Return in John Scottus’ Eschatology,” in James McEvoy and Michael Dunne, eds. *History and Eschatology in John Scottus Eriugena and his Time. Proceedings of the 10th Conference of the SPES, Maynooth and Dublin, August 16-20, 2000* (Leuven: University of Leuven Press, 2002), 527-579.} If Eriugena has been lauded and appreciated for his originality, Prudentius is generally considered representative of an intellectual culture that “could only rehash previous opinion.”\footnote{The quote is from O’Meara, *Eriugena*, 49-50. Regarding Prudentius, in particular, the judgment of Peltier (“Prudence de Troyes,” 1083) is especially severe: ‘En définitive, Prudence nous apparaît comme un des représentants les plus décidés de l’augustinisme rigide, au IXe siècle. Encore insuffisamment nuancé, ignorant les distinctions que la théologie ultérieure finira par introduire, son enseignement se contente de reproduire avec exactitude l’un des aspects de la doctrine augustinienne, dans les formules de laquelle il se coule tout naturellement. La science théologique de l’évêque de Troyes n’a pas laissé néanmoins de faire grand impression sur ses contemporains.’} It should be noted, however, that our author’s persistent deference to patristic authority need not indicate an inferior grasp of his opponent’s philosophically sophisticated arguments. Though he accused the Scot of deliberately attempting to be incomprehensible,\footnote{‘ea nobis ingerere delegisti quae a nullo nostrum vel intelligi, vel deprehendi, vel certe confutari posse credideras.’ PL 115, 1016D.} Prudentius understood well the Neoplatonic underpinnings of Eriugena’s treatise and worked to refute him on his own terms. A careful reading of both the *De praedestinatione* of Eriugena and of Prudentius’ response, moreover, reveals the men to be on equal terms with respect to theological erudition. Though Eriugena was doubtless the more original thinker of the two, Prudentius was the more careful scholar.

The sections that follow focus on four areas of the bishop’s critique of Eriugena, in particular on 1) his criticism of the Scot’s theological method, 2) his utilization of categorical theory, 3) understanding of the will, and 4) his novel account of eternal damnation. While these lines of Prudentius’ critique will illustrate his facility in the liberal arts and his particular method of approaching doctrine, the *Contra Eriugenam* also represents a powerful deployment of other, less tangible tools of argumentation. The work claims to draw its force from authority and reason. But it also draws on the aesthetic dimensions of pious inquiry. Through its unique system of representing earlier authors and texts on the manuscript page, the *Contra Eriugenam* systematically works to refute its opponent through the accumulation and textualization of
authority. This aesthetic dimension of the text will be examined at the close of the chapter, in light of the work’s apparent effectiveness in convincing Eriugena to reconsider certain of his doctrines.

“True Philosophy is True Religion”

A principal concern of the Contra Eriugenam is that Eriugena had too much elevated the role of philosophy within the broader framework of Christian salvation. Though this concern runs throughout the text, it is primarily expressed in chapter one, which criticizes the Scot’s purely dialectical approach to argumentation in light of the rejection of such approaches by the church Fathers. Eriugena had claimed that reliable knowledge of God could be attained through “that discipline which the Greeks usually call philosophia.” He had equated “true philosophy” with “true religion” and had expressed great enthusiasm for the liberal arts. This confidence in the dignity and efficacy of human reason may be understood in light of Eriugena’s sympathy with Neoplatonic authors of the fourth and fifth centuries.

Though the De praedestinatione is generally believed to have been written prior to his more mature engagement with Greek philosophical sources in the 850s and 60s,745 Eriugena had already cultivated through his reading of the Latin authors Macrobius and Martianus Capella a generally Platonic vision of the relationship between rational inquiry and human salvation. Capella’s De nuptiis, which was generally unknown to continental scholars prior to the mid ninth-century, had been especially influential on Eriugena’s early intellectual development.746 Capella’s account of the soul’s ascent to the divine using the allegory of Philology’s marriage to Mercury had envisaged the seven liberal arts – the Trivium of Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic and the Quadrivium of Geometry, Arithmetic, Astronomy, and Harmony – as wedding gifts, given by the groom Mercury to the bride by way of the god Apollo. In the Adnotationes, or commentary, on the De nuptiis generally attributed to Eriugena,747 the Scot explains

744 Cum omnis piae perfectaque doctrinae modus, quo omnium rerum ratio et studiosissime quaeritur et apertissime inuenitur, in ea disciplina, quae a graecis philosophia solet uocari, sit constitutus, de eius divisionibus seu partitionibus quaedam breuiter disserere necessarium duximus. Si enim, ut ait sanctus Augustinus, creditur et docetur, quod est humanae salutis caput, non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiae studium, et aliam religionem, cum hi quorum doctrinam non approbamus nec sacramenta nobiscum communicant, quid est alius de philosophia tractare, nisi ueram religiones, qua summa et principalis omnium rerum causa, deus, et humiliter colitur et rationabiliter investigatur, regulas exponere? Conficitur inde ueram esse philosophiam ueram religionem conversimque ueram religionem esse ueram philosophiam.  De praed. 1.1 (Madec, 5; Brennan, 7-8).


746 O’Meara, Eriugena, 51-79; Moran, Philosophy of John Scottus, 38-40.

747 Debate surrounds the matter of Eriugena’s commentary(ies) on Capella: the more pressing questions are whether the Scot produced more than one commentary, whether his commentary was produced first as a gloss,
more fully the meaning of this striking image of the arts as “wedding gifts”: “And while the arts themselves are coming into the possession of the mind, before they so come they are learned by the soul itself only. They are not taken from elsewhere, but they are understood naturally in the soul.” That is, the arts are not tools external to the human soul, to be acquired and wielded for particular ends. Rather they are capacities innate in the soul to be exercised for their own fulfillment, which participates in the broader project of the soul’s salvation through a return to its divine source. The exercise of the arts involves an awakening of the soul to its heavenly origins and motivates the movement of the soul’s return. Eriugena’s comments on Capella, which Prudentius seems to have known, can be used to illuminate the claim of the De praedestinatione that “true philosophy is true religion” and the insistence of the Scot that dialectic could be reliably used to arrive at true knowledge of the Divine. In light of his understanding of the arts as innate and linked through the rational structures of the universe to the Divine Being, Eriugena’s dialectic should be understood not only as a tool for arriving at true beliefs but also as a means of ascent, by which the individual soul could experience God through the cultivation of rational inquiry. In other words, “philosophy” for Eriugena was not simply a tool to be used for clarifying and organizing truth revealed in scripture. It was the very project of human salvation itself, simply called by its ancient name.

Against this elevated view of human reason, Prudentius rejected the lofty role the Scot had given dialectic and the other liberal arts within the broader framework of the Christian life. He could find nowhere among the Fathers of the church Eriugena’s optimism regarding the philosophical life. Rather, the Fathers themselves had warned against “dialectical and sophistical conclusions” and had preferred to gather in council, testify in synodical acta, and witness together through the veridical writings of proven then copied into two separate versions of excerpts, whether he first acquired his knowledge of Capella on the continent or in Ireland, and what the relationship is between his commentary and other ninth-century glosses and commentaries on Capella (such as those attributed to the Irishmen Dunchad and Martin Hibernensis). For a summary of the debate and full bibliography, see Michael Herren, “The Commentary on Martianus attributed to John Scottus: Its Hiberno-Latin Background,” in G. H. Allard, ed., Jean Scot Ecrivain. Actes du IVe colloque international Montreal 28 aout – 2 septembre 1983 (Bellarmin: Montreal, 1986), 265-286.

748 Cora E. Lutz, Johannis Scotti annotationes (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1939), as quoted in O’Meara, Eriugena, 27.

749 PL 115, 1294B.

750 See O’Meara, Eriugena, 28-29.
authors the truth of the Holy Scriptures. Against the solitary dialectic of the Scot, the Contra Eriugenam arrays extensive quotations from the sermons of Leo the Great from Jerome’s commentary on Galatians, and the prologue to Cassiodorus, Expositio Psalmorum, in which these Fathers had reasserted the Pauline dichotomy between the “world’s wisdom” and the “simplicity of the Gospel.” Prudentius had evidently understood the broader Neoplatonic assumptions that lay behind the Scot’s elevation of dialectic, since patristic criticism of any one of the liberal arts is used as equivalent to an attack on them all and to an attack on philosophy more generally. For example, Leo and Jerome are used to condemn Rhetoric, which aims “not at instructing” but at “winning favor.” Cassiodorus is found affirming the contingency and inadequacy of the rhetorical arts in relation to the holy simplicity of the scriptures. Later, Jerome can be overheard derisively wondering whether anyone should even read philosophy. “How many are there who know the books, or even the name of Plato? You may find here and there a few old men who have nothing else to do who study them in a corner.”

Our author’s more ambivalent attitude toward the arts should not be taken as a univocal condemnation of their usefulness, so long as they are understood to be the product of the particular intellectual culture of the Greeks and the Romans – that is, as foreign elements whose utility is circumscribed by and defined in light of the simplicity of the gospel. Prudentius reminds his correspondent of the well-worn patristic topos that compares the liberal arts to the spoils of Israel’s Exodus, the gold and silver dishes, the gems, and various other beautiful things, which had been taken out of Egypt to be used more devotedly in the service of the Lord. Like these treasures, so too the spoils of the Greek and Roman dialectical and rhetorical arts had been taken over from the great authors of antiquity, to be put to the more devoted

---

751 PL 115, 1013D: ‘Quanta enim contra diversas haereses majores nostri egerint, testantur concilia multis totius orbis Patribus sancto Spiritu aggregata, testantur acta synodica, attestantur etiam doctrum probabilius scripta veridica, quibus actoritate insuperabili simplicitas atque soliditas de re fidei defensa atque invincibiliter approbata non tui quadruvii tricis involuta ac deterius implicata dignoscitur.’

752 Leo, Epistola 164 (PL 115, 1014A – 1015B) and Epistola 162 (PL 115, 1015B).


759 PL 115, 1016C-1016D.
purpose of defending the faith against those who would despise the gospel for its simplicity. In an interesting (and to my knowledge original) extension of this metaphor, Prudentius will critique Erigena’s enjoyment of the arts for their own sake as comparable to the sin of Achan, who had misappropriated the spoils from the Hebrews’ conquest of Jericho for his own private use (Josh. 7). Erigena had imitated neither the Israelites in the Exodus, nor the Fathers in their own utilization of the arts. Rather, like Achan, he had taken from the enemy to enhance his own reputation and to please his patrons, all at the expense of catholic doctrine.

Prudentius believed that his opponent knew well the catholic position on predestination, but had chosen instead to use his facility in dialectic to argue the position of his patrons. The Scot had introduced his method as “philosophy,” the path to wisdom, but had followed instead the path of the mercenary. He had become a “philocompus,” a lover of pus and venom.

Whether Erigena read these words indifferently, as a young scholar chastened by an aging and increasingly irascible prelate, or painfully, as a friend, stung by the criticism of a dear colleague, we cannot say for certain. But there is a ring of truth to the charge. Perhaps the Scot had intended his arguments to be so esoteric as to preempt a direct engagement of them by his colleagues?

**Divine Simplicity**

Whatever Erigena’s intentions in adverting to dialectic more often than to scripture, it is clear that Prudentius also had a command of the technical philosophical vocabulary used by his opponent. This technical facility is on full display in his rejection in chapters 2 and 3 of Erigena’s argument from the simplicity of God for the singularity of predestination. Prudentius comprehended well the Scot’s arguments and was able to detect terminological imprecision and logical sleights of hand in his opponent’s attempt to identify predestination with the divine essence. Though his response would be buttressed with patristic quotations, in between the excerpts from authorities, the bishop was responsive to the details of Erigena’s arguments and would address them on their own dialectically precise terms.

---

760 *Et dum studes placere hominibus, quibus id cordi esse noveras (si tamen sunt aliqui, quod avertat Veritas sempiterna), nequaquam vel cavisti, vel formidasti illi displicere, de quo super talibus Propheta intentando praedicit: Quoniam Deus dissipavit ossa eorum, qui hominibus placent confusi sunt, quoniam Deus sprevit eos. Nec metuisti cum Achan auream regulam ex Hieroconthino anathemate contra inhibuit castris Dominicos inferre, jamjamque cum ipso sententiam divinae animadversionis, nisi citius humiliter resipiscendo poenitueris, merito subiturus.* PL 115, 1016D-17A.

761 *In promptu est nimirum jactantiae studens, et non jam philosophus, sed philocompus videri appetens, ea nobis ingerere delegisti quae a nullo nostrum vel intelligi, vel deprehendi, vel certe confutari posse credideras.* PL 115, 1016D.
Against the Scot’s claim that predestination is identical to the divine essence and so must be singular, Prudentius maintained that predestination is not predicated essentially but relatively of God, such that it should be understood as one of the manifold effects or operations of the divine will within the conditions of time. Here, by establishing his facility in one of the principal tools of the early medieval dialectician – the ten categories of Aristotle – the bishop demonstrated that he had not forfeited or deferred an analytical refutation of his opponent out of his own lack of philosophical depth. Both Eriugena and Prudentius likely knew the Categories through the Ps. Augustinian *Decem categoriae*, a short introduction to logic, written in the fourth century and perhaps introduced to the Carolingian schoolroom by Alcuin.

John Marenbon has shown how effectively Eriugena had applied the *Decem* to theological discourse by the time of his *Periphyseon*. But Prudentius will belittle the Scot’s poor command of categorical theory in his *De praedestinatione*. Perhaps wanting to demonstrate his expertise to his opponent (or perhaps to insult him with pedantry), the bishop offers, in the tone of a master addressing a recalcitrant student, a tutorial on the categories as they might be more appropriately related to the doctrine of God:

For although it is evident that there are ten species of categories and of these, the first is essence (usiam), the remaining nine are accidents, that is, things which happen to a substance, and there is a certain relation according to happening, not according to being. I by no means see how you can call an accident a substance. For destining and predestining, just like making, creating, disposing, dispensing, ordaining, administering, governing, judging, condemning, and the rest, is said relatively. No one who follows the knowledge of these things even a little is entirely ignorant of this. For when something is “destined” it is necessary that there be one destining and another having been destined. And according to the latter “to destine” is not said substantially, the way that something is said “to be.” Indeed, being is a substance, but doing is its accident, that is, it shows relation. For when one says “man,” it is a substance, when one says “destinator,” it is his accident, that is a relation is predicated. Indeed *ousia* points essentially to a single thing, but the happening of it embraces more things. For saying “man,” I announce nothing other than man, but when I have said “destinator,” I am simultaneously announcing both the man and his accident. For

---

762 ‘Dicitur quippe voluntas Dei essentia ejus, dicuntur etiam voluntates ejus pluraliter, nec tamen essentiae ejus pluraliter proferuntur, sed manente incommutabiliter remotaque a omni multiplicitatis capacitate essentia illius, voluntas ejus pluraliter effertur; non ut ipsa essentia multiplicetur, sed ut voluntatis ejus effectus pro distributionum ejus congruentiis atque diversitatibus multiplices declarantur.’ PL 115, 1026B.


Eriugena had argued that predestination, like Wisdom, Power, and Will, describes the Divine essence itself. Against this thesis, Prudentius points to terms predicated of God in scripture and in the works of the Fathers that refer to the divine Being in relation to particular aspects of his creation. These terms, such as creator, founder, maker, operator, disposer, governor, and judge, refer “in part to God and in part to his creation.” For Prudentius, predestination is an abstraction from one such term. God as “predestinator” depends upon the existence of a creation to predestine. To predestine and to dispose are necessarily to be in relation to what is predestined and disposed, and, therefore, these terms describe accidents, not in God, but in creation. “Predestination is not what he himself is, but it announces what he wills, disposes, and works.” The substance of God is never described plurally. But his predestinations and his dispositions are.

The Will and Human Freedom

If the ontological plurality or singularity of divine predestination was an abstract concern, the matter of the will was an immediate and practical matter, involving by implication questions of soteriology and theodicy. In asking whether the individual will is free or constrained, by extension it was also asked whence the cause of evil, whether the individual could choose the good in a fallen world, and what is the

---

765 Cum enim constet categoriarum species decem esse, earumdemque primam, usiam, reliquas novem, accidentia, id est quae accident in substantia, certumque sit relationem secundum accidens, non secundum usiam praedicari [.] qua fronte accidens substantiam nuncupes, nequaquam video. Nam destinare et praedestinare, sicut facere, creare, disponere, dispensare, ordinare, administrare, gubernare, judicare, dammare, et caetera similia relative dici nullus, qui horum aliquantulum assecutus est peritiam, prorsus ignorat. Quod enim destinatur, aliud necesse est sit destinans, aliud destinatum. Ac per hoc non substantialiter ita dicitur destinare, sicut dicitur esse: esse quippe substantiam, destinare vero ejus accidens, id est relationem significat. Itaque cum dicitur homo, substantia est, cum vero dicitur destinator, ejus accidens, id est relatio praedicatur; et usia quidem unum aliquid essentialiter demonstrat, accidens vero illius jam plura complectitur. Diceo etenim, homo, nihil aliud quam hominem pronuntio; at cum dixeroh destinator, et hominem et ejus accidens pariter enuntio. Nam destinatur necesse est aliquid destinet, homo vero ad nihil aliud relatum simpliciter substantia indicatur.’ PL 115, 1037A-C.

766 ‘Creator, conditor, factor, operator, dispositior, destinator, ordinarius, gubernator, judex relatio proferuntur, quae tamen relatio [for ralatio] in Deo partim ad se, partim ad creaturas referitur.’ PL 115, 1037D.

767 PL 115, 1037D.

768 ‘Praedestinatio non quid ipse sit, sed quid velit, disponat et operetur enuntiat.’ PL 115, 1038D.

769 This distinction between God considered a se versus God in relation to his creation, which Prudentius will establish in his response to Eriugena’s chapters 2-3, reappears in chapter 15. PL 115, 1205B-1206B.
role of the will in human salvation. It was also being asked whether it was appropriate to speak of such a thing as an “evil will.” We might recall that it was the implications for human freedom of Gottschalk’s teaching that had first attracted the concern of Rabanus in the early 840s.\textsuperscript{770} In the immediate aftermath of Quierzy (849), human freedom had also become a preoccupation of Hincmar, who was concerned that the simple-minded, under the sway of Gottschalk, might conclude their will to be bound by God’s predestination and use this belief as a license to sin freely and neglect the sacraments of the church.\textsuperscript{771}

Eriugena, commissioned by Hincmar and his supporters specifically to write against Gottschalk, had argued in defense of a high view of human freedom. The will had been created good by a perfectly good God and endowed with free choice. The will was not constrained or compelled by the foreknowledge or the predestination of God either to choose rightly or evilly.\textsuperscript{772} The cause of sin is neither in God’s knowledge nor in his will, nor in the human will, properly speaking, but rather in a certain movement (\textit{motus}) of the individual will away from God. Thus, Eriugena had distinguished between free will, the essence of a human person, which is always good, from “free choice” (\textit{liberum arbitrium}), which is not a substance, but rather a “motion.”\textsuperscript{773} After the Fall, the will had remained good (as all existing things are good) and truly free,\textsuperscript{774} only now it lacked the original vigor and power (\textit{virtus}) with which it had been created in the Garden.\textsuperscript{775} For Eriugena this weakness of choice, not some malicious will, was responsible for human failure. And it was this lassitude that required the grace of God to fortify the will so that it could again choose the Good.

In chapters five and six of his response, Prudentius offers a scathing rebuke of Eriugena and puts forward an alternative to his account of the will. If the post-lapsarian will remained truly good and free, he points out, then the individual would have no need of the cooperating grace of God in order to choose

\textsuperscript{770} MGH \textit{Epistolae}, t. 5, p. 481.
\textsuperscript{771} \textit{Ad reclusos et simplices}, Gundlach, “Zwei epistolae,” 261.
\textsuperscript{772} \textit{De praed.} 5.2 (Madec, 35; Brennan, 34-35) ; my reconstruction of Eriugena’s argument owes much to O’Meara, \textit{Eriugena}, 40-42.
\textsuperscript{773} This distinction is made most clearly in Chapter 8, ‘De differentia inter naturam hominis et liberum eius arbitrium.’ See especially \textit{De praed.} 8. 8.6-8 (Madec, 51-54; Brennan, 54-55).
\textsuperscript{774} \textit{De praed.} 5.6-7 (Madec, 38-39; Brennan, 36-37); and 7.1 (Madec, 44; Brennan, 45-46).
\textsuperscript{775} ‘Atqui humana natura non solum voluntas est sed et libera, nec eius libertas falsa sed uera est, quamuis ipsa libertas post peccatum in tantum uitiatu sit ut poena eius impediatur ne aut recte uiuere uelit aut, si uelit, non possit. De qua miseria liberatur, ut ait apostolus, gratia dei per Ihesum Christum, manente tamen adhuc naturali libertate, quae intelligitur beatitudinis appetitu, qui ei naturaliter insitus est.’ \textit{De praed.} 5.4 (Madec, 37; Brennan, 35-36).
the Good.  

This was the argument of the Pelagians, who had been condemned by church synods and refuted in the “books of Augustine.”  

The Irishman had openly and brazenly contradicted authority. Moreover, his argument could be shown to fail on logical grounds. If an essentially good will is indeed unable to choose God apart from grace, as Eriugena was obligated to maintain, then that will could not be considered truly free. This would be the equivalent of a blind man choosing to see or a lame man willing to walk.  

No matter how ardent the willing, without the ability to see or to walk, the blind and lame remain bound by their impairment. Likewise, if the will is unable to choose God, whether through constraint acting on it externally or through its own inherent weakness, then it is not truly free.  

Prudentius supports this contention with extensive quotations from Gregory, *Moralia,* and Augustine, *De dono perseverantiae* and *Enchiridion.* In a subsequent chapter (c. 8), he goes on to reject his opponent’s facile distinction between free will (*libera voluntas*) and free choice of the will (*liberum arbitrium*), using support from Augustine, *Retractationes.* Against Eriugena’s contrived distinction between the will itself and the exercising of the will, he submits that the will is fallen, bound only to commit evil under its own power.  

Though created good, it had suffered such real and persistent damage in the fall that one should distinguish between the pre- and postlapsarian will. The postlapsarian will is no longer free. It is now constrained by its own fallenness, by its own necessity to sin. For those whom God has elected to save, however, the will is equally constrained, as it must be corrected and compelled, through grace, to will the Good. “For if no one is compelled to loving and fearing God, then what is it that the Lord through the prophet says: ‘I make it so that you might observe

---

776 PL 115, 1081A.  
777 In addressing Eriugena, Prudentius speaks of “your fathers, the Pelagians” (*secundum Pelagianos patres tuos*) PL 115, 1096C. See also PL 115, 1088B.  
778 The analogy is extended to other forms of impairment (the blind, lame, mute, deaf, and the impaired mind) at PL 115, 1087D.  
779 PL 115, 1088D-1089A.  
780 PL 115, 1089A-1089C.  
781 PL 115, 1090A-D; and 1091B-D.  
782 ‘Falsum est ergo quod inter liberam voluntatem liberumque arbitrium hanc distantiam finxeras, ut liberam voluntatem ad naturam, liberum autem arbitrium ad motum liberae voluntatis referenda docuisses.’ PL 115, 1100C. This after summarizing succinctly Eriugena’s position at PL 115, 1099B-C. Then quotations from *Retractationes* (PL 115, 1100A-1102C) are used to counter Eriugena’s quotations (in *De praed.* 8) from Augustine, *De libero arbitrio,* *De Genesi ad litteram,* and *De vera religione.*  
783 PL 115, 1081A-82C.  
784 ‘Motus itaque animae rationalis ante peccatum tam fuerat liber quam voluntarius; post peccatum autem servitio durissimae necessitatis addictus, Domino suo etiam nolens servire compellitur.’ PL 115, 1092A.
my precepts and keep my judgments’” (Ezech. 11, 20). Throughout these chapters (4-8), the bishop will remind his reader of the numerous examples from scripture and the Fathers of God correcting, directing, and constraining the saints to be good.785

**Divine Judgment and the Body**

In the second half of the *Contra Eriugenam*, the ground shifts from the boundaries fixed by Augustine and his fifth-century interpreters in the earlier controversies over free will, divine grace, and predestination. In his final four chapters, Eriugena had drawn upon Neoplatonic ontological and cosmological frameworks to explain how both the punishment of the condemned and the beatification of the elect could participate in the same eternal movement of the Divine Will. Though he had affirmed bodily suffering with literal fire (c. 19),786 Eriugena had denied the existence of a geographically circumscribed place of punishment and, in so doing, had rejected the traditional doctrine of hell.787 Prudentius recognized that his opponent’s closing arguments had stepped onto new terrain and worked at length to refute, on both logical and scriptural grounds, the Scot’s Neoplatonically informed account of damnation.

Eriugena had argued that the resurrected bodies of saints will become ethereal; the bodies of the damned, aerial.788 This claim, which appears to be unique in Latin Christian eschatology,789 was designed to connect moral degradation or beatification to ontological states chosen by the individual over time through habituation to vice or to virtue, thus removing Divine predestination as the primary cause of damnation for the condemned. The Scot’s argument assumed an ontology that equated various levels of

---

785 See especially the catena of quotations from scripture at PL 115, 1081C-1082C.
786 *De praed.* 19.1 (Madec, 118; Brennan, 125).
787 *De praed.* 19.1-2 (Madec, 118-19; Brennan, 125-26).
788 *De praed.* 19.2 (Madec, 119; Brennan, 125). This assertion, that the bodies of the resurrected will be aethereal and the condemned aerial, is found only the the *De praedestinatione*. For a comparison of the views with the purely intelligible post mortem body described in the *Periphyseon*, see Valery V. Petroff, “Eriugena on the Spiritual Body,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 79 (2005), 597-610.
789 Eriugena effectively argues that resurrected bodies will be connatural with angelic beings, such that the reprobate will share an aerial nature with fallen angels, ie. demons (who were believed to inhabit the airy region) and the blessed will be connatural to angels (whose bodies were allowed to be fiery by Augustine, *De Genesi* III, 9-10). Though an analogous doctrine can be found in Origen (which analogy Prudentius himself would make in his criticism of the Scot), Latin Christian authors, including Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory, all insisted on the materiality of the resurrected body. For Eriugena’s doctrine of the resurrected body, situated within the broader patristic engagement with neoplatonic demonology, and within the evolution of the Scot’s own thought, see Petroff, “Eriugena on the Spiritual Body”; and idem, “Theoriae of the Return,” 527-579.
being with the four elements of the world, which, in turn, were associated with the regions of the cosmos, descending from their divine source, through the aethereal, airy, humid, and mundane worlds.\textsuperscript{790} Aether is superior to air, that is, both ontologically superior and physically more proximate to the divine essence.\textsuperscript{791} Just as the devil, an angelic and so ethereal body, was cast out of the heavens into the lower regions of the air, so too the souls of the condemned, resurrected in airy bodies, would dwell in the aerial region, below the fiery and ethereal.\textsuperscript{792} Their bodies would suffer both the sensation of fire, wrought by their removal from the presence of God and the physical pain caused by their proximity to aether, which Eriugena identified as the fourth element, physically identical to mundane fire.\textsuperscript{793} With their bodies fixed in this manner, in graded descent throughout the cosmic expanse of the airy regions, the condemned, remarkably, would retain “the integrity of their substance” as well as their beauty.\textsuperscript{794} In this way, Eriugena professed an “aesthetics of damnation,” wherein the suffering condemned are beheld as beautiful by the blessed, without in any way diminishing the severity of their torment.\textsuperscript{795} “So it comes about that all bodies are made glorious by that very same fire by which punishment will be heaped up from outside upon souls damned from within by their own wickedness.”\textsuperscript{796} In other words, Eriugena had rejected the idea of a punitive fire, specifically prepared for the reprobate. He had instead proposed that

\textsuperscript{790} \textit{De praed}. 19.2 (Madec, 119; Brennan, 125).
\textsuperscript{791} \textit{De praed}. 19.2 (Madec, 119; Brennan, 125).
\textsuperscript{792} \textit{De praed}. 19.2 (Madec, 119; Brennan, 125).
\textsuperscript{793} \textit{De praed}. 19.1 (Madec, 118-119; Brennan, 125).
\textsuperscript{794} ‘Cum ergo, ut diximus, suprema omnium corporum qualitas, quae est aetherea, inferiores qualitates et intra se ambiendo coartat et in se, prout lex naturarum sinit, commouere non desinat, naturarum intra se mirabile perficitur gaudium, malorum uero ulunctatum ineffabile tormentum. Proinde impiorum omnium, angelorum uidelicet hominumque peruersorum, corpora ita sunt supplicia ignis aeterni perpessura ut, integritate eorum substantiae nullo modo peritura, eorum pulchritudine nullo modo defutura, eorum naturali incolumitate permansura, omnibus deinde naturae bonis ad uniusersitatis ornamentum mirabili ordine refulsiris, excepta beatitudine qua priuabuntur quae non est ex natura sed ex gratia, superioris ignis corporei cum inferioris aeris corporibus qualitate colluctante, naturali ui seruata, infelicium animarum intentio de corporibus suis aeternas patiatur aerumnas; ita uidelicet ut idem ipse ignis omnibus corporibus fiat gloria, quo dammandis animabus intrinsecus iniquitate propria extrinsecus cumulabitur poena.’ \textit{De praed}. 19.2 (Madec, 119-20; Brennan, 126).
\textsuperscript{795} It has also been suggested (see Petroff, \textit{Theoriae of the Return},” 534-37) that Eriugena's vision of hell could have been influenced by Hiberno-Latin and Irish vernacular sources, such as the \textit{Liber de ordine creaturarum} (see edition of Manuel C. Díaz Y Díaz, \textit{Liber de ordine creaturarum. Un anonimo irlandes del siglo VII} (Santiago de Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 1972), ) and the Altas prosator (translation in Thomas Owen Clancy and Gilbert Markus, eds., \textit{Iona. The Earliest Poetry of a Celtic Monastery} (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 44-53 [esp. stanzas G, H, T, and Z]).
\textsuperscript{796} Ibid. (last line)
the ontologically distinct bodies of the condemned and the blessed will experience the existing physics of
the cosmos differently. That is, one eternal fire will simultaneously beatify the saints and punish sinners.

Prudentius, as we might expect, was deeply critical of his opponent’s Platonizing explanation of the
traditional doctrine of divine judgment, which had gone well beyond even the most imaginative existing
engagement of Latin Christian authors with the Neoplatonic tradition. He criticized the Scot’s
understanding of eternal punishment as contrary to authority, weak philosophically, and insufficiently
cognizant of the relevant passages in scripture (in light of their exposition by the Fathers). His critique
focused primarily on two issues: 1. Eriugena’s identification of mundane fire with the fires of Gehenna
(which could be defeated on empirical grounds) and 2. his insufficient view of the materiality of the body
that eternal fire is designed to punish.

First, Eriugena’s claim that the eternal fires that torment the condemned are indeed the fourth element,
the same fire given for the necessities and daily use of mortals. Eriugena was not the first to assert that
fire, the fourth element, is identical to aether, which was usually counted as a fifth element, ontologically
distinct from fire. But he may have arrived at this conclusion through his own independent
investigations. For Prudentius, the identification of fire with aether was problematic because it was
impious. Such a view, which attempted to harmonize the fires of hell with the physical properties of
known elements, was inattentive to the particular language of Christ, who had stated in the Gospels that
the fires of Gehenna were “prepared” for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). Scripture indicates that
this fire was prepared specifically as punishment and that hell fire is physically “inextinguishable.” “For
why was it necessary for it specifically to be said ‘prepared’ for the torture of sinners, if the very fire
procured was the one already known for the necessities and uses of all mortals?” Moreover, the eternal
fires of Gehenna are not compatible with what can be presently observed of the fourth element. Whereas

---

797 On the uniqueness of Eriugena’s assertion of a single fire by which the condemned are punished and the
blessed beatified, see Petroff, “Theoriae of the Return,” 532-34.
798 Cicero, De natura deorum, II.26-27.
799 Petroff (“Theoriae of the Return”) does not comment on the uniqueness of this claim, nor does Madec,
in his notes to the De praedestinatione. I have not yet been able to satisfactorily trace the identification of fire with
aether (making both “the fourth element”) in Eriugena’s sources. I must thank Aaron Johnson for suggesting the
possible influence of the Latin translations and commentaries of Calcidius on Plato’s Timaeus, but no existing
scholarship suggests the availability of Calcidius to Eriugena at this time (Madec, for example, does not include the
author in his “Index Auctorum” to the De prae).
800 ‘Quid enim necesse erat specialiter dici paratum cruciatui peccatorum, si ipse esset qui omnium
mortalium necessitatibus atque utilitatis noscitur procuratus?’ PL 115, 1320C.
mundane fire requires the nourishment of kindling, is easily extinguished by removing its fuel, and has the effect of consuming whatever it touches, the inextinguishable fires of Gehenna will burn the body eternally, with each sinner tormented more or less severely depending on the variety and immensity of his or her crimes.\textsuperscript{801} Scripture also indicates that this fire will neither consume nor substantially degrade the body.\textsuperscript{802} Attentive to the physical properties of known fire and faithfully adherent to the biblical account of eternal fire, Prudentius concluded that the fires of Gehenna were not the same as the fourth element of the world. He supported his view with a lengthy quotation from book four of Gregory’s \textit{Dialogues}.\textsuperscript{803}

It is worth puzzling here why it is so important for the fires of hell to possess fundamentally different physical properties from mundane fire. “This is not a small question,” believed Prudentius.\textsuperscript{804} Both our author and his opponent recognized a tension between the doctrine of a bodily resurrection and the scriptural accounts of a fiery eternal punishment for the reprobate. In the world to come, either fire must burn differently, in such a way that the body can burn without being physically degraded. Or bodies must change, so that known fire can burn in its usual way without consuming or annihilating the condemned. Eriugena had chosen fire over bodies. He had posited a new, insufficiently corporeal body, so that he could identify the fires of Gehenna, attested in scripture, with the fourth element of the world and with the aethereal regions of the cosmos. It was a philosophically elegant solution, which drew upon and harmonized scripture with Neoplatonic cosmology.

In reply, Prudentius resolutely affirmed the resurrection of a material body. All mortals, both saints and sinners, will be resurrected in bodies of flesh and blood. For the saints, those bodies will be made incorruptible (I Cor. 15), that is, unsusceptible to sin and substantially non degradable, but nevertheless composed of the same material properties as their premortem antecedents: “Obviously aether is not flesh, nor is it enclosed in a fleshlike skin, nor is it bound together with bones and nerves, which the Lord himself, after having been glorified in the resurrection, showed that he himself had, when he said: ‘See my hand and feet, that it is me. Handle and see (Luke 24:38).’”\textsuperscript{805} The resurrected Christ had risen in an

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{801} PL115, 1320C-D.
\item \textsuperscript{802} PL115, 1320D.
\item \textsuperscript{803} PL115, 1320D-1322B.
\item \textsuperscript{804} ‘Utrum autem ipse sit qui quartum mundi elementum vocatur, non parva quaestio est.’ PL 115, 1030B.
\item \textsuperscript{805} ‘Aether quippe non est caro, neque pelle carnea circumdatur, neque ossibus et nervis compingitur. Quam ipse Domus jam resurrectione glorificatus se habere manifestat, qui dixit: Videte manus meas, et pedes meos, quia ipse ego sum: palpate, et videte quia spiritus carnem et ossa non habet, sicut me videtis habere [Luke 24:38]. Item
incorruptible, but real and material, body of which it could be said to the Apostle Thomas: “‘Put in thy finger hither and see my hands. And bring hither the hand and put it into my side (John 20:27).’”

No one who is orthodox has asserted, no one has taught, that this can be done in an ethereal body. You have given in to the understanding of Origen, who often, while explaining the resurrection, would enhance many times the resurrection and glorification of the body, denying the flesh altogether and deceitfully disguising [this view] under the name ‘body.’

The name Origen is invoked here to chasten one who had too much allegorized, spiritualized, or Platonized the simple truth of the orthodox faith. Prudentius would have viewed Origen’s teachings (perhaps unfairly) through the fourth- and fifth-century controversies in the Latin church over “Origenism,” which had ruptured the networks of Christian intellectuals in Palestine and severed the friendship between Jerome and Rufinus. Echoing this earlier debate, Prudentius will quote from Jerome's Contra Rufinum, book II, later in the chapter, to provide support for his defense of the materiality of the resurrected body.

Perhaps precisely to avoid the charge of “Origenism,” Eriugena had earlier claimed that aethereal and aerial bodies, though composed of attenuated matter, could nevertheless be defined as corporeal and material. Prudentius was determined to prove otherwise. Pulling from the shelf Isidore’s Etymologies, he will establish the properties of both aether and air. “‘Aether,’ as Isidore says, ‘is the place where the stars are. It signifies fire, which is the splendor of aether.’” Even air, having a greater mixture of porousness
than other elements, belongs “only partly to the world of earthly material, partly to the celestial.” He then provides additional evidence, drawn from Bede’s *Commentaries on the Hexameron*, of the insufficiently corporeal quality of both aether and air. Clearly, as both reason and authority attest, neither air nor aether can be counted as material: a body composed of either element should be counted a spirit. “Since they [aether and air] are [defined in this way], if the bodies of saints are changed into an ethereal quality, they are either fire, and so will part with the reality of an earthly body or they are heaven and stars, and thus will lack in no small way flesh, bones, and nerves.”

Now Prudentius must show why such a body would disagree with the witness of scripture. Here he turns to I Cor. 15, the *locus classicus* in scripture for the doctrine of the resurrection. The Apostle had said of the resurrected body: “it is sown in corruption; it shall rise in incorruption . . . It is sown a natural body; it shall rise a spiritual body” (I Cor. 15:44). In using the word “spiritual,” Prudentius argues that the Apostle was not preaching a loss of substance or of corporeality, but rather emphasizing the “glorification” of a body devoted to the things of the spirit. The resurrected body was not to be a body transformed from material to immaterial. Rather, it would be a material body of flesh and blood made incorruptible, that is, incapable of sin or of substantial degradation. Prudentius draws initial support for this distinction from Jerome, *Ad Galatas*, *In expositione Jonae*, and *Contra Jovinianum*, Book I; Augustine, *Enchiridion* (cc. 88, 91); and Gregory, *Moralia*, Book XIV. But the most effective patristic support will come from *De civitate Dei*.

In turning to the closing chapters of the *City of God*, our author could again demonstrate his sophistication in the reading of Augustine. Not unlike Augustine’s modern exegetes, Prudentius

---

810 Aether, ut Isidorus ait [Orig. lib. XIII, c.5,7], locus est in quo sidera sunt, et significat eum ignem, qui a toto mundo in altum separatus est. Sane aether est ipsum elementum, aethera vero splendor aetheris, et est sermo Graecus. Aer est inanitas plurimum habens admistum raritatis, quam caetera elementa, hic autem partim ad terram, partim ad coelestem materiam pertinet. Nam ille subtilis, ubi ventosi, ac procellosi motus non possunt existere, ad coelestem pertinet partem.’ PL 115 1323D-1324A.


812 Quae cum ita sint si sanctorum corpora in aetheream qualitatem mutabuntur, aut erunt ignis, et amittent veritatem terreni corporis, aut erunt coelem et sidera, et carebunt nihilomenus carne, ossibus et nervis: quod quam sit a sinceritate Christianae fidei alienum neminem studiosorum latet.’ PL 115, 1324B.

813 PL 115, 1324D-1325B.

814 PL 115, 1325B-D.

815 PL 115, 1326A-B.

816 PL 115, 1326B.

817 PL 115, 1327A-1329C.
recognized a distinction between the earlier and the later Augustine, using the *Retractationes* (as he does throughout his *Contra Eriugena*) as a guide to Augustine’s considered views on the resurrection of the body.\(^{818}\) In three of his earlier works – the *Liber Quaestionum octoginta trium*, *De agone Christiano*, and *De fide et Symbolo* – Augustine had suggested that resurrected bodies will be “very light and ethereal” (*Liber quaestionum*) or “no longer flesh and blood, but heavenly” (*De agone* and *De Fide et Symbolo*). But in the *Retractationes*, the Father had warned that if a reader of these earlier works had understood him to have said “that at the time of the resurrection neither [the body’s] members nor the substance of the flesh will exist,” then that reader would have been in error.\(^{819}\) The nature of the resurrected body, insists the *Retractationes* in the section quoted by Prudentius, “is much better handled in the work entitled *De civitate Dei*.\(^{820}\) Following this recommendation, Prudentius next shifts to *De civitate*, Book 22, where Augustine had treated at length the nature, physical characteristics, and capabilities of the post resurrection body.\(^{821}\) *De civitate* 22 clearly states that the resurrected body will be a body of flesh and blood, yet unsusceptible to vice and perfected in virtue.

Having traced Augustine’s mature position from the *Retractationes* to the *City of God*, Prudentius then seems to have discovered additional evidence from Augustine with which to refute several of his opponent’s earlier assertions. Three substantial quotations follow from *De civitate* 21,\(^{822}\) each designed to relitigate the qualities of condemned bodies and the nature of the fires of Gehenna, both of which issues had already been debated at the start of the chapter. As the reader traces the thread of Prudentius’ arguments, together with his quotations from patristic authority, he gains a sense for the ways in which (then as now) erudition could combine with happy accidents of discovery. One has the impression of a scholar, eagerly adding footnotes to support an argument already vigorously proven, only to discover that the top authority in the field has already proven one’s case for him. With the turn to *De civitate* 21, Prudentius could detect another false note in his opponent’s own learning. To demonstrate that mundane fire is capable of burning bodies without consuming them, Eriugena had pulled from Augustine, without attribution, examples of exotic elements – such as asbestos, the salamander, and the lava of Mt. Etna –

\(^{818}\) *Retract.* I, I c. 26; *Retract.* I, 2, c. 3 (quoted at PL 115, 1329D-1330C).

\(^{819}\) *Retract.* I, 1, c. 26 (quoted at PL 115, 1329D).

\(^{820}\) *Retract.* I, 1, c. 26 (quoted at PL 115, 1329D).

\(^{821}\) *civ. Dei* 22, c. 24 (PL 115, 1330C-1331A).

\(^{822}\) *civ. Dei* 21.4 (PL 115, 1332A-B); *civ. Dei* 21.9 (PL 115, 1332B-33B); *civ. Dei* 21.9-10 (PL 115, 1333C-34C).
that point to material bodies known to burn without substantial degradation.\textsuperscript{823} The bishop could now trump his opponent’s false erudition with the original: “You have taken over these things, or rather compiled them, from the books of the blessed Augustine, although you change completely the meaning which he had given them.”\textsuperscript{824}

Our author’s turn to \textit{De cивitate dei} should not surprise us. This masterwork of Augustine, conceived in response to the literary aftermath of Alaric’s sack of Rome, was for ninth-century intellectuals not merely an apologetic work or a work of political theory. Like Isidore’s \textit{Etymologiae}, the \textit{De cивitate} had become a standard encyclopedia of classical learning, as well as a learned source on more obscure questions in natural philosophy and cosmology, as well as in theological anthropology. Books 20-22, in particular, were standard texts in a series of ninth-century debates surrounding anthropological problems posed by Christian eschatology, especially by the question of the soul’s relationship to the body and of the resurrected body’s materiality.\textsuperscript{825} For example, Ratramnus of Corbie was at that time (in 853) writing a treatise on the soul’s relationship to corporeal and incorporeal substances.\textsuperscript{826} Rabanus had already written a work on the vision of God (\textit{De vidento Deum}),\textsuperscript{827} in which it was asked whether the elect shall see the Divine with physical eyes. Lupus had also addressed this question in response to Gottschalk, who wrote from his confinement at Hautvillers. Eriugena likewise produced a treatise \textit{De visione Dei} (now lost), which would have taken up the same theme.\textsuperscript{828} In several of these works, the closing books of \textit{De cивitate} were used both to pose and to resolve questions surrounding the resurrected body, the beatific vision, and the punishment of the condemned. Thus, the doctrines of the resurrection and of eternal fire under discussion here by our author and by his opponent may be read in light of these other,

\textsuperscript{823} \textit{De praed.} 19.4 (Madec, 120).

\textsuperscript{824} ‘Quae cum ex beati Augusti libris mutuaveris, vel potius compilaveris, alio penitus sensu quam ab eo fuerant posita protulisti: ille enim ad hoc de asbesto, salamandra, et montibus Aetnae similitudinem proposuit, ut paganorum contradictionibus exemplo temporalium rerum multisque non ignotarum occurreret, qui negabant fieri posse ut corpora igni arderent et consumi nullatenus possent.’ PL 115, 1337A.

\textsuperscript{825} On the series of tracts produced to address these topics, many of which were written contemporaneous with the decade long controversy over predestination, see P. Delhaye, \textit{Une Controverse sur l’âme universelle au IXe siècle} (Namur: Centre d’Etudes Médiévales, 1950); Moran, \textit{Philosophy of Eriugena}, 24-25.


\textsuperscript{827} Rabanus, \textit{De vivendo Deum}, PL 126, 1261D-1332D.

contemporary conversations. These questions of the body’s resurrection, of its punishment, and its beatification went well beyond the narrow debate occasioned by Gottschalk’s treatment at Quierzy. That smaller question of predicking the term “gemina” of God’s predestination had given way to a broader and more consequential project. Prudentius was now working, as was his opponent, Eriugena, to discover the place of the human person within the cosmic scope of an awaited reconciliation of all things to their divine source. Even in our distance from the period, we can see why, for Prudentius, “this is not a small question.”

*BNF Lat. 2445 and the Visual Argument of the Contra Eriugenam*

The foregoing survey does not account fully for the richness of the *De praedestinatione* as an example of our author’s approach to theological debate. The form of the text and its content are inextricably linked in ways that frustrate broad summary. In calling the views of his opponent “impiety,” “blasphemy,” and “perversity,” Prudentius was particularly concerned about the propositional and dialectical nature of the Scot’s approach to the mysteries of faith. Against the tone, the method, and the aesthetic of Eriugena’s nineteen chapters, the *De praedestinatione* of Prudentius offers not just a refutation. It simultaneously puts forward an alternative model of the literary and aesthetic dimensions of pious inquiry. As we have observed in chapter five, this alternative model of theological discourse, which valued the accumulation and reappropriation of authoritative texts, was broadly shared by a number of Prudentius’ colleagues. Gottschalk had quoted extensively from the Fathers. Hincmar, Rabanus, Lupus, Ratramnus, and Florus all practiced the compilation of lengthy block quotations in their own writings on predestination, and even Eriugena had devoted a chapter of his *De praedestinatione* to the works of Augustine he deemed most relevant to his topic. Prudentius, however, seems to have gone beyond his contemporaries in both the quantity and quality of his citations. His text also evinces a particular care for the arrangement and visual force of these quotations on the manuscript page.

With more than 320 excerpts from patristic authors and numerous quotations from Eriugena and from scripture, the *De praedestinatione* contains in its pages a polyphony of voices. Though the edition of

---

829 PL 115, 1030B.  
830 ‘Caput 14. Testimonia sancti Augustini simul collecta quibus aperte conficitur non esse nisi unam praedestinationem camaque solummodo ad sanctos pertinere.’ *De praed.* 14 (Madec, 81-86). Testimonia include passages from *De correptione et gratia, De dono perseverantiae, Ps. Augustine, Hypomnesticon,* and *De libero arbitrio.*
Migne has done much to silence the volume and mitigate the cumulative force of these voices, on the manuscript page it can still be seen how the arguments of Prudentius were intended to collude visually with a chorus of patristic authors. The sole extant witness to the Contra Eriugenam is MS 2445 of the Bibliotheque Nationale de France, formerly of the library of Jacques August de Thou.831 This manuscript has long been suspected of a close association with the Cathedral of Troyes. Bischoff had observed that the text originated in “the region of Troyes”832 and Ganz later suggested that it was the autograph of our author, “still being assembled while it was being copied.”833 But no definitive argument had been made for this codex’s direct connection with Prudentius until a relatively recent study by Pierre Petitmengin. Before proceeding further, it would be well to review Petitmengin’s evaluation of the precise relationship between our author and this sole extant witness to the Contra Eriugenam.

In MS 2445 the text of the De praedestinatione is divided using three levels of rubrics. As Prudentius indicated in his introduction, the Theta (Θ), the letter formerly assigned to criminals sentenced to die,834 is employed to mark off and condemn the erroneous statements of Eriugena. Next, the replies of Prudentius and the words of patristic authority are marked by a Chi-Rho (☧), “the monogram of the name of Christ” (see Plates 1 and 2, below). A third level of text, which will contain the more extensive quotations from the Fathers, is indicated by the names of the patristic authors about to be quoted, in large rustic capitals, usually written significantly larger than the surrounding text. The resulting effect is calculated to give the patristic authorities a visually dominant presence on the page. The names are often left unabbreviated, with ample space on all sides, so that, upon viewing the manuscript page from a distance, one encounters a sea of text, out of which emerge the symbols of Eriugena and of Prudentius, surrounded by the names of the Fathers. The reader is given the experience of watching Prudentius and his numerous patristic allies shout down and drown out the solitary voice of the Scot (see Plate 2, below).

833 Ganz, “Debate on Predestination,” 293.
Beyond these three levels of text, Petitmengin has drawn attention to a fourth level, containing marginal and interlinear additions to the text and to the patristic citations, as well as to a number of parchment tabs introducing quotations too lengthy to be contained in the margins. These numerous additions, written in several different hands, are cued to the main text using tyronian notes (see Plate 3, below). Petitmengin does not say how many hands are responsible for these marginalia. But at least two are written contemporary with the main text (in addition to the several hands of later centuries responsible for the ex libris ‘Sichelmus dedit’ and occasional commentary on the text). One of these contemporary hands, “sometimes a little shaky,” can be found throughout the manuscript, elaborating and supplementing the text (for eg. the addition of ‘Reclamat autem aduersus . . .’ on fol. 7r) and introducing patristic quotations, which are then transcribed by (an)other copyist(s) (for e.g., the addition of De lib. arb. on fol 6r, l. 40).

This is the same hand responsible for numerous small corrections and stylistic improvements to the text of the author: for example, “nostrum veraciter <et proprie> appellari,”835 ‘ignorat’ for ‘nescit,’ when the latter had appeared in the preceding sentence,836 and the transformation of short citations into a full

---

835 Fol 14r l. 12; PL 115, 1045A.
836 Fol. 14r l. 14; PL 115, 1045A.
phrases, as in “<Unde et ipse beatissimus> Augustinus <in> libro de ciuitate dei VIII <inquit>.” These corrections were almost certainly introduced by Prudentius himself. “Who other than the author would have pressed the revision into such small details?”

Plate 2: BNF MS. 2445, fol. 113v.

---

837 Fol. 115v, l. 40.
If Petitmengin is correct and the author himself was responsible for a number of the revisions to MS 2445, then it would appear that we have a manuscript that preserves the text of the *Contra Eriugenum* much as Prudentius intended it to be read on the page. Moreover, we have the text in an unfinished state, revealing aspects of a larger process of composition and revision hidden from us in the modern printed edition. The production of MS 2445 was clearly a complex operation involving multiple stages of composition. First would have come a draft of the author’s direct refutation of the Scot, which incorporated some, but clearly not all, of the patristic quotations to be assembled in the final text. Next were added the texts of Eriugena’s *De praedestinatione*, excerpts from which had likely been marked by Prudentius to be incorporated later by a copyist into the text of his refutation (see plate 4). Then came the many citations of patristic authority added to our author’s refutation after he had written it but prior to the final stage of composition reflected in MS 2445. Finally, there were the numerous patristic quotations added in the margins and on parchment tabs, only after the manuscript (as we have it) had been written. In the process of reading his way into new topics and revisiting familiar ones, our author seems to have acquired several new texts specifically for the purpose of refuting his opponent. The full extent of this campaign of book acquisition (or of book borrowing) cannot be measured with precision, since we have no indication of which books the author had available but chose not to quote in the earlier letter to Hincmar. But the survival of MS 2445 confirms that Prudentius was indeed in the process of acquiring texts while composing (and even after he had composed already) his response to Eriugena. The marginal additions to the manuscript reveal numerous excerpts from the Fathers that were added only after the

---

Plate 4: BNF MS. 2445, fol. 3v.

initial writing of the *Contra Eriugenam* was substantially complete. These additions include Isidore’s *Sententiae*,\(^{840}\) a homily of Bede,\(^{841}\) sermons of Leo the Great,\(^{842}\) a letter of Boniface,\(^{843}\) as well as Augustine, *Confessiones* (5 citations),\(^{844}\) the *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum* (4),\(^{845}\) *De libero arbitrio* (5),\(^{846}\) *De nuptiis et concupiscencia* (1),\(^{847}\) *Ennarratio in Ps. 66*,\(^{848}\) *Epistola 130*,\(^{849}\) and *Sermones* 26, 74, 153, and 292.\(^{850}\) Excerpts from all of these texts are found among the marginal and tabular additions.

\(^{840}\) *Sent. 2.6* (inserted between fol. 7v and 8 [PL 115, 1029A-C]).
\(^{841}\) *Hom. 65* (In dedicatione ecclesiae) (Fol. 93v [PL 115, 1260B-C]).
\(^{842}\) *Serm. 7* (Fol. 17v [PL 115, 1044B-C] and Fol. 93v [PL 115, 1260C-D]; and ‘Sermo de Passione Domini’ (unnumbered by Maug[\[\ldots\]\[\ldots\]n]) (Fol. 112v [PL 115, 1303C-D]).
\(^{843}\) Unidentified letter (Fol. 115r [PL 115, 1310]).
\(^{844}\) *Conf. 13.11* (inserted between fol. 16r and fol. 17v [1053A-C]); 13.20 (fol. 36r. [PL 115, 1110C-D]); 8.5 (fol. 76v [PL 115, 1211A-BJ]; 8.9-10 (fol. 76v, [PL 115, 1211B]); 8.10 (fol. 76v,[PL 115, 1211B-C]).
\(^{845}\) *c. adv. leg.* 1.15-16 (fol. 38v [PL 115, 1146A-1153A]); 1.22 (fol. 69v, [PL 115, 1189B-D]); 1.22 (fol. 76v [PL 115, 1211C-D]); 1.23 (fol. 76v-77r [PL 115, 1261C-62A]).
\(^{846}\) *lib. arb. proem.* (fol. 6r [PL 115, 1022D-23A]); 3.17 (fol. 25r [not printed in PL edition]); 3.27 (fol. 38v [not printed in PL]); 3.20 (fol. 94r [PL 115, 1280D-81A]); 3.23 (fol. 94r [PL 115, 1281A]).
\(^{847}\) *nupt. et conc.* 2.28-29 (fol. 76r [PL 115, 1208D-9D]).
\(^{848}\) *Ennarr. 66* (fol. 94r [PL 115, 1281D-82A]).
\(^{849}\) Fol. 32r [not printed in PL edition].
\(^{850}\) I have not been able to locate these sermons in the manuscript. They are reported as marginal additions in Petitmengin, “D’Agustin a Prudence de Troyes,” 249.
The variety and extent of the patristic works quoted by our author mark a significant increase over the number of citations found in the earlier letter to Hincmar. This proliferation of patristic citations likely arose not only from the polemical context of the work but also from the broader range of topics on which our author needed to consult the opinions of the Fathers in order to refute Eriugena. The technical discussions of the will (chpts. 4-7), the debate over the role of the liberal arts in theological discussion (chpts. 1, 13, 15, 16), the ontology of the divine (chaps. 2-3), the nature of the resurrected body (chpts. 17-18) and of eternal fire (chpt. 17-19) required Prudentius to read his way into new topics, acquire new texts, and weigh the relative reliability and authority of some texts over others. Clearly, the quotations from the Fathers were essential to the force of our author’s response to the Scot. But not all authorities who appear in the Contra Eriugenam were quoted in the same fashion. Some were judiciously excerpted to fit the immediate needs of a particular argument. For example, Book II of Isidore’s Sententiae (inserted on a parchment tab, between fol. 7 and 8, see Plate 5, above) provided key support for the author’s defense of the phrase “gemina praedestinatio,” which had been used by Gottschalk but rejected by Hincmar and Eriugena. The De libero arbitrio of Augustine had been cited by Eriugena and was necessary for Prudentius to incorporate into his arguments, even though his reply appears to have been

---

851 Gottschalk had quoted the same passage at least five times in his Confessio prolixior and De praedestinatione. See Lambot, ed., Godescal d’Orbais, 551.
852 Eriugena cites or alludes to the De lib. arb. 28 times according to Madec, ed., De praedestinatione, 152.
substantially complete when this text arrived in the cathedral library (the *De libero* only appears in marginal additions to the manuscript). The *Enchiridion*, though little used by Eriugena, had been quoted extensively by Gottschalk and by Lupus. 853 Prudentius would obtain the *Enchiridion* and cite it at least twenty times, more often than any other work of Augustine. 854 The *Retractationes* was another essential text, used both to gain summaries of works of Augustine that Prudentius had not yet read and to reveal his opponent’s scholarly naiveté in relying upon arguments that Augustine had reconsidered or even outright rejected toward the end of his life. 855 Other texts likewise fit naturally into the author’s argument: the sermons of Leo the Great and the prologue to Jerome’s *Commentary on Galatians* are aptly quoted to condemn Eriugena’s overreliance on dialectic. 856 Isidore’s *Etymologies* is used to arrive at definitions and explanations of disputed terms. 857 Short quotations from Fulgentius and Isidore supply proof texts deployed by colleagues of Prudentius who had also written in support of a double predestination. 858

For many of these texts it is immediately apparent where and precisely to what extent the quotation contributes to the author’s broader argument. Yet, there are also numerous citations, often of extravagant length, whose relevance to the argument is only discovered with some patience. What is the reader to make of lengthier quotations, only tangentially related or even unrelated to the point at hand? Moreover, why should certain authors be quoted at such great length as to lead the reader off into material irrelevant to or even distracting from the argument they are quoted to support?

Many of the several quotations from Gregory’s *Moralia* are of this latter type. The *Moralia* appears more often and is quoted at greater length than any other patristic text cited by Prudentius. Of the 33

853 For Gottschalk, see Lambot, ed., *Godescal d’Orbais*, 447; Lupus recommends the *Enchiridion* as the book that best withstood the “censorious severity” of the *Retractationes*. See *De tribus quaestionibus* PL 119, 643A.

854 See Petitmengin, “D’Agustin a Prudence de Troyes,” 247-8. Citations at PL 115, 989C-D; 1032C-1035B; 1049D; 1056A; 1070B-71A; 1088C-D; 1090A-D; 1091A-D; 1173A-B; 1212B-13C; 1250A; 1250A-C; 1254D; 1255B-D; 1259B-D; 1314D; 1326B; 1326C-D; 1334C-D. As noted in chapter 5, the recent work of Warren Pezé (“Deux Manuscrits Personnels”) has confirmed that Harvard, TYP 495, which contains the *Enchiridion*, was written for the Cathedral of Troyes at mid century.

855 See Petitmengin, “D’Agustin a Prudence de Troyes,” 249. Citations at PL115, 1041D-42A; 1069B-70A; 1099D; 1100A-B; 1100D-01B; 100C-D; 1101B-D; 1101D-02A; 1102A-C; 1102C-06B; 1206B-C; 1261C; 1300A; 1329D-30A; and 1330B-C.


857 PL 115 1323D-1324A.

858 Fulgentius, *De Praed.* c. 26[PL 115, 1023B – 1023C]; Isidore *Sent.* 2.6 [PL 115, 1029A-C].
discrete quotations from this text, at least 7 occupy one or more folios of the manuscript (running to two or more columns of the *Patrologia Latina*). To take only one example at random: In chapter 2 Prudentius will quote some 69 lines from the *Moralia*’s commentary on Job 38, in which Yahweh, having listened in silence to his servant’s lament, at last speaks to Job. Yahweh’s words, spoken “out of the storm,” had given Gregory the opportunity to elaborate on God’s providential ordering of the universe. Yet, Prudentius does not appear to have selected the quotation from Gregory with the same degree of judiciousness he would apply to other authors, such as Cassiodorus, Isidore, and Fulgentius (for whom more precise quotations are the usual practice). The attentive reader of the *Contra Eriugenam* will note the extravagance of such a lengthy quotation when due carefulness and incisiveness with the development of the author’s argument might be expected. The manuscript context of MS. 2445 ff. 6-11v, however, will reveal the ways in which such a lengthy excerpt from Gregory (even when imperfectly related to the immediate needs of the author) could cooperate with other patristic authorities to create a visual argument parallel to the author’s own rhetorical and dialectical refutations. Here the 69 lines from Gregory’s *Moralia* are combined with 14 lines of Isidore, *Sent.* II, 35 lines of Augustine, Sermon 71, and 107 lines of Augustine, *Enchiridion* for a total of 261 lines of patristic authority to 190 lines of material original to Prudentius. The passages from Isidore and from Augustine, *Enchiridion*, both directly address the predestination of God, while the passage from Gregory only addresses the topic obliquely, as part of a broader exegetical program. Gregory’s usefulness here derives primarily from the rubric used to indicate his presence in the text and from the very bulkiness of the quotation from his *Moralia*. The reader need only glance at the text to absorb the visual argument indicated by the interplay of the sigla (Θ and ☧) together with the generous rubrics indicating the principal names in our author’s mental hierarchy of patristic authority:

Θ IOH ☧ Θ IOH GREGORIUS ☧ ISIDORUS ☧ AUGUSTINUS ☧ AUGUSTINUS ☧ Θ IOH

Such an effect would play imperfectly if our author were to create an imbalance between his own words and the words of authority. Imbalance would also follow from excessive quotation from a single source or repeated quotations from the same author (such as Augustine). Clearly, the bishop was sensitive to the

---

859 *Moralia* Lib. 29, 30 [PL 115, 1026D-28D]; Lib. 6, c. 13 [PL 115, 1068D-89A]; Lib. 25, c. 9 [PL 115, 1092B-94C]; Lib. 32, c. 18 [PL 115, 1112D-14C]; Lib. 26, c. 20 [PL 115, 1163A-65A]; Lib. 9, c. 38 [PL 115, 1228B-32D]; Lib. 14, c. 38 [PL 115, 1326D-29C].
visual power of balancing his own words, with longer quotations from principal authors (Gregory, Augustine, Jerome), with shorter quotations from “specialist” authors (such as Cassiodorus, Fulgentius, and Isidore). Thus, in this instance, he turned to the *Moralia*, a rich and variegated text by a principal authority, which could be quickly surveyed for key terms such as *praedestinationes, volentes, electio, reprobatio, and judiciorum secretorum*.

This willingness to allow certain patristic authors to say more than the reader might want or need is extended most often to Augustine. Of the more than 320 patristic citations found in the *Contra Eriugena*, 141 discrete quotations come from the works of Augustine. A full list of these works is included as an appendix to this dissertation. It will suffice to say here that the work of acquiring the 38 separate works from which these quotations were taken, of selecting the passages to be quoted, and of arranging them on the page can only be described as a monumental task. No single text of Augustine generated such lengthy excerpts as the 33 taken from Gregory’s *Moralia*, but at least five quotations from Augustine exceed two or more columns of the *Patrologia Latina* in the printed edition of the *Contra Eriugena*. We have already seen several lengthy passages from both the *Enchiridion* and *De civitate*. In a preceding section on the nature of the resurrected body, we treated a section of three linked quotations from the *City of God*, Book 21, that exceeded 63 lines (over two folios) in the manuscript.\(^{860}\) Though the passages contain much of relevance for addressing the Scot’s inadequate account of damnation, they run to more than 20 times the length of the lines of Eriugena they were quoted to address. The quotations from *De civitate* also far surpassed in length Prudentius’ own words on the same topic. Once again, we must ask why the bishop should continue to pile quotation upon quotation when more precise and exacting citations had already been used to populate the text. Even the most pious commitment to engagement with the tradition of the Fathers does not explain adequately these extravagant accumulations.

Perhaps it is here, in the excesses of our author’s quotational style, that we find echoes of other forms of intellectual and cultural labor that involved the collection, accumulation, and reappropriation of hard won materials of meaningful provenance. An analogous (if ultimately unrelated) form of visual extravagance is evident in the architectural program of Charlemagne, who laboriously excavated from

\(^{860}\) *civ. Dei* 21.4 (PL 115, 1332A-B); *civ. Dei* 21.9 (PL 115, 1332B-33B); *civ. Dei* 21.9-10 (PL 115, 1333C-34C).
Rome and Ravenna and transported up the Rhone, the columns of green porphyry and red Egyptian granite to be used in his palace chapel at Aachen. Just as those translations of architectural spolia participated in a broader late antique aesthetic, so too did the quotational style of authors like Prudentius aspire to engage in a visual culture that delighted in the playful interaction and juxtaposition of the old with the new. If we ignore the affect on our author and his audience of this late antique “cumulative aesthetic,” then we stand to overlook the effectiveness for a contemporary audience of this bulky and challenging work. Eriugena’s short tract was to be condemned, not only for its heterodox doctrines and erroneous argumentation, but also because it was thin and weak and meager. In reply, Prudentius would deliberately produce a much thicker, more variegated, and (by contemporary standards) more beautiful composition. Though he would not have been out of his depth had he chosen to respond to his opponent in a purely dialectical fashion, Prudentius chose the more pious, more difficult, and more aesthetically rich task of situating his response within a framework of quotations drawn from authors of the patristic past.

Nachleben

It remains to ask how effective was this total refutation of the Scot. Did it succeed, either on argumentative grounds or through its sheer accumulation of patristic authority, in convincing Prudentius’ colleagues to reject the tract of Eriugena? To what extent can its influence be measured? These are questions to which an answer can only be given in approximation. The text of the *Contra Eriugenam* does not appear to have found many readers in the decades following Prudentius’ death. As we have noted, the only extant witness to the text is the manuscript that remained in the possession of the author up to the time of his death. Once at Rheims this unique witness was cautiously perused from time to time (as a late ninth-century gloss to MS 2445 demonstrates). But beyond this highly local and occasional

---

awareness of the text’s existence, I have not discovered a single medieval author outside the lifetime of the author who quoted from the *Contra Eriugenam* or reported having read it. It is important to notice, however, that the broader significance of our author’s polemical labors should not be measured in the same ways one might assess the *Nachleben* of a literary text or an original theological argument intended for wider circulation. As Ganz has noted, neither the work of our author nor the numerous other tracts and longer pieces written amidst the mid-century debates over doctrine were intended to circulate widely. Most were written or compiled for highly specific audiences – often for an audience of one, such as for a single bishop or secular official, or in some cases for a circle of clerics, such as a group of bishops meeting in council. It is therefore striking that the work of Prudentius, which had been commissioned by his metropolitan (presumably as a brief for his own consideration), should have found the audience it did. As Madec has demonstrated, our author’s refutation of Eriugena would form the foundation for the *Adversus Ioannis Scoti Erigenae erroneas definitiones liber* of Florus of Lyon. In composing his own response to the Scot, Florus seems to have relied heavily on the quotations of his opponent first assembled by Prudentius. The entry of Florus and of the see of Lyon into the controversy surrounding Gottschalk also demonstrates the influence of Prudentius outside his own ecclesiastical province. Though both Hincmar and his suffragans had earlier reached out to Lyon, it was the theological positions of Prudentius that Florus would take up and defend. The fortuitous coincidence of doctrinal opposition to Hincmar with the political ambitions of Florus’ metropolitan, bishop Remigius of Lyon, cannot be ignored, but it was the work of Prudentius against Eriugena, among other factors, that first assisted Lyon in its open opposition to the see of Rheims.

We can also observe the effects of the *Contra Eriugenam* in the subsequent philosophical projects of Eriugena himself. The Scot left behind no direct answer to the criticisms of Prudentius or Florus. Though he would be (obliquely but not directly) condemned by the council of Valence (855) Eriugena seems to have enjoyed a royal immunity from ecclesiastical censure in the north. His arguments in favor of a

---

863 PL 119, 101-250.
865 The ‘alia capitula numero X et VIII syllogismis ineptissime et mendacissime conclusa’ condemned in Canon III of the council are surely a reference to Eriugena’s *De praedestinatione*. (MGH Concilia, t. III, p. 355). Eriugena’s “royal immunity” has been inferred from the absence of contemporary ecclesiastical censure of his views, though no positive evidence exists to confirm this protection. For the suggestion of royal protection, see John
single predestination were far more radical than anything put forward by Gottschalk, yet he continued to teach and write from the safety of the cathedral school of Laon, though never again on predestination. By the end of his life, Eriugena again had the opportunity to take up in his masterwork, the *Periphyseon*, a number of themes first treated in his *De praedestinatione*. Though nearly thirty years had passed, it is here that we can best assess the enduring impression Prudentius had made upon the Scot. By then Eriugena had abandoned his doctrine of an aetherial paradise and aerial hell and had adjusted his doctrine of the resurrected body to conform better to the consensus of the Greek Fathers. Of the earlier work examined in this chapter, the work refuted by Prudentius, he would later express measured regret: “I cannot deny that I was at one time deceived by the false reasoning of human opinions that are far from the truth, for deceived I was. For while still uninstructed I gave assent to all these, or almost all, seduced by some likeness to the truth, and by the carnal senses.” One cannot help but hear the echoes of Prudentius’ critique in this reflection of the mature Eriugena. Nor was the expression of regret only a rhetorical experiment, designed to protect his mature philosophy from charges of heterodoxy. Valery Petroff, who has examined carefully Prudentius’ criticisms of the Scots’ cosmological views in light of their later modification, has concluded that the Irishman absorbed the criticisms of the bishop of Troyes. “In many instances, John Scottus took into account the criticism of Prudentius and reworked some of his earlier statements in the *Periphyseon*.”


866 Valery V. Petroff, “*Theoriae* of the Return,” 543-549.

867 PP III, 1292-1304 (quoted in Petroff, “*Theoriae* of the Return,” 573).

868 Petroff, “*Theoriae* of the Return,” 544.
Conclusion

Though he continued to write his *Annals* and remained involved in the conciliar activities of the Frankish episcopate, Prudentius did not again write at such length on the topic of predestination after the year 852. The controversy surrounding Gottschalk continued to excite criticism of Hincmar and his allies, particularly in those churches within the ecclesiastical jurisdictions linked to Lyon. By 853 Hincmar had convoked a new round of councils designed definitively to refute Gottschalk. Feeling the combined opposition of the powerful sees of Sens, under Wenilo, and of Lyon, under Remigius, the bishop of Rheims began to maneuver toward a political solution that would uphold the judgment at Quierzy (849), yet placate (and so neutralize) those clerics who had recently expressed views sympathetic with Gottschalk.

What would be the role of the aging (and possibly ailing) bishop of Troyes in these discussions? The question touches on one of the more persistent mysteries of our subject’s biography. A second council of Quierzy, called by Hincmar in spring 853 and attended by king Charles, had produced four canons that addressed (and even affirmed) certain of the views articulated in the treatises of Prudentius, Lupus, and Ratramnus. The first canon of Quierzy affirmed that the single predestination of God has a double effect, pertaining both to the gift of grace and to the retribution of justice. Though it sidesteps the language of Gottschalk’s “gemina praedestinatio,” the canon was clearly designed to please those aligned with Prudentius, who agreed that divine grace had a double effect in time. The council also affirmed that, though God wills that all men should be saved, not all men are saved. But in the fourth canon of the council, which maintained that Christ’s atonement was Universal and not limited only to those who would be saved, Quierzy maintained a vast gulf between the consensus of the council and the doctrines of Gottschalk. This fourth canon could not be harmonized with the doctrine of a limited atonement endorsed by Prudentius in his *Epistola ad Hinemarum*. It is thus surprising that the bishop of Troyes could have approved the proceedings of the council. For our subject’s subscription of the council’s acta, we are again reliant upon the witness of Hincmar. And once again, Hincmar’s testimony comports

869 MGH *Concilia*, t. III, p. 297.
870 MGH *Concilia*, t. III, p. 297.
871 MGH *Concilia*, t. III, p. 297.
872 Though he had recorded the acta of Quierzy in his *Annals of St. Bertin* (suggesting direct knowledge of the council), Prudentius did not leave a subscription (or rather, no subscription list for the council survives). In
poorly with the picture drawn of Prudentius from other sources. Over the last several chapters, we have gained an impression of the bishop as an elder statesman, who commanded a measure of respect and deference, even from his ecclesiastical superiors. Thus, it is not clear why he would have at last surrendered firmly held opinions to accommodate Hincmar in the spring of 853. It is possible that the aging bishop, worn down by years of controversy and factional strife, simply capitulated to the formulation of the bishop of Rheims. But it is also possible that Hincmar, writing at six years remove from the proceedings of this council, retained only an imperfect recollection of our subject’s involvement in it. Either this, or he wrote in such a way as deliberately to mislead.

Whatever the events at Quierzy in spring 853, the debate over predestination continued to animate conciliar activity within the kingdom of Lothar. In 855, the council of Valence, which convened the clergy of Lyon, Vienne, and Arles, condemned the De praedestinatione of Eriugena and promulgated a series of counter-chapters to those earlier passed under Hincmar at Quierzy. The Council of Valence, though it involved only the clergy of Lyon and her suffragans, also offered a precedent around which northern clerics who opposed Hincmar could rally. By the following spring, the archdiocese of Sens had approved a statement, echoing the positions of Lyon and designed to counter the earlier canons of Quierzy. The statement was drafted by Prudentius, who, though unable to attend, had the capitula sent by way of his messenger Arnold. The capitula of Sens affirmed that 1) Free will was lost in the fall of Adam and that the grace of God is required to do any good work; 2) that some were predestined to life and others were predestined to punishment; 3) that the blood of Christ was shed for those, throughout

Hincmar’s third and final work on Predestination (859), he twice complained that Prudentius (in his Epistola Tractoria, addressed to the Council of Sens [956]) was rejecting the acta of a council that he himself had subscribed. ‘Cui capitulo cum aliis tribus de quibus ratio agitur, in conventu episcoporum domnus subscripsit Prudentius’ (PL125, 182C). ‘Caeterum capitula a nobis ex sanctorum patrum excerpta, quae reprehendit domnus Prudentius venerabilis episcopus nobiscum constituit atque firmavit’ (PL125, 268C). For all indirect witnesses to the council of Quierzy, see MGH Concilia, t. III, pp. 351-57.

873 Canons I-VI, in particular, address the ongoing debate over predestination. MGH Concilia, t. III, pp. 380-381.
875 MGH Concilia, t. III, pp. 379-382.
876 MGH Concilia, t. III, p. 380.
877 MGH Concilia, t. III, p. 380.
the whole world, who believe in him, but not for non-believers;\textsuperscript{878} and 4) that the omnipotent God wills to save whomever he wants and no one is able to be saved apart from God.\textsuperscript{879}

Thus, by 856 the personalities of Eriugena and of Gottschalk had receded from the center of the controversy. And what had begun as a more amicable exchange between ecclesiastical magnates was hardening into a zero sum struggle between competing political factions. Hincmar had the support of the royal court and its chapel and of the powerful suffragans of Rheims, many of whom by now were his own appointees. In opposition to Hincmar were the clerics of Rheims who had been appointed under Ebbo in 840, most of whom had been deprived of their positions and stripped of their ordination at the council of Soissons (853). Though we cannot know individual doctrinal stances of those who made up this body of clerics, it may be presumed that a number of these men had known Gottschalk, when he had corresponded with Ebbo in the early 830s. The archdiocese of Sens, then, represented another powerful faction, increasingly at odds with the agenda of Hincmar and increasingly critical of the royal court. We have noted in chapters one and three how Prudentius had grown concerned about Charles’ actions against his vassals in Aquitaine. Though we must be cautious not to conflate doctrinal controversy with political division (for I remain convinced that these debates were primarily concerned with ideas), the political divisions would have compounded sinister suspicions first formed in disagreements over doctrine. Prudentius and Wenilo of Sens could now proceed with the conviction that Hincmar was acting not only out of ignorance but also in bad faith. Likewise, Hincmar could imagine that a colleague and former friend had become implicated in the opposition to Charles, even if he had not participated directly in the rebellions of c. 853-58. Why should the bishop of Rheims take seriously the theological opinions of a man he had grown to distrust? Such are the ways in which the bonds of collegiality are broken, then as now. The political divisions would only have exploited and intensified the existing disagreements over the interpretation and application of doctrine.

As we move toward the 860s, the voice of Prudentius grows increasingly silent, almost in direct relation to the criticism of him by Hincmar. By 856, any prospect for reconciliation between the two prelates would have been severed by the direct assault of the latter on our bishop’s orthodoxy. Though

\textsuperscript{878} MGH \textit{Concilia}, t. III, p. 380
\textsuperscript{879} MGH \textit{Concilia}, t. III, pp. 380-81.
the work in which this assault was made does not survive, we can catch echoes of its rancorous tone in Hincmar’s third and final treatise on the topic of Predestination (859) and in his much-discussed obituary of his one time friend and colleague. After a long illness, Prudentius died in the spring of 861. The traditional date of his death is April 6, the day preserved since the twelfth century for the veneration of Saint Prudentius, bishop of Troyes. In this regard, Prudentius is unique among Carolingian era intellectuals. No one among his colleagues in the ninth-century debate over predestination, nor any intellectual in the generation which preceded him (not Alcuin, Theodulf, Rabanus) or which came after (Eriugena, Haimo, Remigius), would leave behind a memory of sanctity sufficient for the development of a cult. Clearly, to the twelfth-century clergy of Troyes cathedral, who looked back on the long, hard centuries that separated them from the era of Charlemagne and his successors, the career of bishop Prudentius must have appeared as one of the brighter moments in the history of their church. They would have admired their bishop’s erudition, his patient accumulation of patristic authority, and his skillful appropriation of late antique literary forms. Beyond the personal and charismatic dimensions of his sanctity (lost to us over such a great distance of time), these intellectual virtues of careful reading and patient writing remain on display even in our chronological remoteness. It is hoped that the preceding chapters have made some small progress toward bringing the virtues of such a man and his context into sharper focus.
Bibliography

Primary Sources:


______. *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum*. Edited by Migne. PL 44, 547-638.


______. *De civitate Dei*, Edited by Bernard Dombart and Alfons Kalb. CCSL 47. Turnhout, 1955.

______. *De consensu evangelistarum libri quattuor*. Edited by Franz Weihrich. CSEL 43. Vienna, 1904.


*Capitularia regum Francorum*. Edited by Alfred Boretius and Viktor Krause. MGH Capitularia, t. I-II. Hanover, 1883-1897.

Chronicon Roberti Canonici S. Mariani Autissiodorensis. Edited by George Waitz. MGH SS, t. XXVI. Hanover, 1887.


Collectio Hispana. Edited by Migne. PL 84, 93-848.

Collectio Quesnelliana. Edited by Migne. PL 56, 359-746.


_____. Libellus de tribus epistolis. Edited by Migne. PL 121, 985-1068.

Formulae Merowingici et Karolini aevi. Edited by Karl Zeumer. MGH Legum, t. V. Hanover, 1886.


_____. De Una et non trina deitate. Edited by Migne. PL 125, 473-618.

219

______. Liber de praedestinatione. Edited by Migne. PL 125, 65-474.

______. Epistolae. Edited by Ernst Perels. MGH, Epistolae, t. VIII. Berlin, 1939.


______. Etymologiae. Edited by Migne. PL 82.


______. Collectaneum de tribus quaestionibus. Edited by Migne, PL 119, 648-66.


______. De praedestinatione. Edited by Migne. PL 121, 13-80.


Edited by G. H. Pertz. MGH SS I. Hanover, 1826.

Edited by George Waitz. MGH SS 15.1. Hanover, 1883.
______. *Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum*. Edited by Migne. PL 115, 971-1010.

______. *Epistola tractoria ad Wenilo*. Edited by Migne. PL 115, 1365-1368.

______. *Epistola ad quemdam Episcopum*. Edited by Migne. PL 115, 1367-1368.


______. *Versus Sancti Prudentii*. Edited by Migne. PL 115, 1419-1420.


______. *De oblatione puerorum*. Edited by Migne. PL 107, 419-440.

______. *Epistola ad Notingum de praedestinatione*. Edited by Migne. PL 107, 1530-53.


______. *De praedestinatione*. Edited by Migne. PL 121, 13-80.


______. *De spiritu sancto*. Edited by Migne. PL 105, 239-241.


*Vita sancti Anscharii* (BHL 0544). Edited by Migne. PL 118, 1002.

**Secondary Sources:**


Gumerlock, Francis X. “Predestination before Gottschalk.” *Evangelical Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (July 2009): 195-209.


Innes, Matthew and Rosamond McKitterick, eds. “The writing of history.” Pages

Inowlocki, S. *Eusebius and the Jewish Authors: His Citation Technique in an Apologetic Context.* Leiden: Brill, 2006.


1. **Carmen 79, MGH, Poetae Latini, t. 1, p. 579:**

Carior in cunctis mihimet qui constat alumnis,
   Ferto illi dulci, cartula, dulce melos;
Nomine qui patrio fulget, praenomine nostro:
   Hinc rutilat Prudens, inde Galindo nitet.
Qui merito rebus radiat Prudentius ipsis
   Perpetuo certus, certus ubique puer.
Cum sua te teneris tractarit dextera palmis,
   Continuo nostros profer ab ore sonos.
Adde: ‘Vale, valeas, optat bis mille salutes,
   Qui dominus mihimet, qui pater ecce tuus.
Scilicet exigui fuls modo corporis auctu,
   At minor ingenio, artis et ope minor.
Optat et ut valeas, magis ut condiscere certes,
   Et, mentis nitida sint tibi summa, monet.
Fama manet nostra totaque vagatur in urbe,
   Mente polos quendam scandere forte virum,
Et Stigios Manes noctis caligine tectos,
   Infernos tristes sollicitasse deos;
Monstra deum tenuesque simul sub imagine mortis
   Umbras quo pavidus Ditis in ima videt.
Agnoscit notos torqueri Acherontis in unda,
   Felices superis et radiare pios.
Ast alii quandam referunt sub nocte puellam
   Excessu mentis forte subire polos,
Et penetrale lacus Cociti Stigiamque paludem
   Diramque . . . . . loca torrida . . . .
Quae simul enarrat multorum cernere poenas,
   Se et vidisse pios arce nitere poli.
His rogita super eximio moderamine
   Certa meo domino ut te referente feram.
Te referente, puer, capiam fidissima Clio,
   Eius in aspectu quod mea verba sonent.
Si meritis celsus cunctis memoretur in istis
   Teudulfus noster rebus, amice, pius.
Multa tibi lirico modico de pectore plectro
   Carmina conferrem, credito, summe puer,
Ni subito lator dominum adgrederetur ineptus,
   Qui rapidus longum carpere coepit iter.
Cumque sacras, quas saepe solet, inverteret aedes,
   Quo cineres sancti sunt, Aniane, tui,
Prae foribus sacris medioque in limine sistens
   Latorum urguiert edidit ista citus:
   ‘Rusticus est noster tali nunc ordine sermo,
   Unde saluetur primus in arte puer,
Nec tenui vitta, solito nec fulminat ostro,
Nec girum rotula currit amena suum.
Te pia nostra pium nimium nimiumque salutat
Turba poetarum semper amica tibi.
Tu dominum simili nostro sermone saluta,
Quaes, tuum, sociis sicque ‘valeto’ cane,
Atque poetalem radiat quae .............,
Caesaris imperio quae bene paret ovans,
Quae celer ingenio, fulgentis acumine sensus
Artibus in cunctis ingeniosa viget:
Maxime Clementem, merito qui nomine tali
Ornatus claret et pietate probus;
Inde Thomam, Gondacharum pariterque potentem,
Mens quorum est similis mentis, Omere, tuae.
Cetera seu resono modulanti carmina plectro
Agmina tironum consociare para.
Sicque mei domini cunctas optare salutes
Mens valeat felix et caro compta bonis.
Me reducem, quæso, vestris onerate camenis,
Ut mea vix referat pondus inorme celox,
Sospes eamque tamen tantis conferta choreis,
Plena poetarum cum mihi navis erit.
Ergo his praemonitis et vultu laeta peractis
Aspice signiferum nunc, puer, arte melos.
Quod modicum subter conpactum cernis, amice,
Multo aliud retinet quam sua verba sonent.
Res miranda satís nimiumque simillima divis,
Quae vorat et numquam est saciata cibis,
Quae rabidis crebro comandit faucibus escas,
Et magis ingluvies eius aperta viget.
Nocte thoro comedens propriis obvolvere merdis
Gestit et est stercore tecta quies.’
AD PRUDENTIUM MAGISTRUM

Nominis alma tui capiat clementer origo
    Barbaria emissum vile salutis opus.
Haece Strabo ille tuus mittit vel Strabus alumnus
    Indignus, quem tu corde vel ore feras.
Agnus uti nutrice sua vitulusve tenellus,
    Sic te, sic careo, care magister ave.
Piscis uti fluvios, sicut salamandra calorem,
    Sic te quaero miser, care magister ave.
Utque oculus sine luce perit, sine pulsibus auris,
    Sic te absente gemo, care magister ave.
Quod stipes claudio, quod ductor denique caeco,
    Hoc mihi fecisti, care magister ave.

Reddo igitur grates, si tantas possidet orbis,
    Quantis dignus ades, care magister ave.
Non lapsu lassantur aquae, non flabra volatu,
    Non ego amore tuo: mutua redde, precor.
Dum geminis innixa viget structura columnis,
    Dum pulmone trahit aera, semper amo.
Et dum certa duos tandem mors clauzerit orbes,
    Hausero si caelum, tunc redamabo magis.
Accipe, mitto tibi Modoini carmina magni,
    In quibus invenies quod ferias, quod ames.
Mitte politorem Lucani vel mihi magni
    Carmina Virgili mitte minora, precor.
`Mitte tui monimenta salis; describe, quid obstet,
    Quidve tibi laetis rideat exitibus.
Crede deo sub teste mihi, te diligio totus,
    Praesentem cupiens semper habere, vale.
Hunc gerulum commendo tibi mihi denique carum,
    Ut solita foveas sedulitate, vale.
Terra, polus quodcumque tenent, te, care, salutet:
    Dico, ubicumque moror, sis ubicumque, vale.
Gratia summa dei temet comitetur in aevum,
    Ducat et in requiem perpetuam oro, vale.
Appendix II: Alumni of the Palace Chapel, c. 820-840

The following are alumni of the palace chapel with whom Prudentius is likely to have interacted in his subsequent career as bishop. In compiling the list, I have found invaluable Phillippe Depreux, *Prosopographie de l’entourage de Louis le Pieux (781-840)* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1997).

1. Aldricus of Cenomanensium (Le Mans), attested at the age of 12 in an envoy to the palace, attached to the church of Metz, was ordained by Drogo of Metz, who would become archchapelain of the palace. Was present at the Synod of Paris (846) and the Council of Anjou (850). See Depreux, 97-99.

2. Adalgarius, abbot of Sanctae Crucis. Probably not Adalgarius, the count, charged with strengthening the northern defenses against the Danes. Depreux, 73-74.

3. Erchenradus of Paris: Was in the the palace in the 820s, elevated to bishop in 832, remained faithful to Louis the Pious in 833, was present at the deposition of Ebbo at Thionville, 833. Present at Synod of Paris (846) and the Council of Anjou (850) and Bonneuil (Aug. 855).

4. Freculf of Lixoviensis (Lisieux): Composed the second part of his world chronicle 'ob amorem dominae meae augustae Judith' and for the education of her son Charles. Present at Paris (846) and Anjou (850). Depreux 197-98.

5. Heribaud, bishop of Auxerre: Father was a Bavarian born courtier in the palace of Louis the Pious. Raised at court in the 810s and 20s; involved in monastic reform at the Synod of St. Denis (832), participated in the council of Paris (829). Conveyed the commission of Charles the Bald to Lupus of Ferrières and Prudentius (spring 845), regarding the reform of monasteries in the Orleannais and Senonais. Attested at Anjou (850) and Bonneuil (Aug. 855). Depreux, 241-42.

6. Hincmar of Rheims: Attested in the 820s as oblate to St. Denis, whose abbot Hilduin was archchapelain 814-830. In his own *De ordine palatii*, Hincmar purports to recollect the organization of the palace, as he known it first hand in the 820s and 30s. Played a leading role in the government of the western Frankish kingdom, c. 845-88; present at all of the councils in which Prudentius is in attendance, save only Sens (856), which involved only the prelates of the archdiocese of Sens.

7. Hucbert of Meaux: Bishop of Meaux, whose diocese bordered Troyes; found in and out of the palace in the early 830s, his name appears in the correspondence of Hincmar with the title "precentor" of the palace clergy. Was present at Paderborn in 833 and at the 835 deposition of Ebbo of Rheims. Present at councils of Anjou (850) and Soissons (853). Depreux, 261-62.

8. Irminfridus of Bellovagensis (Beauvais): Might have been the Ermenfrid who served as missus of Louis the Pious in May 819-Jan. 820. Present at Paris (846) and Anjou (850) and Soissons (853) and Bonneuil (Aug. 855). Depreux 187-88.


10. Lupus of Ferrières: Prudentius would have first met Lupus at court in the 830s. After his early education at Ferrières and later at Fulda, Lupus had become attached to the court circle in the late 830s, probably as a palace chaplain. In a letter addressed to Prudentius in the early 840s, Lupus reveals that the two men had worked together, at the insistence of Charles the Bald, to undertake monastic reform (of an unspecified nature) in the Orleannais and
Senonais, a project which also involved Heribald, bishop of Auxerre, another veteran of the palace from the 830s. Depreux, 322-23.

11. Pardulus of Laon: Present at the council of Anjou (850). Likely responsible for first requesting the opinion of Prudentius on double predestination. He is the co-recipient of a letter addressed to Hincmar to which is attached a dossier of patristic texts, apparently the first formal consideration (extant) that Prudentius had given to the matter. Not attested in Depreux.

12. Paschius Radbertus, abbot of Corbie. Not attested in Depreux. Nor is Ratramnus, the monk of Corbie, who wrote against Hincmar on the topic of Predestination.

13. Raginarius of Ambianensis (Amiens): Possibly the Raganarius, monk of Fleury, who was sent by Louis the Pious in an envoy to Jerusalem, though Depreux does not make this assertion. Depreux, 353.

14. Rodhadus of Suessionensis (Soissons): Attested at court between 832 and 835; involved in the deposition of Ebbo of Rheims. Present at the Synod of Paris (846), Council of Anjou (850), Soissons (April 853) and Bonneuil (Aug. 855). A suffragan of Hincmar of Rheims, Hrothadus (Rothad)'s diocese, Soissons, bordered the diocese of Troyes. Hincmar would assert the propriety rights his church to certain private chapels in the diocese of Troyes. See Philippe Depreux et Cécile Treffort, "La paroisse dans le De ecclesiis et capellis d'Hincmar de Rheims. L'énonciation d'une norme à partir de la pratique ?", Médiévales 48 (2005), (http://medievales.revues.org/document1064.html).

15. Simeon of Laudunensis (Laon): Maybe the abbot of monastery of unknown name (Jan. 833) who complained about the quality of the missus in a case involving the restitution of property to the Cathedral of Le Mans. Depreux, 376.

16. Theodericus of Camaracensis: Not attested in Depreux (unless he is to be identified with the bastard son of Charlemagne (b. 807), was placed in the monastery of Saint-Epvre de Toul, and could later have become abbot of Moyenmoutier.

17. Walahfrid Strabo: An undated verse epistle, addressed from Strabo to Prudentius, reveals the two men to have developed a friendship based on mutual respect and affection for old books. Walahfrid calls his correspondent "magister" and identifies himself as one of Prudentius' students. The verse reminds one of the famous correspondence between a young Lupus of Ferrières and an aging Einhard, in which Lupus eagerly seek new witnesses to the text of Cicero's De oratore, among other books.

Appendix III: List of Patristic Quotations from the
Contra Eriugenam

The following is a provisional list of patristic quotations appearing in the Contra Eriugenam. The list depends on the edition of Maugin (1650), which is reprinted in Migne, Patrologia Latina, vol. 115. I have used the book, chapter, and verse citations of Maugin. Titles of works have not yet been brought into conformance with modern citation practices, nor have most of the citations been checked against modern editions of the authors quoted. When possible I have silently corrected misattributions and worked to identify citations overlooked by Maugin. I have also checked the appendix of Petitmengin (which lists citations of Augustine only) against MS BNF 2445 to account for interlinear, marginal, and tabular insertions, several of which appear neither in Maugin’s edition nor in Migne. Additions to the manuscript are marked by an asterisk* and keyed to the manuscript folios on which they appear. At minimum, the list should provide an impression of the extent and variety of the quotations appearing in the Contra Eriugenam and record the sources on which the preceding analysis (chapter 6) was based.

**Ambrose**

*In expositione Evangelii Lucae,*

c. ii, 25 [1307A]

**Ps.Ambrose (Ambrosiaster)**

1. *Commentary on Corinthians*
   - 1 Corinth. iv, ix [1160 C – 1160D]
   - 1 Cor. xi, 26 [1253 B – 1254 C]
   - 1 Cor. ii, 7 [1306 D]
   - 1 Cor. xv, 22 [1340 A – 1340B]
   - 1 Cor. xv, 37 [1340B – 1341A]
   - 1 Cor. xv, 42 [1341A]
   - 2 Cor. Xii, 2 [1294D – 1295A]

2. *In epistola ad Romanos*
   - Rom. ix, 11 [1184C – 1186A]

3. *In epistola ad Ephesios*
   - Eph. ?-? [1190B – 1190C]
   - Eph. I, 19 [1295B – 1295C]
   - Eph. I, 5 [1305C – 1305D]
   - Eph. I, 5 [1305D]

4. *In epistola ad Colossians*
   - Col. 2:8 [1313A – 1313D]

**Augustine**

1. *De libero arbitrio*
2. Sermon 71 [1030 D – 1031D]

3. *Enchiridion*
   
   c. 100 – c. 106 [1032 B – 1035B]
   c. 30 [1049D]
   c. 30 – c. 32 [1059A – 1060B]
   c. 32 [1070B – 1071A]
   c. 72 [1087C – 1087D]
   c. 36 [1090A – 1090D]
   c. 80 – c. 81 [1091A – 1091C]
   c. 55 [1173A – B]
   c. 13 – 15 [1212 B – 1213C]
   c. 15 [1250A]
   c. 25 [1250A – 1250C]
   c. 30 [1254D]
   c. 46 [1255B – 1255D]
   c. 13 [1259B]
   c. 14 [1259B – 1259D]
   c. 88 [1326B]
   c. 91 [1326C – 1326D]
   c. 92 [1334 C – 1334D]

4. *Retractiones*
   
   Lib. 1, c. 26 [1041D – 1042A]
   Lib. ? c. 23 [1069B – 1070B]
   Lib. 1, c. 15 [1100A – 1100B]
   Lib. 1, c. 15 [1100C – 1100D]
   Lib. 1 c. 15 [1100C – 1101B]
   Lib. 1 c. 15 [1101B – 1101D]
   Lib. 1, c. 16 [1101D – 1102A]
   Lib. ? c. 13 [1102A – 1102C]
   Lib. 1, c. 9 [1102C – 1106B]
   Lib. 1, c. 26 [1206B – 1206C]
   Lib. 1, c. 21 [1261C]
   Lib. 2, c. 24 [1300A]
   L. 1, c. 26 [1329D]
   [1330B – 1330C]
5. *In Johannis evangelium tractatus*
   Tract. 17 [1044A]
   Tract. 42 [1242D – 1243A]
   Tract. 95 [1200D – 1201A]

6. *De consensu Evangelistarum*
   Lib. 4 [1044A]
   Lib. 3, c. 13 [1209D – 1210C]

7. *Adnotationes in Job*
   [1044B]

8. *De correptione et gratia*
   
   c. 1 [1046 D – 1047A]
   c. 2 [1047A – 1047B]
   c. 7, 9 [1176 D – 1178A]
   c. 7 [1178B]
   c. 8 [1188A]
   c. 12 [1194D – 1195B]

9. *De dono perseverantiae*
   
   c. 7 [1049C – 1049D]
   c. 7 [1089B – 1089C]
   c. 11 [1197C – 1198A]
   c. 15 [1198B – 1199A]
   c. 22 [1199A – 1199B]
   c. 17 [1307A]

10. *Confessiones*
    Lib. 13.11 [1053A – 1053C]* (inserted btwn ff. 16 and 17)
    Lib. 13. 20 [1110C – 1110D]* (fol. 36r.)
    Lib. 8. 5 [1211A – 1211B]* (fol 76v.)
    Lib. 8.9,10 [1211B]* (fol. 76v)
    Lib. 8.10 [1211B – 1211C]* (fol. 76v)

11. *Contra Julianum*
    Lib. 6.23 [1065A – 1066D]
    Lib. ? 3 [1067A – 1067B]
    Lib. 5.3 [1263A – 1271D]

12. *Contra Manichaeos*
    
    c. 10 [1099D]

13. *De Trinitate*
    Lib. 8 [1106D – 1107D]
14. Sermo 11 (de verbis Apostoli)
   [1053D-1054A]
   [1139B – 1140B]

15. *De Civitate Dei*
    Lib. 5, c. 9 [1140B – 1143D]
    Lib. 5, c. 10 [1143D – 1145A]
    Lib. 5, c. 11 [1145A – 1145C]
    Lib. 3, c. 21 [1201C – 1201D]
    Lib. 15, c. 1 [1208B – 1208D]
    Lib. 15, c. 1 [1219B]
    Lib. 14, c. 15 [1221D – 1222C]
    Lib. 21, c. 24 [1249B – 1249C]
    Lib. 12, c. 3 [1262A – 1262B]
    Lib. 7, c. 22 [1290C – 1290D]
    Lib. 7, c. 6 [1294B – 1294C]
    Lib. 8, c. 11 [1312B – 1313A]
    Lib. 22, c. 24 [1330C – 1330D]
    Lib. 21, c. 4 [1332B]
    Lib. 21, c. 9 [1332B – 1333B]
    Lib. 21, c. 10 [1333B – 1334B]

16. Homiliae
    Homilia 53 (in Evangelium Joannis) [1145C]
    Homilia 27 [1179D – 1180C]
    Homilia 7 (de coena Domini) [1180C – 1180D]
    Homilia 32 [1180D – 1181B]
    Homilia 18 (In Pascha) [1331A – 1331B]

17. *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum*
    Lib. 1, c. 15-16 [1146A – 1153A]* fol. 38v
    Lib. 1, c. 22 [1189B – 1189D]* fol. 69v
    Lib. 1, c. 22 [1211C – 1211D]* fol. 76v
    Lib. 1, c. 23 [1261C – 1261D]* fol. 76v
    Lib. 1, c. 23 [1261D – 1262A]* fol. 76v

18. *In Heptateuchum*
    Lib. 7, c. 49 [1155D – 1156A]
19. *Expositio epistulae ad Galatas*
   c. iii, 12 [1249B]

20. *De Praedestinatione sanctorum*
   c. 10 [1165C]
   c. 15 [1166D] (brief paraphrase)
   c. 10 [1173A]
   c. 10 [1205C] (one line, quoted from Eriugena)
   c. 17 [1307A]
   c. 16 [1307B – 1307C]

21. *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*
   Quaestiones de Genesi, qu. 117 [1178C – 1179A]
   Lib. vii, q. 49 [1200B – 1200C]
   In quaestionibus Judicum, qu. 13 [1206C – 1206D]
   In quaestionibus Deuteronomii, qu. 2 [1206D – 1207A]
   In quaestionibus Exodi, qu. 143 [1207A – 1207B]
   In quaestionibus Exodi, qu. 148 [1207B – 1207C]
   In Quaestionibus Levitici; qu. 20; 1216 D – 1217 D

22. *De nuptiis et concupiscientia*
   Lib. 2, c. 28-29 [1208D – 1209D]* fol. 76r

23. *Expositio in psalmis*
   ps. 6 [1235D – 1236A]
   ps. 7 [1272A – 1272B]
   ps. 66 [1281D – 1282A]*

24. *De Genesi ad litteram*
   a. Lib. 11, c. 34 [1237A – 1239C]
   b. Lib. 11, c. 21 [1240B]
   c. Lib. 11, c. 9 [1241B – 1241C]
   d. Lib. 8, c. 19 [1241D]
   e. Lib. 8, c. 19 [1241D – 1242A]
   f. Lib. 9, c. 4 [1307C]

25. Sermons:
   Sermon 74 (On Mt. 15:32) [1261A]
   Sermon 192 (In Natali S. Joannis) [1260D – 1261A]

26. *De fide et operibus*
   c. 15 [1272C -1272D]

27. *De vera Religione*
   c. 52 [1274A – 1275D] *
c. 41 [1281A – 1281B]*
  c. 41 [1281B]*
  c. 11-12 [1281B – 1281D]*
  c. 23 [1287C – 1287D]
  c. 41 [1287D – 1288A]

28. Epistolae
   Epistola 44* (Fol. 31r)
   Epistola 57 (ad Dardanum de Praesentia Dei)
     [1284D – 1285B]
     [1285B]
     [1285B – 1285C]
   Epistola ad Vitalem
     [1254D – 1255A]
   Epistola ad Sixtum (Epist. 105)
     [1201C – 1210D]
   Epistola 130 (Ad probam de orando deo)*
     [Fol. 31r]

29. De Agone Christiano
   Lib. 2, c. 3 [1329D – 1330A]

Prosper
  1. Ad capital. Gall.
     c. 15 [1176D – 1168A]

     c. 6 [1169A]* (Fol. 61r. 3 separate quotations)

Bede
  1. De Tabernaculo
     Lib. 2, c. 11 [1043C]
     Lib. 3, c. 4 [1043D]

  2. In principium Genesis
     Gen. 8, 22 [1055C – 1055D]
     Gen. 1, 26 [1055D]
     Gen. 3, 7 [1254C – 1254D]
     Gen. 1,14[1324A – 1324B]

  3. Homilia Evangelii de adventu Domini [1075C – 1076C]

  4. In proverbia Salomonis
     Lib. 3, c. 31 [1190C – 1191A]
     Lib. 3, c. 31 [1226A]
5. Homilia 65 (In dedicatione ecclesiae)  
   [1260B – 1260C]* (Fol. 93v)

6. Homilia 9 (In ascensione Domini) [1296A]

Cassiodorus

1. *Expositio Psalmorum*
   Prolog. in Psal., c. 15 [1019C-1020C]  
   Ps. 18, 15 [1216C]  
   Ps. 54 [1235C-1235D]  
   Ps. 6:6 [1247C-1247D]  
   Ps. 85 [1299C-1300A]  
   Ps. 7, 13 [1302B-1302C]  
   Ps. 7 [1310A]  
   Ps. 51 [1310B]  
   Ps. 54 [1310B]  
   Ps. 82 [1310B]  
   Ps. 87 [1310B-1310C]  
   Ps. 92 [1310C]  
   Ps. 20, 10 [1337D-1337A]  
   Ps. 48 [1338A-1338B]  
   Ps. 9 [1339A – 1339D]

Fulgentius

1. *De Praedestinatione*
   c. 26[1023B – 1023C]

2. *In libro ad Petrum de Fide*
   [1055A]  
   [1055A-1055C]  
   [1072C-1073B]  
   [1075A-1075B]  
   [1246B-1246C]  
   [1246C-1247B]  
   [1247B-1247C]  
   [1335D]

3. *Ad Monimum*
   Lib. II [1168A – 1168B]  
   Lib. I, c. 20, 21 [1309C]  
   c. 21 [1309D]  
   c. 23 [1309D]

Gregory the Great
1. Homilia 22 (in Sabbato Paschae)* (fol. 3v) [1015D – 1016C]

2. Homilia 36 (in Evang.) [1082D – 1084A]

3. Moralia in Job
   - Lib. 30, c. 32 [1026D-1028D]
   - Lib. 6, c. 13 [1068D-1089A]
   - Lib. 22, c. 5 [1076C-1076D]
   - Lib. 25, c. 9 [1092B-1094C]
   - Lib. 32, c. 18 [1112D-1114C]
   - Lib. 26, c. 20 [1163A-1165A]
   - Lib. 3, c. 14 [1182A]
   - Lib. 10, vi, c. 11 [1182A-1182B]
   - Lib. 11, c. 7 [1215B-1215D]
   - Lib. 11, c. 21 [1216B-1216C]
   - Lib. 34, c. 17 [1222D-1223A]
   - Lib. 2, c. 24, sub finem [1225B-1225C]
   - Lib. 12 [1226C-1226D]
   - Lib. 16, c. 26 [1226D-1227A]
   - Lib. 15, c. 30 [1227A-1227B]
   - Lib. 4, c. 17 [1227B-1228B]
   - Lib. 9, c. 38 [1228B-1232D]
   - Lib. 20, c. 15 [1232D-1233D]
   - Lib. 11 [1256D-1257A]
   - Lib. 3, c. 7 [1262B-1262D]
   - Lib. 11, c. 5 [1275D-1276B]
   - Lib. 11, c. 5 [1276C-1276D]
   - Lib. 12, c. 20 [1277A-1277D]
   - Lib. 13 [1298A-1298C]
   - Lib. 12, c. 6 [1298C]
   - Lib. 11, c. ult. [1301B-1301D]
   - Lib. 28, c. 6 [1307C-1307D]
   - Lib. 19, c. ult. [1307D]
   - Lib. 15, c. 30 [1307D]
   - Lib. 14, c. 28 [1307D-1308A]
   - Lib. 18, c. 17 [1316B-1316D]
   - Lib. 12, c. 2 [1319B-1319D]
   - Lib. 14, c. 38 [1326D-1329C]

4. Homilia 38
   - [1181D]
   - [1276D-1277A]
   - [1298A]

5. Expositio prophetae Ezechiel
Lib. 1, hom. 10 [1183A-1183B]
Lib. 1. Cap. xx, 35 [1183 C-1183D]
Lib 1. Cap. xx, 35 [1184A-1184B]
C. I, v. 13 et 14; [1184 B--1184 C]
Hom. 11; [1277 D-1280C]
Hom. 13 post medium; [1308A-1309B]

6. Dialogi
   Lib. 4, c. 29 [1291C-1292C]
   Lib, 4, c. 25 [1296B-1297A]
   Lib. 4, c. 28 [1297A-1298A]
   Lib. 4, c. 43 [1320D-1322B]

7. In die Pentecostes [1295C-1295D]

8. De Ascensione Domini, Homilia 29;
   [1295-1296A]
   [1296A]

Isidore
1. De differentiis
   Lib. 2, c. 32 [1056C-1057C]

2. Etymologiae
   Lib. 7, c. 1 [1110D-1111A]
   [1323 D-1324]

3. Sententiae
   Lib. II, c. 6 [1029A-1029C]
   Lib. I, c. 28 [1339D-1340A]

Jerome
1. Comm. Epist. ad Gal;
   proem. lib. III [1017 C – 1019 B]
   cap. 1 [1042 A – 1042 B]
   cap. v [1054 D]
   cap. v [1324 D – 1325 B]

2. Commentario Matthaei, cap. vi [1054 D – 1055A]

3. In Isaiah
   lxvi, 18 [1060 C – 1061 D]
   Lib. 1, lvii, 5 [1189 A – 1190 B]
   xix, 11 [1218 C – 1219 A]
   xxiv, 1 [1219 A – 1219 B]
   xxix, 14 [1220 C – 1221 A]
lib vi; cap. xiv, 21 [1242 A]
lib. xiii; cap. xlvi [1242 A]
lib. xv; cap. liv, 16 [1242 A – 1242 B]
lib. xvi; cap. lix, 8 [1242 C]
cap. ult., v. ult [1243 B – 1244 B]
lib. x; cap. xxx, 20 [1244 B – 1244 D]
lib. vi; cap. xiv, 18 [1244 D – 1246 A]
lib. v, c. 14, 19 [1298 D]
lib. iii, c. 7, 10 [1298 D]
lib. v; [1315 B]
lib. v [1315 C]
lib. v [1315 C – 1315 D]

4. *In Expositione Osee prophetae*,
cap. ii, 6 [1084 B – 1084 C]

5. *In expositione Amos prophetae*;
   iii, 6 [1126 C – D]
   iii, 12 [1127 D – 1128 A]
   iv, 10 [1131 A]

6. *In expositione Malachiae prophetae*; Mal. I, 2 [1127 A – 1127 D]

7. *In expositione Michaeae prophetae*;
   iii, 4 [1131 B-C]

8. *In expositione Habacuc prophetae*;
   iii, 1 [1131C]
   i, 6 [1131D-1132A]

9. *In exposition Zachariae prophetae*
   ix, 7 [1131 C]
   xi, 11[1131 D]

10. *Contra Jovinianum*
    lib. II [1182B – 1182C]
    lib. I [1325 D – 1326 B]
    lib. ii, in principio [1338 C – 1339A]

11. *In Joel*
    Cap. ii; [1214A – 1215A]

12. *In Epistola ad Ephesios*
    cap. ii, 1 [1216 A-1216 B]
    [1299A]
    [1337 C-1337 D]
Eph. V, 5 [1306 A – 1306 B]

13. *In exposition Evangelii secundum Matthaeum*
   cap. xi, 28 [1226 A]


**Leo**

1. Epistola 164 [1014A – 1015B]

2. Epistola 162 [1015B]

3. Sermon 7 (de jejunio mensis septimi)*
   [1044B – 1044C] (Fol. 17v)
   [1260C – 1260D] (Fol. 93v)

4. Sermon (de Passione Domini)*
   [1303C – 1303D] (Fol. 112v)

**Philippus**

*In Expositione beati Job*
   lib. ii, cap. 24; [1246A]
   c. 24, sub medium; [1290D-1291A]
   c. 26, in principio; [1299A-1299B]
   c. 36; [1299B-1299C]
   c. 3; [1299C]