

ALBERTUS G. A. HORSTING, *Prosper Aquitanus. Liber epigrammatum*, Series: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 100, Berlin / Boston: De Gruyter 2016, vii+160 pp., ISBN 978-3-11-033398-5.

The CSEL series presents a text that had not been edited for more than three hundred years and for which the editor attempts a critical edition and a *stemma codicum* for the first time. He studies the textual tradition and the intricate web of sources of and influences from the work at some length (pp. 1–66) and edits it critically with rich apparatuses (pp. 77–156). Hitherto the standard edition was the one reprinted in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* (PL 51, coll. 497–532B), originally by Jean-Baptiste Lebrun des Marettes and Luc-Urbain Mangeant (Paris 1711) who used several manuscripts and report some variant readings. Their text has recently been reprinted with an Italian translation in Stefania Santelia, *Prospero d'Aquitania «Ad coniugem suam». In appendice «Liber epigrammatum»*. Napoli, Loffredo 2009 (Studi latini 68). Michele Cutino is currently preparing another edition with French translation for the series Sources Chrétiennes for which he studies the challenging manuscript tradition again. It will be interesting to compare his results.

Prosper of Aquitaine (c. 390–after 455) was a disciple of St Augustine who wrote extensively on his master's ideas and helped to divulge them both in prose and in verse. His *Liber epigrammatum* is extant in at least 180 manuscripts owing much of its success to the fact that it was used in monastic schools. It is indeed very well suited for this purpose as it condenses much of St Augustine's teaching in a brief metrical, easily understandable form, well suited for memorisation. The work's structure is uniformly: title, sentence, epigram of 1 to 12 distichs. The sentences are taken from Prosper's *Liber sententiarum* (Ed. Gastaldo, CCSL 68A), which in turn often depends on his *Expositio in Psalmos*, extant only for Psalms 100–150, the rest being apparently lost (p. 4). These depend on Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, other sentences stem from other works of Prosper's master, especially *De civitate Dei* and *De trinitate*. The first 58 epigrams correspond to the first 58 sentences, but in the second part there are some inconsistencies: occasionally there is no sentence at all, sometimes the order is different, especially after epigram 81 the author seems to have used only a few of his many more sentences. Due to this and the fact that in four verses (4,4, 39,6, 52,4, 58,8, discussed pp. 20–22) the manuscript tradition exhibits two equally convincing verses of roughly the same content that both look like genuine Prosper, the editor considers that the work may be unfinished (p. 13f). It is difficult to decide whether the sentence headings were originally part of the text (P2 and L1, on which see

below, do not contain them), although the editor's arguments (pp. 11-14) for retaining them seem rather convincing.

The editor decided to use for his edition all known manuscripts older than the 12<sup>th</sup> century, which amount to 41. Besides, readings from three of the most important early prints (including Le Brun des Marettes/Mangeant) are also included in the apparatus. He thus provides us with the first scholarly edition of this popular text: critical text and rich apparatuses are certainly a great advance over the previous editions. Still, as the editor himself readily admits, his *stemma codicum* (p. 57) will hardly be the last word on the complicated transmission of this text. The witnesses contain a relatively homogenous text, many of the apparatus entries are *lectiones singulares*. As expected for a monastic school text there is a lot of contamination among the manuscripts. It quickly becomes clear that three manuscripts are by far the most important ones: P1 (Paris, BnF, lat. 11326, online <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b105154782>) a sixth or seventh century uncial, P2 (Paris, BnF, 2772) and L1 (Leiden, UB, Vossianus lat. Q. 86), both from the early 9<sup>th</sup> c. All other studied manuscripts are grouped by the editor into the families β, δ, ε as well as a contaminated group arising from β and δ, all of which together form a superfamily. P2 and L1 are closely related to one another. The position of P1 is less clear. The editor makes a case that it does not belong to the P2-L1 family and joins it with the rest of the tradition (the aforementioned superfamily) under a hyparchetype ψ against the P2-L1 family. But there is only one relatively solid looking conjunctive error for P1 and the rest against P2-L1 (*plectit* vs. *punit*, p. 46). One might wonder why the editor does not consider the possibility that the archetype could have split into three families (P2-L1, P1, rest), such that ψ would be one and the same with ω. Strikingly, the stemma constructed by the editor is always bipartite. Indeed, accepting the provided stemma, for the doublet verses 4,4 one would be forced to conclude that version *a* is archetypal, and version *b* secondary and thus not by Prosper. Under these circumstances it might have been interesting to specifically search for post 12<sup>th</sup> c. manuscripts related to P1-P2-L1 by using their significant readings (like 31,1: *aeternam* not *caelestem*). This could have shed more light on the relationship of the major groups. Furthermore the cases of contamination shown in the stemma do not seem to adequately represent the whole picture: e.g. the interesting example discussed on p. 54 depends on a transmission of text between P1 or W (ε family) to the δ family, a connection that is not documented in the stemma. But the full picture of contaminations for all considered manuscripts may be impossible to elucidate. It would also have been interesting to know more about corrections of archetypal mistakes (as in 43,2) which could have been highlighted more clearly in the text. Despite these few desiderata, the new edition is certainly without paragon at present.

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