*Docta Psallere*: An Anonymous Christian Woman as Prudentius' Ideal Poet

Kathleen Kirsch

Department of Greek and Latin

The Catholic University of America

40kirsch@cua.edu

1. The Mother as Latin Poet
	1. *talia* ***canente*** *matre iam laetus puer* (l. 791)
	2. ***docta******mulier******psallere*** */ hymnum* ***canebat******carminis*** *Davitici* (ll. 837-838)
		1. *doctae psallere Chiae*, Ode 4.13.7
2. The Mother as Late Antique Latin Poet
	1. *hic, hic* ***bibendus****, nate,* ***nunc*** *tibi* ***est*** *calix* (l. 736)
		1. *Pater mi, si non potest hic calix transire nisi bibam illum, fiat voluntas tua* (Matt 26:42)
		2. *Nunc est bibendum* (Ode 1.37.1)
3. The Mother as Teacher
	1. *‘ergo ipsa mater adsit,’ exclamat, ‘cedo,’ / Asclepiades ; ‘****disciplinae*** *et exitum / tristem suae* ***magistra*** *spectet inpia, / male* ***eruditi*** *torqueatur funere / infantis orba, quemque corrupuit fleat...’* (ll. 686-690)
	2. *‘scis, saepe dixi, cum* ***docenti*** *adluderes / et garrulorum signa verborum dares ...’* (ll. 746-747)
4. The Mother’s Didactic Authority
	1. *at sola mater hisce lamentis caret, / soli sereno frons renidet gaudio : / stat in piorum corde pietas fortior / amore Christi contumax doloribus / firmatque sensum molis indulgentiae* (ll. 711-715)
		1. *illa ex parente* ***Spiritu******docta******inbibit*** */ quo me inter ipsa pasceret cunabula* (ll. 682-683)
		2. ***docta*** *mulier psallere / hymnum canebat carminis Davitici* (ll. 837-838)
5. The Son’s Need for Education
	1. *puto* ***inbecillo****, nate, turbaris* ***metu*** */ et te* ***doloris******horror*** *adflictum* ***domat*** (ll. 721-722)
	2. *non in hanc spem* ***gloriae*** */ te procreavi,* ***cedere*** *ut leto scias* (ll. 724-725)
6. Exemplary Poetry
	1. ***exemplum*** *ad* ***istud*** *nitere, o fortis puer* (l. 741)
	2. *omnes* ***capaces*** *esse* ***virtutum*** *Pater / mandavit annos, neminem excepit diem, / ipsis triumphos adnuens* ***vagitibus*** (ll. 743-745)
	3. *narravi et illud nobile ac memorabile /* ***certamen****, una matre quod septem editi /* ***gessere*** *pueri, sed tamen factis viri, / hortante eadem matre in ancipiti exitu / poenae et coronae* (ll. 751-755)
	4. *his Maccabeos incitans stimulis parens /* ***hostem******subegit*** *subiugatum septies, / quot feta natis, tot* ***triumphis*** *inclyta* (ll. 776-778)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | The Child's Martyrdom | *Peristephanon* 10 |
| Poet | The Child's Mother | Prudentius *qua* narrator  |
| 7. The Poets’ Songs | *talia* ***canente*** *matre*...(l. 791)*...docta mulier psallere* *hymnum* ***canebat******carminis*** *Davitici* (ll. 837-838) | *largire comptum* ***carmen*** *infantissimo**fac ut tuarum mira laudum* ***concinam***(ll. 3-4) |
| 8. Celestial Inspiration | *‘illa ex parente* ***Spiritu*** *docta inbibit quo me inter ipsa pasceret cunabula’* (ll. 682-683) | *sed si* ***superno*** *rore respergas iecur* *et* ***spiritali*** *lacte pectus inriges**vox inpeditos rauca laxabit sonos*(ll. 13-15)*sum mutus ipse, sed potens facundiae**mea lingua* ***Christus*** *luculente disseret*(ll. 21-22) |
| 9.Analogy between Inspiration and Poet | *...‘****mater****, et matri Deus.**illa ex* ***parente*** *Spiritu docta inbibit quo me inter ipsa pasceret cunabula’*(ll. 681-683) | *Romane, Christi fortis adsertor Dei,* ***elinguis*** *oris organum fautor move* (ll. 1-2)*praefectus ergo ratus* ***elinguem*** *virum...* (l. 911)*sum* ***mutus*** *ipse...* (l. 21)*nam scis et ipse posse* ***mutos*** *eloqui* (l. 5) |
| 10. Conduit of Spiritual Milk | *‘ego, ut gemellis uberum de fontibus* ***lac*** *parvus hausi, Christum et hausi credere’* (ll. 684-685) | *sed si...**...spiritali* ***lacte*** *pectus inriges,* *vox inpeditos rauca laxabit sonos* (ll. 13-15) |
| Exemplar | Holy Innocents, Isaac,Seven Brothers | The Martyr Romanus |
| *Discipulus* | The Child | The Reader |

Select Bibliography

Fontaine, Jacques. “La femme dans la poésie de Prudence.” *Revue des études latines* 47 bis (1970): 55–83.

Fruchtman, Diane. “Modeling a Martyrial Worldview : Prudentius’ Pedagogical « Ekphrasis » and Christianization.” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 7 (2014): 131–58.

Fux, Pierre-Yves. “Le « Romanus » de Prudence (Peristephanon 10), tragédie chrétienne ?” In *Koryphaiō andri: mélanges offerts à André Hurst*, edited by A. Kolde, A. Lukinovich, and A.-L. Rey, 87–96. Genève: Droz, 2005.

———. *Prudence et les martyrs : hymnes et tragédie : Peristephanon 1, 3-4, 6-8, 10 Commentaire*. Fribourg (Suiza): Editions Universitaires, 2013.

Henke, Rainer. *Studien zum Romanushymnus des Prudentius*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1983.

Lavarenne, M. *Étude sur la langue du poète Prudence.* Paris: Société française d’imprimerie et de librairie, 1933.