

# Michael Psellus and the Date of the Palatine Anthology

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THERE has until recently been general agreement that the unique manuscript of what is commonly known as the Palatine Anthology—*Palatinus graecus* 23—dates from the tenth century. It would hardly be possible to assign an exact date to the codex as a whole, since it falls into two distinct parts, one older than the other, both of which were completed and revised by at least two other more or less contemporary parties. But P. Waltz, the Budé editor, placed the completion of the work *ca.* 980, while taking the earliest elements back as early as *ca.* 930.

Now the Palatine Anthology is largely based on an earlier anthology (now lost), compiled by one Constantine Cephalas. Accepting the common and natural identification, Cephalas was active in Constantinople (as *protopapas*) in 917. His anthology presumably dates from the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century. Thus the earliest part of the *Palatinus* might be no more than a few decades later than the anthology on which it was based.

In the course of a challenging reassessment of the manuscript tradition of the Greek Anthology as a whole,<sup>1</sup> R. Aubreton has recently attempted to cast doubt on this generally accepted picture. While not denying that there is a Cephalan kernel to the Palatine Anthology, Aubreton argues that there are substantial later accretions round this kernel—accretions which suggest to him a longer interval between the two works. Accordingly he has proposed a much later date for the *Palatinus*, between 1050 and 1070.

Quite how far the *Palatinus* does reflect the anthology of Cephalas is admittedly very uncertain.<sup>2</sup> And if we could be sure that there was an interval of 150 rather than 50 years between them, some traditional

<sup>1</sup> "La tradition manuscrite des épigrammes de l'Anthologie grecque," *REA* 70 (1968) 32–82.

<sup>2</sup> See the recent discussions of A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams* I (1965) xvii f; F. Lenzinger, *Zur griechischen Anthologie* [Diss. Zürich 1965] 2f; and my own paper "The Garlands of Meleager and Philip," *GRBS* 9 (1968) 323f, by which, on the

assumptions might well need to be reconsidered. But can we be sure? Aubreton's case as so far presented rests almost entirely on his own assumptions about the relationship between the two anthologies, for the palaeographical study of the *Palatinus* by G. Rochefort to which he refers for support has not yet been published. I am not myself competent to judge the palaeographical issue, but one eminent authority I have consulted, Mr N. G. Wilson, tells me that he remains firm in his adherence to the *communis opinio*.

In a new paper Aubreton has tried to support his position by another line of argument.<sup>3</sup> *AP* xiv 5, 35 and 58, anonymous in the *Palatinus*, are also transmitted in a collection of riddles ascribed to Psellus in *Parisinus graecus* 968, first published by Boissonade in his *Anecdota graeca* III (Paris 1831) 430f, now more accessible in the Didot *Anthologia graeca* III, ed. Cougny (Paris 1890) vii 34–45. This collection is dedicated to Psellus' feeble pupil, the Emperor Michael Ducas, who reigned from 1071 to 1078.

If these poems really are by Psellus, then the traditional date of the *Palatinus* would certainly have to be abandoned. Written as they there are in the body of the text by two of the main scribes of the manuscript (B and B2), they cannot be explained away as subsequent additions or interpolations.

But are they by Psellus? Aubreton claims that it is only because of their blind acceptance of the traditional date that previous scholars have failed to take the ascription to Psellus seriously. This may or may not be so, but a number of substantial objections to the ascription can be formulated nonetheless.

The collection in *Par.gr.* 968 comprises: first the dedication to Michael Ducas, then three riddles in political verse (not, as Aubreton states, in prose), next the three elegiac epigrams *AP* xiv 5, 35 and 58, and finally twelve more riddles in iambics (or rather, 'Byzantine twelve-syllables').

We may begin with some objections to Aubreton's case as he formulates it himself. Instead of arguing, as one might have expected, that the epigrams must have been written between 1071 and 1078

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whole, I still stand, though I might now express myself more cautiously on some points in the light of Aubreton's discussion. When writing my paper I had not yet seen E. Hirsch's somewhat more adventurous study "Zum Kranz des Philippos," *WissZeitUnivHalle* 15 (1966) 401f.

<sup>3</sup> "Michel Psellos et l'Anthologie Palatine," *AntCl* 38 (1969) 459f.

(when Psellus probably died) and that the Palatinus cannot therefore be earlier than 1071, on the contrary Aubreton firmly maintains that it is earlier than 1071. Believing (as he does) on palaeographical grounds that the scribes B and B2 wrote “vers 1060,” Aubreton strangely suggests that at this date only the elegiac riddles had been written. This is why B and B2 did not include the iambic pieces, which did not see the light till the edition dedicated to Michael Ducas after 1071.

It is difficult to take this sort of reasoning very seriously. Whether Psellus wrote (which I doubt) or merely collected these riddles, in the absence of any indication to the contrary we are surely bound to assume that he *published* them all together—that is to say in the only edition we know of, that dedicated to Michael Ducas.

How do we account for the fact that these three elegiac riddles are left anonymous in *AP*? Aubreton casually remarks that B was apparently unaware of their Psellan authorship. Yet if they were hot from the pen of the greatest living man of letters, how can B not have known who wrote them? The scribes and redactors of *AP* took more pains over their ascriptions than we find in any other Byzantine anthology. And we are dealing here with two scribes: B copied xiv 5 and 35, B2, 58. It would be surprising if B, B2 and their reviser J had all three overlooked the claims of Psellus—especially after taking the trouble to include his newly written work in a collection of ancient riddles in the first place.

More generally, it would be most unusual if all eighteen of the riddles in Psellus' collection had been original products of Psellus' own ingenuity. Riddle books, in ancient and Byzantine times as today, tend to be for the most part collections of anonymous puzzles handed down from generation to generation. It is the exception rather than the rule for a riddle to be associated with a named author. Of all the riddles and puzzles assembled in *AP* xiv, only one has a really plausible looking ascription: 63, to Mesomedes. I would not myself place overmuch confidence in the attribution of 101 to the sage Cleobulus or his daughter. Since Tannery, it has been generally recognised that the last section of Book xiv, 116–146, was taken, complete with their elaborate and learned scholia, from a collection of problems by one Metrodorus, of uncertain date but hardly later than the fourth century.<sup>4</sup> Against 116 B2 has written *Μητροδώρου ἐπιγράμματα ἀριθμητικά*,

<sup>4</sup> P. Tannery, ed. *Diophanti Alexandrini Opera omnia* II (BT, Leipzig 1895) xi f, and pp.43f

yet neither 116 itself nor its successors is provided with a regular ascription to Metrodorus. We find instead the formula ἄλλο.<sup>5</sup> The collection was Metrodorus', but he was not credited with the authorship of its individual components in the ordinary way.

Let us take a much later example, the probably thirteenth-century collection attributed to Eustathius Macrembolites, equipped with metrical solutions by Maximus (or Manuel) Holobolus.<sup>6</sup> The lemmata would seem to suggest that only the first eleven were believed to be by Macrembolites himself, and they are the only ones Holobolus provided with his own solutions. Of the rest, some are attributed to two shadowy twelfth-century figures called Aulikalamus and Prosuch,<sup>7</sup> while thirteen others are left anonymous. Of these thirteen, no fewer than seven were taken from earlier collections, those of Christopher of Mytilene, Psellus, and another mysterious figure (of quite uncertain date), Basil Big-nose (Megalomytes).<sup>8</sup> Nor can we be sure how many even of the first eleven were really written by Macrembolites, since no. 8 turns out to be none other than *AP* VII 311, attributed to Agathias by Triclinius on Sophocles, *Electra* 150, but falsely,<sup>9</sup> since there exists a very close Latin translation dating from the late fourth century.<sup>10</sup> Editors of the Anthology have all missed its appearance in *Harleianus* 5624, attributed to the Emperor Julian, perhaps correctly.<sup>11</sup>

Basil Big-nose's book would seem to belong somewhere in the period between Psellus and Macrembolites. It contains three riddles

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for the Palatine scholia. There is a useful summary in F. Buffière's new Budé ed., *Anthologie grecque* XII (Paris 1970) pp.34f, in most other respects a careless and undistinguished piece of work (at p.37 J. A. Fabricius appears as an ancient author!).

<sup>5</sup> On which see Gow, *The Greek Anthology: Sources and Ascriptions* (London 1958), 29 and K. Preisendanz, *Gnomon* 34 (1962) 657. Quite unjustifiably and misleadingly Buffière heads 116 *Μητροδώρου* and its successors *τοῦ αὐτοῦ*.

<sup>6</sup> M. Treu, *Eustathii Macrembolitae quae feruntur aenigmata* (*Program des Königl. Friedrichs-Gymnasiums zu Breslau*, 1893).

<sup>7</sup> On whom see Treu's discussion, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.6) 31f.

<sup>8</sup> I have not been able to trace a single word of scholarship devoted to Basil, but it seems clear to me that his book is later than Psellus' and draws on it, not *vice versa*. Concerning his curious sobriquet, Robert Browning draws my attention to a 'Small-nose' in Theophanes Continuatus p.175.<sup>9</sup> Bonn.

<sup>9</sup> Though accepted, for example, by I. Hilberg, *BZ* 3 (1894) 174.

<sup>10</sup> Ps-Ausonius, *Ep.* 26 (p.260 Schenkl). Since the discovery of the *Epigrammata Bobiensia* there is no need to doubt that this poem, if not actually by Ausonius, is at least genuine fourth-century work.

<sup>11</sup> With an interesting new ascription, "To a silkworm" (see J. Bidez/F. Cumont, edd. *Juliani imperatoris epistulae, leges, poemata, fragmenta varia* (Paris/Oxford 1922) p.221.

by Christopher of Mytilene and several taken or adapted from Psellus' collection. As before, there is no indication that any of the items in question were in fact by Christopher or Psellus, though on the other hand (and again as usual) none of them is expressly ascribed to Basil himself.<sup>12</sup> This is not plagiarism in the ordinary way. It is simply that riddles were felt to be common property.<sup>13</sup>

We come at last to Psellus' collection. We may reasonably assume that the first three riddles in political verse come from Psellus' own pen. That some of the twelve iambic pieces are by him is probable; that some are *not* is certain. Three can definitely be attributed to his older contemporary Christopher of Mytilene: Psellus 45 (Cougny) on the seasons= Christopher 56 (Kurtz); Psellus 38 on the tent= Christopher 71; Psellus 42 on the scales= Christopher 21. I entirely agree with Christopher's editor E. Kurtz that there can be no question about Christopher's prior claim in all three cases. Christopher's poems are not just a riddle book but a substantial and amazingly diversified collection on a multitude of subjects by a talented and versatile poet. There are just six riddles in the whole book, all of which reappear time and again in the later riddle books. Another poem attributed elsewhere to Psellus (*Par.gr.* 1182, f.151<sup>v</sup>) turns out to be by Christopher (50 Kurtz). Indeed, Christopher's poems often suffered the fate of attribution to later and more famous writers.<sup>14</sup> But for the preservation of his whole collection in a sadly fragmentary state in one fifteenth-century manuscript, we should have known almost nothing of his influence. Psellus would have been one of the chief beneficiaries. Psellus no doubt has other literary creditors, whom we are no longer in a position to trace.

That Psellus wrote some at least of the other nine iambic riddles is likely enough. That he wrote the *elegiac* riddles is not at all likely. To

<sup>12</sup> Basil's riddles were published in J. F. Boissonade, *Anecdota graeca* III (Paris 1831) 436f, and again in Cougny vii 47f, with a few useful notes. Cougny did not, however, know of the existence of Christopher of Mytilene (whose poems had only been published three years previously): on Basil's debt to Christopher, see E. Kurtz's edition of Christopher (Leipzig 1903) xv.

<sup>13</sup> I know of no modern account of Byzantine riddle poetry. In the 1890s Sp. Lampros was reputed to be preparing the definitive work, but it seems never to have appeared, and his paper in *Deltion* 2 (1885/9) 154f promised little enough. There are two sentences in F. Dölger, *Die byzantinische Dichtung in der Reinsprache* (Berlin 1948) 27. For a brief popular account (based mainly on Krumbacher) see Archer Taylor, *The Literary Riddle before 1600* (Berkeley 1948) 45f.

<sup>14</sup> See Kurtz's ed. *op.cit.* (*supra* n.12) pp.xv f.

the best of my knowledge Psellus always wrote in political or iambic verse, never in elegiacs. Even if he did write elegiacs occasionally, I doubt whether he would have been capable of *AP* xiv 5, 35 or 58. They are undistinguished enough by ancient standards, to be sure, yet unmistakably ancient all the same. Quite apart from the problem of the quantities, the feel for the handling of caesura and hiatus that came instinctively to all educated writers up to the sixth century was somehow lost to Byzantine litterateurs of later centuries. No one could mistake the elegies of Arethas, Ignatius, Cometas or even Christopher for genuine ancient workmanship.

We must, I think, conclude that Psellus took all three elegiac riddles from an earlier collection, most probably though not necessarily an exemplar or apograph of *AP* xiv.<sup>15</sup>

This brings us to another and yet more decisive objection to the Psellan ascription. Aubreton assumes that B and B2 were the compilers rather than the copyists of *AP* xiv. The three 'Psellan' poems are held to have been added to a collection they had largely gathered themselves. That is to say, *AP* xiv did not exist before *AP*.

Here, however, as in his earlier reexamination of the manuscript tradition of the Anthology as a whole, Aubreton has forgotten the collection of epigrams in *Laur.* 32.16, an anthology now recognised to have been written in Planudes' own hand<sup>16</sup>—a precursor to his *magnum opus* of twenty years later.

Two of the 'Psellan' epigrams—*AP* xiv 35 and 58—appear in the selection of riddles on f.382<sup>v</sup>. Now it is true that this famous codex dates from 1280/3, some two centuries later than even Aubreton's date for *AP*. Yet there are reasons, not to my knowledge so far perceived, for supposing that it derives from a fuller and earlier collection than *AP* xiv.

The riddles included in this selection are as follows (all references, except the two to Cougny, to *AP* xiv):

Cougny vii 31; 19; 26; 30; 32; 35; 41; 42; 57;<sup>17</sup> 58;<sup>17</sup> 60; 62;

Cougny vii 23; 9; 12; 20; 22; 56;<sup>18</sup> 61.

<sup>15</sup> The not inconsiderable variants effectively exclude the possibility that Psellus drew directly on *AP*. For other redactions of the riddles of *AP* xiv see below.

<sup>16</sup> C. Gallivotti's discussion, in *Bollettino del Comitato per la preparazione dell' Edizione Nazionale dei Classici Greci e Latini* 7 (1959) 37f, supersedes earlier work but still leaves much to be desired. I hope to discuss other aspects of the two epigram anthologies it contains elsewhere before long.

For notes 17 and 18, see page opposite.

The most striking feature of this collection is surely the order in which the riddles stand compared with their order in *AP* xiv. Those in the first line follow the order of *AP* exactly, and though the seven in the second line break the original sequence, they are still in the order of *AP*. It looks as if Planudes excerpted the same original sequence twice. Having copied out his first choice of a dozen riddles (the riddle sequence ends at xiv 64 and the last poem in L is xiv 62), Planudes decided to fill up his page with a few more (all but two of the second batch are distichs, and they do reach exactly to the bottom of the page). So he skimmed through his exemplar again from the beginning, adding a few he had missed the first time round (for example, having originally passed from 60 to 62, he now took 61).

The implication is that Planudes had before him a sequence of riddles arranged in exactly the same order as the sequence in *AP* xiv. What now of Cougny vii 31 and 23, known to us (in the Anthology tradition)<sup>19</sup> only from L? Both *could*, of course, be additions from another source, but for a variety of reasons this seems unlikely.

In the first place, the riddle sequence in L is the middle element in a tripartite anthology of epigrams and oracles (ff.381<sup>v</sup>–384<sup>r</sup>). First 15 oracles, second 19 riddles, third 27 epigrams from monuments to charioteers. Now by a lucky chance the whole series of charioteer epigrams, just as they were transcribed direct from the original monuments,<sup>20</sup> is preserved in Planudes' later, definitive, anthology of 1299 (*Marc.* 481, ff.43<sup>v</sup>–45<sup>v</sup>, split up in modern editions between *AP* xv 41–50 and *APlan.* 335–378). Thus it is possible to see that the series in L is just a selection from this fuller series, with no additions from elsewhere.

The oracles are described as being taken ἐκ τῆς Θεοδοσίας. The *Theosophia* is a late fifth or early sixth-century Christian work which quotes a number of pagan oracles carefully chosen for their possible appropriateness to things Christian. It does not survive entire, but we do

<sup>17</sup> In fact only the first couplet of 57 and 58 is written in this place. The second couplets follow after Cougny vii 23. It is clear from the symbols in the margins that the omission was accidental, and for the sake of simplicity I have restored Planudes' intended order.

<sup>18</sup> Gallavotti, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) 46, claims that Cougny vii 29 is written between *AP* xiv 56 lines 1–2 and lines 3–4 of the same poem. This is a curious slip: Cougny vii 29 is *AP* xiv 56.3–4. Buffière inexcusably perpetuates the error (critical note *ad loc.*).

<sup>19</sup> Cougny vii 31 is known, with a couple of unimportant variants, from Athenaeus: see below, p. 348.

<sup>20</sup> See my full discussion in a forthcoming book, *Porphyrius the Charioteer*.

have manuscripts containing fuller excerpts than those in L (published in H. Erbse's very full and elaborate edition, *Fragmente griechischer Theosophien* [Hamburg 1941]). Once more, L's series is simply an excerpt from this one source. *A priori*, the probability is that L's riddle sequence derives from just the one source. Whether Planudes drew on three separate sources for this tripartite anthology in L, or just one source where the three parts were already (in fuller form) united, is a question that need not concern us for the moment (it may be insoluble).<sup>21</sup> But we ought to think twice about postulating more than one source for each part.

In the second place, Cougny vii 23 is not in fact a riddle. It would be odd for Planudes to have gone to the trouble of consulting another source for his riddle sequence and then add a poem which was not a riddle at all. On the other hand, it would *not* be odd for the compiler of the original riddle series to have included Cougny vii 23, since the sequence in *AP* xiv includes no fewer than three poems which, though mildly puzzling, are no more riddles than Cougny vii 23: nos. 8, 10 and 15.

In this connection, it is particularly instructive to see that L includes xiv 9, which is not a riddle but an arithmetical puzzle. Now *AP* xiv (like the anthology in L) is tripartite: it contains an approximately equal number each of riddles, oracles and arithmetical problems. Basically, the oracles occupy the middle of the book (65–100), and the problems the end (116–146), though between 101 and 115 there is a mixture of riddles and oracles. Basically, the rest of the book consists of riddles, though most of 1–13 are problems (1–4, 6–7, 11–13), as also are 48–51—not to mention the three that are neither riddles nor problems (8, 10, 15). That is to say, the book is not divided cleanly and straightforwardly (like the tripartite anthology in L) into its three component parts. Some attempt has been made to provide short mixed sections, without however breaking up all the material in this way. Now Aubreton, for whom the Palatine scribes are the compilers rather than just the copyists of *AP* xiv, would ascribe this idiosyncratic and haphazard method of arrangement to those scribes rather than to their sources, since in his view they made additions to whatever sources they may have used at irregular intervals throughout (*i.e.* the three 'Psellan' poems, 5, 35 and 58). Yet here we have L evidently drawing on a source which is not *AP* but which nevertheless

<sup>21</sup> I hope to discuss the matter elsewhere before long.



already contained the idiosyncratic *mélange* of riddles and problems *AP* xiv 1–13. If it can be shown that L's source was *fuller* than *AP* xiv, then it would have to be a collection (or an apograph of a collection) which was *earlier* than *AP* xiv. And if L's source contained Cougny vii 31 and 23, then it was *fuller* than *AP* xiv.

For the sake of convenience let us call this postulated common source of *AP* xiv and L by the name X. Now the riddle sequence proper in *AP* xiv runs from xiv 14 to 64. With the exception of xiv 9 from the mixed sequence 1–13, all the riddles in L are from this main sequence, running from 19 to 62. Now since Cougny vii 31 stands before xiv 19 in L, presumably it also stood before 19 in X—probably between 14 and 19.

Here is the poem:

Πέντ' ἄνδρες δέκα νησιὶ κατήλυθον εἰς ἓνα χῶρον,  
 ἐν δὲ λίθοις ἐμάχοντο, λίθον δ' οὐκ ἦν ἀνελέσθαι.  
 δίψη δ' ἐξώλλυντο, ὕδωρ δ' ὑπερεῖχε γένεια.

The answer is apparently a shipwreck. The immovable stones they fight in or among are the rocks the ships have crashed into, and the 'thirst' alludes to the undrinkable salt water the men drown in. This still leaves one or two details unclear (*i.e.* the numbers in line 1),<sup>22</sup> but whatever the exact interpretation, is there a suitable context for a riddle of this form between xiv 14 and 19? There is indeed. Compare xiv 14 itself:

Εἷς ἄνεμος· δύο νῆες· ἐρέττουσιν δέκα ναῦται·  
 εἰς δὲ κυβερνήτης ἀμφοτέρως ἐλάει.

The answer here is certain: the double flute (*αὐλός*), the ten sailors being the ten fingers and the wind the breath of the player, while the two ships are of course the two pipes. But more relevant than the solution is the form of the riddle. Like Cougny vii 31, the point turns on a specified number of ships and sailors in contact with the elements. Naturally enough there are many other examples of riddles on the same or linked themes being juxtaposed (*e.g.* xiv 17–19, on hunting; 23–24, on birth; 32–33, on Nessus the centaur; 40–41, on day

<sup>22</sup> Diels solved the problem by simply transposing the numbers, so that there were ten sailors and five ships. Professor Geoffrey Arnott draws my attention to the note in Dale-champs' sixteenth-century translation of Athenaeus (*ad* 457D): "aenigmatis esse puto hunc sensum: quinque classis praefecti, pugnam decem navibus commiserunt . . .," which is perhaps a better way of dealing with line 1.

and night). Cougny vii 31 and *AP* xiv 14 would make highly appropriate neighbours. L omitted one of the pair, *AP* xiv the other. It was only in X that both stood together.

Now for Cougny vii 23:

*Κούρη Ἰκαρίοιο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια,  
ἕξ ποσὶν ἐμβεβαυῖα, τριδάκτυλος ἐξεφαάνθη.*

The point, of course, is not that Penelope herself has six feet and three fingers, but that line 1 (which often occurs in the *Odyssey*) has six metrical feet of which three are dactyls. Its immediate predecessor in L is xiv 62, one of the last of the riddle sequence in *AP*, its successor xiv 9, one of the first. In X, then, it must have stood either at the very end, or at the very beginning, where Planudes found it his second time round. The beginning is much more likely, since Cougny vii 23 has nothing in common with the riddles at the end and everything in common with the material at the beginning. It has been remarked already that there are three poems in *AP* xiv that are neither riddles nor puzzles. All occur together at the beginning: 8, 10 and 15. If Cougny vii 23 came at the beginning in X, it would have stood before 9, sandwiched between two of these intruders. Here is 8, a similar bit of counting in verse, on the numbers on opposite sides of a die:

*ἕξ, ἕν, πέντε, δύο, τρία, τέσσαρα κύβος ἐλαύνει.*

But the one of the trio that best parallels Cougny vii 23 is *AP* xiv 15, a strikingly similar schoolmasterly trifle on the same subject, metre (this time the iambic):

*ἕξ πόδες<sup>23</sup> ἐν χώραισι τόσαις μετροῦσιν ἴαμβον,  
σπονδεῖος, χόριος καὶ δάκτυλος ἢ δ' ἀνάπαιστος,  
πυρρίχιος καὶ ἴαμβος. . . .*

It looks as though the compiler of X decided to introduce readers gently by diluting his riddles and puzzles with a few less demanding bits of verbal juggling in the early stages of the book.

There is one last argument in favour of placing at any rate Cougny vii 31 in X. Unlike vii 23 it is not known from L alone. It also appears in Athenaeus, *Dipnosophistae* 457D. Now *AP* xiv 64 occurs in this same chapter of Athenaeus (456B). Rather than postulate two separate consultations of this same chapter of Athenaeus, first by the Palatine

<sup>23</sup> Compare Cougny vii 23.2, opening *ἕξ ποσὶν*.

scribes and then, independently, by Planudes, would it not be both more natural and more economical to suppose that the compiler of X found them both there at the same time and transferred them both together into X?

Aubreton assumes that the 'Psellan' poems, *AP* xiv 5, 35 and 58 were *added* to their main source or sources by the Palatine scribes *ca.* 1070. Yet since two of them—35 and 58—occur in both L and *AP*, evidently they cannot be newcomers in *AP*. They go back to X. Together with all the other riddles in L and *AP* they came to *AP* from an *earlier* anthology. We cannot say how much earlier, and it would be remotely possible, assuming for a moment Aubreton's date of *ca.* 1070 for *AP*, to place X in the 1060s. It would thus be formally possible to maintain the Psellan authorship of the poems, though only at the price of assuming that they had already been published separately before the edition dedicated to Michael Ducas after 1071. But since no proof has yet been produced that *AP* is as late as *ca.* 1070, and since there are so many other objections to the Psellan authorship, such a tautly stretched chain of assumptions is doubly implausible and unnecessary.

There is a certain amount of Christian material in the Palatine manuscript, but with few and isolated exceptions the epigrammatic portions are restricted to ancient and pagan, not Byzantine and Christian poetry. The exceptions are books I, mainly inscriptions from churches and illuminated manuscripts; viii, funerary poetry by Gregory Nazianzen; and xv, a ragbag of more Gregory and some tenth-century work by Arethas, Cometas, Constantine of Rhodes and others. The 'Cephalan' books (v, vi, vii, ix, x, xi and xii), together with the dubiously Cephalan xiii and xiv, do contain, in addition to classical and Hellenistic material, a considerable amount of work, both literary and inscriptional, from the Roman period down to as late as the sixth century. But exclusively secular work executed in the classical tradition. Planudes' Anthology has the same scope: it is an anthology of ancient, not Byzantine epigrams.

If *AP* xiv had really been compiled *ca.* 1070 by scholars anxious to include contemporary as well as ancient work (as Aubreton supposes), then one might have expected some of the already famous riddles of Christopher of Mytilene, or some Psellan riddles openly ascribed to their author. This we do not get. In fact nowhere in *AP* do we find anything later than the feeble ninth or early tenth-century epigrams

by Arethas, Cometas, Constantine of Rhodes and other approximate contemporaries of Cephalas.<sup>24</sup> Nothing by such superior exponents of the genre as John Geometres, Christopher, or John Mauropous, who had by the mid-eleventh century raised the Byzantine epigram to respectable literary heights, in the classicising hexameter and elegiac as well as the Byzantine twelve-syllable.

Till the necessary palaeographical proof is forthcoming, I propose to operate on the assumption that *AP* belongs in the tenth century, and accordingly to place *X* in the early tenth or (more probably) late ninth century. This was the great age for anthologies of ancient epigrams. In additions to Cephalas' massive work, we know of his friend Gregory Magister's collection of inscriptional epigrams, based on field work in the nineteenth-century tradition; the *sylloge Euphemiana*, compiled at Constantinople under Leo the Wise (886–911), perhaps the *sylloge Parisina*, and probably several others too. It was around this period, I would suggest, that *X* was put together. About half a century later it was incorporated with a few omissions into the Palatine Anthology, and a century later again it was drawn upon by Michael Psellus for the compilation of his riddle book.

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September, 1970

<sup>24</sup> On the poems ascribed in *AP* xv to Ignatius, one or more probably two of their number, see Robert Browning, *REG* 81 (1968) 408–09.