SOME REMARKS ON THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION OF THE MAXIMUS FLORILEGIUM

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The sacred-profane florilegium attributed to Maximus the Confessor has long been known to exist in two main versions at least, one consisting predominantly of short gnomic sayings of literary or oral origin and represented by the printed editions, and another version characterized by the presence of numerous long literary excerpts in addition, taken mostly from late prose writers such as Dio Cassius, Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, Dio Chrysostom, and others. Accepted scholarly opinion is that the former version is the original, arising perhaps in the late ninth or the tenth century (which no demonstrable connection with the historical seventh-century Maximus the Confessor), and that the latter version is an expanded recension, the result of large-scale interpolation of the longer excerpts into the original version, arising perhaps in the tenth or eleventh century.

A study of several manuscripts of the full version, however, suggests that the situation is not so simple. I will argue in this paper that there is evidence to discard the assumption that the shorter version was the original, although exactly what form the prototype took is not so clear. At the very least, in its original form the florilegium appears to have included material generally considered characteristic of the longer, so-called expanded version, long literary excerpts not generally found in the short version. It was not, however, necessarily exactly as we now have it in the long version, as I will show later. The short version appears to be abridgements made from the full prototype by compilers relatively uninterested in the longer less gnomic excerpts, and it may have arisen almost immediately.

Evidence suggesting that the short version is not likely to have been the original comes from two major observations. First, and most striking, occasionally some of the short rather gnomic sayings or excerpts so
characteristic of the short version turn out to be part of longer literary excerpts extant in the long version; sometimes they are in a string of selections from the same author, and those selections which exist in both versions often occur in the same order in both long and short versions. It is quite easy to imagine an excerptor taking a sentence here and a precept there from long excerpts in an original florilegium in constructing an abridged version, but it is less easy to imagine an industrious interpolator searching for the location of a given aphoristic fragment in a multi-volume literary source in order to continue with a longer extended excerpt.

One example occurs in Chapter 20, concerning silence. A long string of selections under the rubric of Plutarch and beginning with short gnomic sayings concludes with at least 15 long literary excerpts, which appear in all the long-version manuscripts I examined but none of the short-version manuscripts, with one exception. This exception is an apophthegm (a pithy anecdote about, or a bon mot attributed to, a famous personage) which begins what in the long version is a long excerpt from Moralia 505 Α, and the apophthegm appears alone in all the short version manuscripts I have examined: Ἀνάχαροις ἐστιαθείς παρὰ Σόλωνι καὶ κοιμώμενος ὅψη τὴν μὲν ἀριστερὰν χεῖρα τοῦς μορίους, τὴν δὲ δεξιὰν τῷ στόματι προσκεκλιμένην ἔχων· ἐγκρατεστέρον γὰρ ὅπετο χαλινοῦ δεῖσθαι τὴν γλῶτταν.

The second major observation supporting my argument is a pattern of arrangement of excerpts in the Maximus florilegium, a pattern which has often been noted but with different conclusions. Generally, in both the patristic and classical portions, similar sayings appear together in groups of short gnomic excerpts followed by groups of long excerpts from literary sources. Each chapter begins with relatively brief biblical quotations, first New Testament, then Old Testament, and generally in the same order (the first quotation in each chapter is always from one of the Gospels, the second from an Epistle, and so on). Next come excerpts from patristic writers followed by classical and late classical. Both patristic and non-patristic selections follow the same general pattern, although the details and the relative completeness vary from chapter to chapter. In its most complete form, the pattern consists of gnomic prose sayings often taken from known medieval collections (see below), followed by gnomic, aphoristic poetry and prose excerpts from literary sources, followed by longer literary excerpts in the long version, generally prose but occasionally poetry. This pattern is most pronounced, repeated on a smaller scale.
several times within each chapter, in strings of excerpts of varying types all attributed to the same name, particularly in long chapters. Frequently the name is Plutarch, and quite often, in around half of the 71 chapters in some or all of the manuscripts I have examined, the first group of non-patristic selections in a chapter is attributed to Plutarch, with some or all of these types of selections included, that is, short gnomic precepts or apophthegms from known medieval collections, then aphoristic literary excerpts, then long excerpts.

Most commentators have assumed, implicitly or explicitly, that the grouping together of long literary excerpts reveals a later insertion of groups of long literary selections into an existing florilegium of shorter gnomic selections (more on this below), but it is at least as plausible to assume that the original compiler selected groups of sayings or excerpts from numerous sources, including collections of long excerpts or even the literary works themselves, integrating the various groups into chapters arranged topically in the tradition of the collections of Stobaeus.

In fact, we already know that many short gnomic selections or series of selections in the Maximus florilegium had just such an origin. The presence of groups of precepts or apophthegms obviously copied from known earlier medieval collections is extensively documented, in florilegia in general and the Maximus florilegium in particular. The ninth chapter of the Maximus florilegium contains a particularly clear illustration of the process, involving three extant sources. The chapter contains a string of at least four precepts and apophthegms found in a collection, the so-called Corpus Parisinum Profanum, extant in a thirteenth-century Paris manuscript. Following this group in the Maximus florilegium are two or perhaps three from a collection of sayings attributed collectively to Democritus, Isocrates, and Epictetus, followed by at least three from a collection of apophthegms from a Vatican manuscript. A comparison of two long-version manuscripts (Codd. Vat. Gr. 739 and Vat. Barb. Gr. 158) and one short-version manuscript (Cod. Vat. Gr. 741) with the source collections shows the borrowing very clearly (see n. 6 for descriptions of the source collections):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long version</th>
<th>Short version</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agathon</td>
<td>Agathon</td>
<td>Corp. Par. 543 Elt.</td>
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<td>Agathon</td>
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<td>Antigonus</td>
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<td>Antigonus</td>
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<td>Epaminondas</td>
<td>following Antigonus</td>
<td>C.P. 545 Elt.</td>
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<td>Epaminondas</td>
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Different manuscripts might show different details. For example, Cod. Vat. Barb. Gr. 6 (short version) omits the attribution to Agathon in the second selection and includes, for the next, the rubric Epaminondas. Such differences merely strengthen the hypothesis that in its original form, the Maximus florilegium was all-inclusive.

The order of the three selections evidently taken from the Democritus-Isocrates-Epictetus collection does not correspond exactly to their order in Wachsmuth's text (numbers 84, 82, 83), but it does correspond exactly to their order in one of Wachsmuth's manuscripts, the same Cod. Par. Gr. 1168 which contains the Corpus Parisinum Profanum (above, n. 6). In this Paris manuscript the three are numbers 37, 41, and 42 (Wachsmuth's numbering).

It can also be seen that two fragments, one attributed to Isocrates (an excerpt from the *Ad Nic.* 24) and the other a trimeter attributed to Chaeremon, appear in the short-version manuscript (Vat. Gr. 741) but not in the long version, while another, an apophthegm concerning Cotys but with no formal attribution and following an apophthegm attributed to Eumenes, appears in our long version manuscripts only. Both the Isocrates selection and the Cotys apophthegm, and presumably also the Chaeremon trimeter, are clearly parts of strings of selections lifted from earlier collections, suggesting that the original form of the florilegium contained all the selections under discussion. If this is the case, then both the short versions are abridgements of the original to a lesser or greater extent.

If groupings of short excerpts like the above from known sources can be explained as copying by the compiler of the florilegium, would it not also be plausible to explain groupings of longer literary excerpts from known literary sources as copying of the same sort by the same compiler.
as part of the process of putting together the original florilegium? This
might be the case whether the Maximus compiler's source was the literary
text itself (Plutarch, for instance), or compilations of long excerpts not
now extant. 7)

The argument that the groupings described above indicate wholesale
interpolations of long, literary selections is frequently taken for grant-
ed in the literature. I have demonstrated above that interpolation is not
the most persuasive explanation for the grouping together of long literary
excerpts. In addition, it may be worthwhile to consider the only sub-
stantially articulated argument for the traditional interpolation view
known to me.

H. Schenkl 8) considered the possibility that the full version was the
original only to reject it on two grounds. First, he mistakenly supposed
that all selections originating in the so-called Corpus Parisinum (above,
n. 6) and appearing in the full version were present in the short version,
and he concluded that it was unrealistic to suppose that an excerptor,
working from a full version, would unerringly leave out only non-Corpus
Parisinum fragments. Actually it is possible to find such Corpus Parisi-
num selections present in the long version or some of its manuscripts but
not in the short version, at least in manuscripts I have seen, as well as
the other way around. More importantly, though, he is correct to observe
that selections not in the Corpus Parisinum do predominate among the selec-
tions present in the long version but missing in the short version. But
surely the explanation has to do with intrinsic differences: the Corpus
Parisinum fragments tend to be short and gnomic in nature (with a few ex-
ceptions), whereas the longer excerpts characterizing the long version
and generally lacking in the short version lack the quotable appeal to
excerptors looking for a pithy "quotable quote" (with some exceptions,
again).

Schenkl's second argument involves the pattern of arrangement of ex-
cerpts mentioned above. He observed that generally the excerpts from his-
torians and orators which characterize the long version appear together.
Except for literary excerpts from Plutarch and Isocrates, which often
immediately follow short gnomic selections attributed to the same name
and under the same rubric, literary excerpts in the long version alone
often occur at the beginning (after the biblical and patristic) or end of
a chapter, implying wholesale later addition, Schenkl felt. But this pat-
tern can equally well be explained by the nature of the compilation of the
original, described above, in which the compiler selected groups of
excerpts from various sources into topically-arranged chapters. In the patristic selections, the pattern is more clearly short selections followed by (in the long version) long excerpts or (in the short version) possibly shorter excerpts from the long excerpts, in the case of the popular patristic sources: Basil, "Theologus" (Gregory of Nazianzus), Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril, and some others. When the patristic portion of a chapter begins with a lengthy excerpt from the first author (usually Basil), generally there are no short Basil selections in the chapter. Similarly, when the patristic excerpts end with short quotations from the last author (often Philo of Alexandria, a sort of bridge to the classical and late classical authors, who was sometimes considered patristic and placed at the end of the patristic selections and sometimes considered classical and placed among the non-patristic fragments), generally longer Philo excerpts are not to be found in the chapter.

I do not know whether the compiler actually used texts of any authors for the long literary excerpts or whether he relied totally on compilations by predecessors who had already combed the literary texts and produced their own collections, such as the selections in Wachsmuth's "Parallela" (see n. 7). If the latter, the major accomplishment of the Maximus compiler was simply to integrate, under topical headings, numerous current florilegia or selections from them which were often arranged by form (collections of gnomic precepts, collections of apophthegms) or by author (grouped under the name of the person to whom the saying was attributed, like the Corpus Parisinum, which contains subsections under different names), or alphabetically. If the former, the Maximus compiler was himself familiar with much ancient and patristic literature. It should be noted that the fifth-century Stobaeus collections, loci communes of topically-arranged chapters like the Maximus florilegium and at least indirectly one of its sources, also contain some excerpts of comparable length, up to several printed pages in some cases. Although Stobaeus might have been a direct source for the Maximus compiler in a few instances, in most cases the numerous excerpts which appear in both the Stobaeus and the Maximus collections can be shown (or can reasonably be assumed) to have passed to the Maximus florilegium through some intervening step.

It should be noted that despite my distinction between short gnomic selections characteristic of the short version and the long literary excerpts which occur in addition in the long version, the distinction is actually somewhat blurred. Some short gnomic selections appear in some
manuscripts of both the short and the long versions, but not in others, and some longer excerpts appear in some short version manuscripts but not in some of the long version. The fact that some manuscripts in each version contain considerably fewer selections than some others in the same version is easily attributable to selective copying. There is no reason to assume a different cause for differences between long and short versions.

Earlier I remarked that the actual form taken by the prototype is not so clear as the conclusion that the prototype must have at least included the long literary excerpts characteristic of the long version. The majority of long strings of long literary excerpts contain no evidence suggesting that they are not identical to the prototype. However, from time to time there is a hint that some aspects of the short version are indeed closer to the hypothetical prototype, at least to judge from their relative fidelity in these instances to the known sources of the Maximus florilegium. These hints of short-version fidelity might at first glance lead us back to the traditional interpolation view and probably go a long way towards explaining why few scholars ever considered the possibility that the long version might be original. These hints involve better readings in the short version or strings of selections in which the short version preserves the order of the original better than does the long version.

An example of a better reading in the short version (by no means the only instance) is the name to which a couplet in Chapter 12 is attributed. The couplet appears in Stobaeus, where the rubric is Κράτωρος. In the Corpus Parisinum the couplet appears among γυναι Κράτωρος (485 Elter), and that is the attribution of the couplet in the editions (Gesner 1609, Combevis) and at least one short version manuscript (Vat. Gr. 741). In our two long version manuscripts, however (Codd. Vat. Gr. 739 and Vat. Barb. Gr. 158), the name has been further corrupted to Κάτωρος.

Another example suggesting a greater fidelity to the prototype in the short version than in the long version involves the order of a string of long literary excerpts. In the middle of Chapter 6, a lengthy chapter on friendship, the long version manuscripts I have examined contain seven excerpts from Dio Chrysostom of varying lengths, the first from Book 1 and the remaining six, immediately following, from Book 3. The six from Book 3 occur in the following order in the long version (references are to the de Budé text of Dio Chrysostom): 3.101 combined with 3.104-107; 3.113-114; 3.89; 3.102 (a); 3.102 (b), a direct continuation of the preceding in the
text of Dio Chrysostom; 3.110.

In the three short version manuscripts I have examined, however, the Book 3 selections are widely separated from the one Book 1 selection and placed near the end of the chapter. Only part of the first half of the long 3.101+104-107 is there; the rest is missing, as is the other long excerpt, 3.113-114. This selective copying and excerpting from the long version is characteristic of the short version, as we have seen. The order of the excerpts, however, is significant. The selections which are present in the short version occur in the following order, which, as can be seen, exactly parallels the order in which a reader of Dio Chrysostom would encounter them in the text: 3.89, 3.101 (partial), 3.102 (a+b), 3.110. Notice that the two contiguous excerpts from 3.102, two separate selections in the long version, are in the short version one excerpt, just as they are in the text. We have noted above the improbability of the assumption that a later interpolator into an original short version would search out the location of a short excerpt in the text of Dio Chrysostom in order to lengthen it. But it is equally unlikely, supposing again that an excerptor had before him the full version as we have it, that he would search out the text of Dio Chrysostom in order to unscramble the jumbled order of the fragments.

We are left with the conclusion that the prototype of the Maximus florilegium, which was by definition ancestor of both the extant full and short versions, was essentially all-inclusive and was copied selectively but in different ways by different copyists, producing the long version as we know it, essentially the same as the prototype but with some changes, omissions, and scribal errors, and the short version as well, much abridged by copyists who preferred shorter selections but who on occasion preserved features of the original which the long version lost.

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NOTES


2) Particularly the only edition likely to be readily accessible, the

3) The only manuscripts I have been able to examine are some from the various Vatican libraries contained on microfilm in the Vatican Microfilm Library of St. Louis University. I am grateful for the opportunity to see the manuscripts and for the help provided by the staff. Manuscripts of the short version I have examined are Codd. Vat. Gr. 385 (14th century), Vat. Gr. 741 (11th century), and Vat. Barb. Gr. 6 (13th century); full-version manuscripts are Codd. Vat. Gr. 739 (11th century), Vat. Barb. Gr. 158 (11th-12th centuries), and one sixteenth-century manuscript not previously recognized as containing a copy of the Maximus florilegium, Vat. Gr. 2269. Unfortunately Cod. Vat. Gr. 2269 is merely a worthless copy of Cod. Vat. Barb. Gr. 158.

4) For a description of the various forms of gnomic sayings, see K. Horna, "Gnome, Gnomendichtung, Gnomologien," *RE* Supplementband 6 (1935) 74-87.

5) The final excerpt in this string may provide another example. In the long version it is an excerpt from Plutarch, *Moralia* 39 B, beginning with a quotation from Aeschines Socraticus which actually comprises most of the selection excerpted from Plutarch. In some printed editions, which appear to be based on the short version, only the opening gnomic expression appears, πανταχοῦ τῷ νέῳ κόσμῳ ἀσωμάτως ἦτερ διὰ τῆς ἀνωτέρου. The entire quotation from Aeschines Socraticus, quoted by name by Plutarch, is included among the fragments of Aeschines (fragment 38 Dittmar p. 289). Presumably this opening gnome can be found in a short version manuscript, but I have seen it only in Gesner’s 1609 edition (see above, n. 2). Whatever the manuscript basis of Gesner’s edition, it did not provide anything resembling the full version. However, because of the poor quality of the editions, I have refrained from basing any argument on evidence from them alone.

6) See Richard (above, n. 1) for a summary of the relationships of numerous florilegia and the reliance of the Maximus florilegium on its sources. From the research of C. Wachsmuth, *Studien zu den griechischen Florilegien* (Berlin 1882, reprinted Amsterdam 1971), can clearly be seen the reliance of the Maximus florilegium on the Democritus-Isocrates-Epictetus collection (among others), the text of which he published in Chapter 5 from several manuscripts. The importance of the Corpus Parisinum (Cod. Par. Gr. 1168, fol. 80°-121°; the same manuscript elsewhere [fol. 140°-146°]) contains part of Wachsmuth’s Democritus-Isocrates-Epictetus collection) as a source of the Maximus florilegium has been thoroughly documented; see e.g. Richard (above, n. 1) 489, Wachsmuth p. 131, H. Schenkli, "Die epiktetischen Fragmenten. Eine Untersuchung zur Ueberlieferungsgeschichte der griechischen Florilegien," *Sitzungsberichte der Oest. Akademie Wien, Philosophisch-historische Classe* 116 (1888) 443-546 passim, and A. Elter, *Gnomica Homoeomata* (Bonn 1900-1904) I 72ff. The Vatican apothegms were published and edited by L. Sternbach, *Gnomologium Vaticanum et Codicis Vaticani 743* (Wiener Studien 9 [1887] 175-206, 10 [1888] 1-49 and 211-260, 11 [1889] 43-64 and 192-242, reprinted Berlin 1963). I have not seen manuscript sources of these texts. The Democritus-Isocrates-Epictetus and Vatican collections are well edited by Wachsmuth and Sternbach respectively, but for the contents of the Corpus Parisinum I have had to rely on second-hand reports. The item numbers given in the chart are those of A. Elter, who apparently had compiled a massive amount of material intending to publish an edition of the collection which, unfortunately, never
appeared so far as I can tell. However, many of his contemporaries made use of his material and used his numbering system when referring to a given fragment. When this information is available in other works on a second-hand basis, it at least helps establish the order of appearance of the selections, but lack of such information does not necessarily mean absence of the selection from the Corpus Parisinum. The contents of such collections are generally considered to be apocryphal on the whole, although not infrequently an origin in a literary text can be ascertained, such as aphoristic precepts from the corpus of Isocrates. A similarly apocryphal medieval "Plutarch" collection is a source for many short fragments attributed to Plutarch; see A. Elter, Gnomica Homoeomata III and "Fragmenta Incerta" in Bernardakis' edition of Plutarch, Vol. 7, p. 153.

7) The distinction between an original literary text and a compilation of excerpts might sometimes be blurred, as for instance in the case of the gnomic precepts comprising the Isocratean Ad Nicoelem and Ad Demonicum. They might be considered florilegia (see e.g. Wachsmuth, Studien 165; K. Wefelmeier, Die Sentensensammlung der Demonicea [Diss., Cologne 1961, Athens 1962]) or not (B. Rosenkranz, "Die Struktur der Ps.-Isokrateischen Demonicea," Emerita 34 [1966] 95-129). Similarly, the Regum et Imperatorum Apophthegmata attributed to Plutarch and the apophthegmata related by Diogenes Laertius in his Lives are small collections in the context of a literary corpus. Many of the long literary excerpts, patristic and non-patristic, may well have come from a collection of "Parallela" no longer completely extant but which Wachsmuth explored as a source for subsequent florilegia including the Maximus collection. Certainly, a common source helps to explain close similarities between Maximus, selections from the "Sacra Parallela" preserved in a fourteenth-century Florentine manuscript (Cod. Laur. plut. VIII n. 22), and others. In this Florentine manuscript, selections are arranged alphabetically by the first two letters of the chapter title. See Wachsmuth, Studien Chapter I pp. 1-44. Some of the excerpts quoted by Wachsmuth are among the long literary selections found in the long version of the Maximus florilegium but not in the short version.

8) Above, n. 6.