Cameron,\textsuperscript{203} only 15.9 (a panegyric),\textsuperscript{204} 9.136 (a pastoral threnody on his leaving for exile)\textsuperscript{205} and maybe 1.99 (to Daniel the Stylite) are his.\textsuperscript{206} Besides, he seems to be the author of a Passion of St Menas, a martyr from Panopolis, whom he describes as living in Cotyaeum and presents as an exact replica of the Gordius in the homily of Basil of Caesarea.\textsuperscript{207}

Christodorus of Coptus

Very little is known about Christodorus:\textsuperscript{208} the \textit{Suda} calls him ἔποιοῖς (hexametric poet), the son of Paniscus, says that he was from Coptus, in the Thebaid, and places his ἄυφιμι in the reign of Anastasius (491–518).\textsuperscript{209} To him are attributed Ἰςαβρικά in six books, which probably dealt with Emperor Anastasius’ victory over the Isaurians (497),\textsuperscript{210} six Πάτρια (Constantinople, Thessalonica, Nacle, Miletus, Tralles and Aphrodisias), and some \textit{Lydiaca}\textsuperscript{211} about the mythical history of Lydia. To these the \textit{Suda} adds an ὀλλα πολλά. His description in hexameters of the statues in the thermae of a gymnasium called Zeuxippus’ in \textit{AP 2} has survived,\textsuperscript{212}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{203} Cameron 1982, 226–7. Concerning his relationship with Nonnus, Cameron 1982, 235–9 (“[239] There is more than a chance that Cyrus is the earliest extant reader of Nonnus”).
\item \textsuperscript{204} Cf. commentary in Viljamaa 1968, 115–16 and Cameron 1982, 228–30. It is probably the fragment of a longer panegyric dedicated to Theodosius. Cameron (p. 230) dates it before the wedding of Eudoxia, Theodosius’ daughter, c. 435, before he started his political career.
\item \textsuperscript{206} Cameron 1982, 254.
\item \textsuperscript{207} Cf. Peeters 1950, 32 ff.; Cameron 1982, 245–7.
\item \textsuperscript{208} Suda X 525 Adler; Baumgarten 1899; \textit{PLRE II}, 293, s.v. “Christodorus, poet L V/ E VI”; Ch. Selzer, “Christodorus”, \textit{BNP} 3, 268–9. In spite of Baumgarten’s opinion, it seems to be a different person from his namesake in the next entry of the \textit{Suda}: cf. Cameron 1965, p. 475, n. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{209} Christodorus dedicates several encomiastic verses to Anastasius: cf. \textit{AP} 2.398–406.
\item \textsuperscript{210} Cf. Tissoni 2000a, 16.
\item \textsuperscript{211} Two lines have been preserved in a \textit{scholium: Schol. A ad Hom. II. 2.461} (= Heitsch S 8.1). Cf. Tissoni 2000a, 17–18.
\item \textsuperscript{212} Waltz 1960; Tissoni 2000a. Cameron 1973, 154 places the \textit{Description c. 500}; Tissoni 2000, 21 ff. proposes year 503 AD as \textit{terminus post quem} for the poem (the year when the panegyric of Priscianus was composed).
\end{itemize}
as well as two epigrams: *AP* 7.697 and 698, about the death of John of Epidamnus, Governor of Illiria and Anastasius’ son-in-law.\(^{213}\)

The only thing known about his religious beliefs,\(^{214}\) is that he wrote a poem entitled *About the pupils of the great Proclus* (Περὶ τῶν ἀκροατῶν τοῦ μεγάλου Πρόκλου),\(^{215}\) which is likelier to be a pagan’s work rather than a Christian’s, given Proclus’ confessed paganism. A name like his, however, is hardly applicable to a pagan. The *Suda* (X 526 Adler) includes an entry on a second Christodorus, *vir illustre* from the Thebaid, author of a hexametric *Ixeutica* and some *Miracles of the saints Argyros, Cosmas and Damian*.

His *Description* deals with the 80 statues which decorated Zeuxippus’ thermae in Constantinople. The thermae dated back to Septimius Severus’ times, but Constantine had reformed them and provided them with a gallery of statues.\(^{216}\) The collection was destroyed in Nika’s revolt (532), so we do not know to what extent the poet is faithful to his subject matter. Obviously, though, his objective was not that of an art critic but of a poet who took those images and also details of others as a source of inspiration and expressed himself by means of epic forms. It is very likely that his description was introduced by a prologue which was not included in the *Anthology*,\(^{217}\) perhaps because only the description was useful for teaching purposes.\(^{218}\)

The description seems to follow the order in which the figures were arranged. They often had their names on their bases, though sometimes the poet seems not to be sure as to whom the statue that he is describing represented (cf. 228 ff., 393–5, 407 ff.). All of them share an air of life and intelligence reflected in various ways: their attitude, thoughts and feelings are evoked.\(^{219}\) The poet tries to show a faithful description of every statue.

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\(^{213}\) Reedited and commented in Tissoni 2000a, 24–36. Nevertheless cf. Eudosiae Augustae Violarium s.v. Χριστοδώρος (1010 Περὶ Χριστοδώρου τοῦ ποιητοῦ), where he is also attributed three books of epigrams and four of letters.

\(^{214}\) Cameron 1965, 475.


\(^{217}\) Baumgarten 1899 thought that the description is incomplete and that neither the beginning nor the end have survived; Waltz 1960, p. 53, n. 7, on the contrary, believed that he just avoided the statues of contemporary personages. Cf. Tissoni 2000a, 50, 63; Whitby 2003a, 595.

\(^{218}\) Zumbo 1998, 37.

\(^{219}\) Cf. Tissoni 2000a, 50, 54.
but also uses openly literary models: Homer, Alexandrian authors and Quintus of Smyrna.

Christodorus frequently uses Homeric and Nonnian *hapax* and on some occasions he presents neologisms with which he aimed to boast an elevated phraseology. He uses eleven different hexametric forms, against the nine used by Nonnus, and in general he quite closely follows the various “Nonnian” metric rules.

3.2. Works known only through inscriptions, papyri, parchment and tablets

As the medieval transmission has been quite selective as far as quality and subjects are concerned, the works known through inscriptions (Ptolemagri’s monument), papyri, parchment and tablets allow us to have a clearer idea about the evolution of language, style, metrics and genre and the different reasons why certain types of hexameters were written as well as the reasons for their different qualities.

A catalogue of 59 papyri, parchments and wood pieces and an inscription containing hexametric poems dated from the third to sixth centuries is offered below. On many occasions they are not epic compositions *sensu stricto*, but all of them incorporate content and / or formal aspects found in epic poetry. Not all of them come from the area around Panopolis,