Sources in the History of Mathematics and Physical Sciences

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Vat. gr. 218, f. 118° Photo: Biblioteca Vaticana

Pappus of Alexandria

Book 7 of the *Collection*

Part 1. Introduction, Text, and Translation

Edited With Translation and Commentary by Alexander Jones

In Two Parts With 308 Figures



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TO MY PARENTS

Preface

The seventh book of Pappus's *Collection*, his commentary on the Domain (or Treasury) of Analysis, figures prominently in the history of both ancient and modern mathematics: as our chief source of information concerning several lost works of the Greek geometers Euclid and Apollonius, and as a book that inspired later mathematicians, among them Viete, Newton, and Chasles, to original discoveries in their pursuit of the lost science of antiquity. This presentation of it is concerned solely with recovering what can be learned from Pappus about Greek mathematics. The main part of it comprises a new edition of Book 7; a literal translation; and a commentary on textual, historical, and mathematical aspects of the book. It proved to be convenient to divide the commentary into two parts, the notes to the text and translation, and essays about the lost works that Pappus discusses.

The first function of an edition of this kind is, not to expose new discoveries, but to present a reliable text and organize the accumulated knowledge about it for the reader's convenience. Nevertheless there are novelties here. The text is based on a fresh transcription of Vat. gr. 218, the archetype of all extant manuscripts, and in it I have adopted numerous readings, on manuscript authority or by emendation, that differ from those of the old edition of Hultsch. Moreover, many difficult parts of the work have received little or no commentary hitherto. In particular I believe that more sense can be recovered from several problematic passages in the important first part of the book than has been recognized. The account of the evolution and vicissitudes of the text, from its composition to the Renaissance, is largely new. In treating the lost works of Apollonius and Euclid, where so much has been done between the times of Maurolico and Zeuthen, my main work was to select what seemed to be valid scholarship; the remainder, if mentioned at all, had to be ruthlessly relegated to footnotes, without regard for intrinsic merit.

This edition is a revision of my doctoral dissertation in the Department of History of Mathematics at Brown University, which was submitted in April 1985. It was stored on and printed by Brown University's computer facilities, using experimental laser-printer typesetting software. Some minor typographical infelicities, for example the lack of an iota subscript, are I hope outweighed by the reduced cost of production. I am entirely responsible for typographical and other errors.

I have to thank the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana for access to its facilities and collections, and providing, through my teacher Gerald Toomer, a microfilm of the archetype. I have also profited from research in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan; the Newberry Library, Chicago; the libraries of the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University; and above all the libraries of Brown University. During the writing of the dissertation I held a doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The History of Mathematics Department provided a truly congenial home for four years; I mention with special gratitude the often manifested hospitality of the late Professor A. J. Sachs and Mrs J. Sachs, and many kindnesses of Professor O. Neugebauer. A summer stipend from the History of Mathematics Department enabled me to spend two months during the Summer of 1984 in Italy palpating the past. For various suggestions, information, and corrections I am indebted to Professors J. L. Berggren, A. L. Boegehold, David Pingree (who also proof-read the Greek text expertly), D. T. Whiteside, and Mr N. G. Wilson. Dr Jan Hogendijk, surpassing his function as reader of the dissertation, rescued me from numerous mathematical and logical morasses. Many of my notes on Pappus's mathematics are the better for his suggestions, and the essays (especially those on the *Porisms* and the loci) were enormously improved, in form and content, under his guidance. He also generously allowed me to read the results of his researches into the traces of lost works of Apollonius in Arabic sources; since these are, at the time of writing, not published, I have limited myself to mentioning the existence of relevant fragments at appropriate points in the essay on Apollonius. My debt to Gerald Toomer extends throughout the book, every page of which (in its earlier version) he read with the greatest care. He suggested the edition in the first place, and I can only hope that a little of his learning is reflected in it.

> Providence, September 1985.

Contents

Part 1

INTRODUCTION Pappus and the Collection

ESSAYS ON THE LOST WORKS	
NOTES	377
Part 2	
TEXT AND TRANSLATION	82
Abbreviations Used in the Apparatus	79
Editorial Principles	75
§20. Mathematics in Book 7	71
§19. The Purpose and Plan of Book 7	70
§18. The Domain of Analysis	66
Introduction to Book 7	02
§17. Printed Editions	56 62
§15. The Vaticanus in Florence and Rome §16. The Recentiores	52 56
§14. False Leads	48
§13. The Papal Inventories	45
§12. Witelo	42
§11. Byzantine Notices	36
§10. Disturbances in the Vaticanus	33
§9. Description of the Vaticanus	30
§8. The Proarchetypes	26
§7. Foul Papers	24
§6. Early references	21
§5. The Marginalia	20
§4. Interpolations	18
§3. Integrity and Composition of the Collection	15
§2. Works	3
§1. Biographical Data	1
Fappus and the Collection	

A. Th	e Minor Works of Apollonius	
§1.	Introduction	510
§ 2.	The Cutting off of a Ratio	510

	§3.	The Cutting off of an Area	513
		The Determinate Section	514
		General Remarks on the 'Triple Section'	522
		The Neuses	527
		The Tangencies	534
		The Plane Loci	539
В.	-	lid's Porisms	
	§1.	Documents	547
	§2.	The Definitions	549
	§3.	The First Porism	554
	-	The 'Hyptios' Porisms	556
		Rectilinear Configurations	560
		Areas and Ranges	563
	§7.	Porisms on Circles	564
	§8.	Applications and Purpose	567
	§9.	Historical Note	569
с.	The	e Loci of Aristaeus, Euclid, and Eratosthenes	
	•	Introduction.	573
		Documents on Aristaeus	577
		Fragments from Pappus	582
		Book 3 of Apollonius's Conics	585
		The Four Line Locus	587
		Euclid's Loci on Surfaces	591
		The Derivation of Curvilinear Loci	595
	§8.	Eratosthenes's Loci with Respect to Means	599
	-	ICES	
APPE		e Scholia to Book 7	600
		Book of Lemmas by "Aqatun"	603
4. 2	Sol	ections from the Cutting off of a Ratio	606
0.	B CI		
APPA	ARA	TUS TO THE FIGURES	620
	100		628
BIBL	10G	RAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS	020
INDE	X		647
GRE	EK I	NDEX	657
FIGURES			667