

pro dignitate cuique tribuatur; id enim est iustitiae fundamentum, ad quam haec referenda sunt omnia. nam et qui gratificantur cuipiam, quod obsit illi, cui prodesse velle videantur, non benefici neque liberales, sed perniciosi assentatores iudicandi sunt" (*Off.* 1. 14. 42).

Mena in turn becomes uncontrolled and immoderate as a result of his change of fortune and his desire to succeed and become rich: "immoritur studiis et amore senescit habendi" (85). Thus he is totally unprepared for failure and frantically seeks the fastest way out of his predicament. The moral, "metiri se quemque suo modulo ac pede verum," ends both the tale and the Epistle. Cicero had put it this way: "ea tamen (universa natura) conservata propriam nostram sequamur, ut etiamsi sint alia graviora atque meliora, tamen nos studia nostra nostrae naturae regula metiamur" (*Off.* 1. 31. 110). The apparent resemblances

to the events of Horace's and Maecenas' relationship are intended only to intensify the contrasts. And again Horace has used a triangular pattern on which to construct an *exemplum* that will help to clarify the whole issue of benefactions between *virī boni et sapientes*.¹⁷

The theme of the Epistle is not independence, except in the abstract, but rather the fitness of one's aspirations as measured by one's proper nature.¹⁸ It is developed within the framework of a request from Horace to Maecenas to be forgiven his extended absence and allowed further time away from his friend. This theme of *decorum* is expressed in terms of giving and receiving, which are made to provide a generous and tactful background for the poet to ask and the patron to grant.

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17. The fable of the fox (29–33) is the only apparent exception. The *mustela* can have nothing to do with the fox's predicament, since he entered the bin *forte* (29). The uniqueness of this fable within the plan of the Epistle may remind us that it is put forward by someone other than the poet, in order that *he* may refute it.

18. That an "assertion of independence" is the main point

of this Epistle seems to have been the assumption of all critics who have handled it. The one exception is Büchner, who recognized the importance of the themes of giving and receiving, and the warm treatment of the friendship between the two. His article remains, in this writer's view, the most sensitive reading to date.

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ecce autem aedificat: columnnam mento suffigit suo.
apage, non placet profecto mihi istaec aedificatio;
nam os columnatum poetae esse indauidi barbaro,
cui bini custodes semper totis horis occubant.

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In this allusion to the imprisonment of Naevius by the Metelli, *os columnatum* has been variously interpreted but not convincingly explained. Brix-Niemeyer's suggestion that it represented "das in Kummer und Leid auf den Arm (*columna*) gestützte Gesicht" is not supported by parallels, and it is not included as a posture of grief in K. Sittl, *Die Gebärden der Griechen und Römer*, although *Miles* 201–9 is given as an example of southern expressiveness (p. 48). Such a posture seems too similar to the attitude of cogitation shown by Palaestrio to be credible as signifying something different. Dousa's interpretation (*apud Gronovius*), that Naevius used to compose with his hand propping his chin,

understandably does not now feature in commentaries, and merely illustrates how puzzling the expression must have been found to give rise to so weak an explanation. A. Ernout suggested (in the Budé edition) that Naevius "fut emprisonné et sans doute mis au carcan (ce qui explique la plaisanterie de Plaute sur l'*os columnatum*)."

But such a *servile supplicium* seems unlikely in the case of a free citizen with aristocratic backing, whose imprisonment must have been in the nature of a *custodia libera*, if he did indeed write the recantatory *Hariolus* and *Leon* in prison (F. Marx, *Ber. d. sächs. Ges.*, LXIII [1911], 71), and whose incarceration must, in view of the great Republican freedom to criticize, have

been an exceptional measure dictated by wartime nervous tension (T. Frank, *AJP*, XLVIII [1927], 109 f.).

J. L. Ussing's *libertate privatum* probably represents the reality better than his suggestion that the phrase meant *columnae adstrictum*, which leaves *os* unexplained.

Something which "der keusche Däne" would have been unlikely to suppose (F. Scheidweiler, *RhM*, XCVII [1954], 162), is what, I believe, we are here dealing with, namely, the gross and humorous popular metaphor for mistreatment with which readers of Catullus are familiar (cf. 10. 12, 16. 1, 21. 8 and 13, 37. 8, 74. 5, and especially 28. 9 ff., expressing his ill-treatment by Memmius). The sexual meaning of *columna*, equivalent to the *trabs* of Catullus 28. 10, is well attested. Catullus, in whose time Plautus was much admired (cf. F. Leo, *Gesch. d. lat. Lit.*, p. 136), shows a good deal of coincidence in the popular element of his language with the language of Plautus, as a reading of J. Svennung's *Catullus Bildersprache* makes evident. Cf. H. Bardon, *Latomus*, XVI (1957), 616 f.; L. Alfonsi, *Dionisio*, p. 10 (and compare L. Afranius 410R and Catullus 13. 8).

"Die Alten waren in Eroticis nicht zimperlich" (Kroll); and the topic on which, I suggest, the metaphor was based would not have been too gross for Plautus, any more than it was for Catullus. It was not alien as a subject for jest even to the chaste Muse of Terence (cf. *Ad.* 215, *os praebui*). Catullus' humorously literal amplification of the figurative expression with reference to himself at 28. 10 shows how well-worn as an image of mistreatment the usage must have been. Plautus, who was, like Shakespeare, "ein Meister in solchen scherzhaften Wiederbelebungen verblichener Metaphern" (Svennung, *op. cit.*, p. 15), was using, I suggest, the same figure in the same wryly humorous way with reference to Naevius' experience at the hands of the Metelli as was Catullus with reference to his own ill-treatment by Memmius.

The allusion in this passage is purely Roman, and the suggested pun illustrates once again Plautus' flair for punning independently of his Greek models; cf. G. Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy*, p. 355.

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FESTUS' SOURCE ON JULIAN'S PERSIAN EXPEDITION

In his discussion of the sources of Festus' *Breviarium* J. W. Eadie, after noting some similarity between the phraseology of the beginning of the chapter (28) on Julian's Persian expedition and the language of Eutropius (10. 16. 1) on the same, remarks that the source itself "is more difficult to determine. . . It is also possible that a written source was used."¹ M. F. A. Brok suggested that Festus was summarizing Libanius *Or.* 18. 248–68.² Certainly many of the details in both Festus and Libanius are the same. But the accounts of Julian's decision upon the manner and the route of the journey home from Ctesiphon differ. Libanius (18. 260–66) defends the Emperor's decision, whereas Festus explains that Julian, led astray by a Persian who deserted to the Romans for this

purpose, made his choice against the advice of his companions.

Sozomen (*Hist. Eccl.* 6. 1) has every detail common to Festus and Libanius, except the explanation of the failure of the army to take Ctesiphon (he omits this completely). His account of Julian's decision upon the return journey agrees with that of Festus. With Libanius he shares not only material not in Festus, but also similarity of phrase, including the words *διώρυγα ναυσίπορον* (Libanius *Or.* 18. 245) of the Naarmalcha canal. This suggests either that Sozomen and Festus followed Libanius and supplemented his account with another version (perhaps the ultimate source of *Or.* 18), or, more likely, that all three writers used a common source and Libanius, since it suited his encomiastic purpose,

1. *The Breviarium of Festus* (London, 1967), pp. 96 ff. The quote is from p. 98.

2. *De Perzische Expeditie van Keizer Julian volgens Ammianus Marcellinus* (Groningen, 1959), p. 13.