

SUETONIUS *DIVUS IULIUS* 86. 2 AND 88. 2: TWO NOTES

## I

86. 2: alii e diverso opinantur insidias undique imminentis subire semel quam cavere \* \* \* solitum ferunt: non tam sua quam rei publicae interesse, uti salvus esset; . . .

The fullest report of this text is given by H. Ailloud in the Budé edition (Paris, 1931). He notes that after *cavere* the codex *p* (cod. Reg. mus. Brit. 15 C. IV, saec. xiii) has a unique reading. It adds the words *diu maluisse dicere* in front of *solitum ferunt*. This indicates that someone had correctly located the lacuna and its cause, and was able to invent the basic elements of a satisfactory supplement, presumably in the thirteenth century or thereabouts; for *p*'s elder relative R (cod. Reg. mus. Brit. 15 C. III, saec. xii) lacks the supplement.

Editors went variously astray, perpetrating such unauthentic readings as "alii e diverso opinatum insidias undique imminentis subire semel [confessum] satius esse, quam cavere semper. alii ferunt dicere solitum . . ." (cf. F. A. Wolf [Leipzig, 1802]; Baumgarten-Crusius [Leipzig, 1816]). It was C. L. Roth (Leipzig, 1858) who returned at last to the correct identification of the lacuna. He reconstructed this part of the text as follows: "... subire semel quam cavere <sollicitum maluisse. quidam dicere etiam> solitum ferunt . . ." This idea depends on the similarity of *sollicitum* and *solitum* to account for the lacuna. But <*sollicitum*> is forced, redundant to the sense, and unconvincing.

M. Ihm (Leipzig, 1907), thinking to improve on Roth, resurrected <*semper*> from earlier editions and proposed to add it at the beginning of the supplement, which would now read "... subire semel quam cavere <semper sollicitum maluisse. quidam dicere etiam> solitum ferunt . . ." *Semper* was thought to be necessary as a counterweight to *semel*. No matter that the point of Roth's <*sollicitum*> was ruined by this insertion.

Ihm's aberration was adopted by J. C. Rolfe for the Loeb edition (London and Cambridge, Mass., 1913); it also appears in the edition of *Divus Iulius* by H. E. Butler and M. Cary

(Oxford, 1927). Yet Ihm had omitted <*semper*> from his *editio minor* (Leipzig, 1908).

The reason for the lacuna, as clearly seen by the anonymous critic whose hand appears in *p*, is homoeoteuton, and his suggestion that the last of the words missing after *cavere* was *dicere* is simple, effective, and hard to improve on. What else has he to offer? His *maluisse* is obviously necessary and right. But *diu*, which like <*semper*> is presumably intended to balance *semel*, is rather inept, where *semper* is merely inelegant. We can do without either.

For the rest, we need to determine the relationship of ... *dicere solitum ferunt* to the previous sentence. Is it exemplification, further development of the same point, or is it a contrast? Suetonius goes on to report Caesar as saying that "his survival was not so much of concern to him as it was to the national welfare; he had long since got more than his fill of power and glory; if anything happened to him, the state would have no peace and would face civil wars under much worse conditions." This hardly exemplifies the proposition that Caesar preferred to face, once and for all, the plots that threatened him from every quarter, rather than guard against them. It represents a different point of view—Caesar half assuming that the national interest vested in his security would be sufficient protection for him. We can therefore approve Roth's <*quidam*> as introducing this further idea. With the addition of an antecedent *hoc* or *illud* to foreshadow the citation of Caesar's remarks, we seem to have the essential elements of a satisfactory supplement *exempli gratia*, one superior to anything printed by the editors:

alii e diverso opinantur insidias undique imminentis subire semel quam cavere <maluisse. quidam illud dicere> solitum ferunt, non tam sua quam rei publicae interesse, uti salvus esset; . . .

## II

88. 2: siquidem ludis, quos primo<s> consecrato[s] ei heres Augustus edebat, stella crinita per septem continuos dies fulsit exoriens circa undecimam horam, creditumque est animam esse Caesaris in caelum recepti; . . .

The text in this form, with *primos consecrato*, is owed to the Basle edition of 1546, and is almost universally accepted. (Baumgarten-Crusius [Leipzig, 1816] is an exception.) Yet the manuscripts with virtual unanimity present *primos consecratos*. The only recorded variants are: *primos (primo)* with *consecratos* omitted, Gg (G<sup>2</sup>), and *primo consecratis*, Lδ. No codex offers the reading *consecrato*.

Caesar was not consecrated until January 1, 42 (Dio 47. 18. 3 f.; cf. *ILLRP*, I<sup>2</sup>, 409–410). The first games that “Augustus” gave in Caesar’s honor were held in July 44 (Cic. *Fam.* 11. 28. 6; cf. Nic. Dam. *Vit. Aug.* 28; Plin. *NH* 2. 93; Suet. *Aug.* 10. 1; Appian *BC* 3. 28; Dio 45. 6. 4). The appearance of the *stella crinita* is in fact associated with these *ludi* of July 44 (Plin. *NH* 2. 93–94, 98; Plut. *Caes.* 69. 2; Dio 45. 7. 1). So the emendation of the MSS reading from *consecratos* to *consecrato* foists upon Suetonius an error. He is made to say that Caesar was consecrated,

1. The collocation *ludos consecratos* seems uncommon but not unnatural or improbable; *ludos . . . consecravit* is found in Hyginus *Fab.* 170. 10.

i.e., officially deified, before 20 July 44 (for the meaning of *consecrare* in this connection, cf. Suet. *Tib.* 51. 2, *Nero* 9. 1, *Dom.* 2. 3). Suetonius could of course have erred. But it might be more sensible to reconsider the paradosis before resorting to such a quixotic type of emendation.

Baumgarten-Crusius thought *primo consecratos* could be retained by taking *ei* as a dative of agent (= *a Caesare*). This is forced and improbable. Moreover, *primo* (“at first”) makes no good sense.

The least objectionable reading is surely *primos consecratos*, which can be derived by combination from the tradition, and which recommended itself to the learned Estienne (Paris, 1543). For “the first *ludi* which his heir Augustus gave consecrated to Caesar”<sup>1</sup> were indeed the games of 20–30 July 44.

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### SOME THOUGHTS ON *DOUBLE-ENTENDRES* IN SENECA *APOCOLOCYNTOSIS* 3 AND 4

Anyone who has read the *Apocolocyntosis* even casually knows that many of the words or phrases in it have a double meaning. Of the two meanings the obvious is usually perfectly innocent, while the less obvious one is obscene and, usually, scatological. Sometimes one is confronted with more than just a word, in fact, with a complex image or an episode which is masked under words that sound perfectly innocuous. I hope to show that this is the case with Chapters 3 and 4 of the *Apocolocyntosis*.

Chapter 3 begins, “Claudius animam agere coepit, nec invenire exitum poterat” (“Claudius began to give up the ghost, and could not make an end of the matter”). Now it is true that *animam agere* is idiomatic Latin corresponding to the expression “to give up the ghost.” On the other hand, the principal meaning of *anima* is “air, wind,” and *agere* means “to drive, to impel, to press.” *Exitus* can

easily mean “passage, orifice, vent,” etc. The beginning of 3 could therefore mean, “Claudius started pressing his wind, but could not find a passage (for it).” This describes Claudius’ dire predicament, an inability to relieve himself of flatulence on his death bed. The implication, confirmed in Chapter 4, is that relief from wind/*anima* will be concomitant with relief from life/*anima*. Claudius cannot do it on his own and hence the need for divine intervention by the god Mercury. The choice of Mercury as the god who is to aid Claudius is not so natural or obvious here as it is later on, when he will lead Claudius to the underworld after his expulsion from heaven. There he is acting in his traditional role of *ψυχοπομπός*. But here? The usual explanation is that satirical irony is achieved by “tum Mercurius, qui semper ingenio eius delectatus esset,”<sup>1</sup> because Mercury, the god of cleverness and

1. So R. Waltz in the Budé *Sénèque: L'Apocoloquintosis du Divin Claude* (Paris, 1961); and W. H. D. Rouse in the LCL *Petronius; Seneca: Apocolocyntosis* (New York, 1922).