

A further point. Propertius' desire in both 2. 8 and 2. 9 is to regain the favor of his mistress. The role of the rival is relatively minor. He is there as the medium by which Propertius shows that he himself is an *exclusus amator* (41–46). The mistress' coldness and ingratitude are more the issue (3–36). The climactic juxtaposition of *medio amore* (48), disposing of the lover, and *media matre* (50), and *media puella* (51), which help to bring together Propertius and his mistress, illustrate the poet's intent. Furthermore, *mortem ego . . . morte . . . tua* frame the last line of the poem and portray almost visually the lover's yearning to be with her, even at the price of death.¹⁰ Any reference to the rival is out of place.

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10. R. J. Baker, "*Laus in amore mori*: Love and Death in Propertius," *Latomus* 29 (1970): 670–98, stresses (677) how important it is to Propertius "for death to find him in full enjoyment of the sort of love *fides* ensures." The *mors inhonesta* of 2. 8 is a "black parody" of his hope for union in death (681).

JUXTAPOSED MEDICAL TRADITIONS: PLINY *HN* 27. 131

Circum Ariminum nota est herba quam resedam vocant. Discutit collectiones inflammationesque omnes. Qui curant ea, addunt haec verba:

Reseda, morbis reseda;
Scisne, scisne, quis hic pullus egerit radices?
Nec caput nec pedes habeat.¹

herba *uett.* : heroa *Er om.* VR¹ || resedam E : -deam V -daem R || omnes *om.* VR¹ || morbis *codd.*, *seruauit datiuum interpretans ut* << *curare alicui rei* >> : morbos *uett.* || cinaequis V habeat VR¹ : -ant *Er.*

[Plin. *HN* 27. 131]

Pliny here recommends the medicinal efficacy of a plant called *reseda*.² His commentary reflects an interesting juxtaposition, hitherto unnoted, of two major antithetical traditions in contemporary Roman medicine.³ First, Pliny relates that the *reseda* "disperses all abscesses and inflamed swellings" ("discutit collectiones

1. The text according to A. Ernout, *Pline L'Ancien. "Histoire Naturelle." Livre XXVII* (Paris, 1959).

2. *Reseda alba L.*, the upright mignonette. Other possible identifications, but less likely, are *R. phyteuma L.*, the Rampion mignonette, and *R. odorata L.*, the common mignonette.

3. According to T. C. Allbutt, *Greek Medicine in Rome* (London, 1921; repr. New York, 1970), this remarkably indiscriminate and uncritical juxtaposition is not uncharacteristic of Pliny the Elder. He comments (pp. 213–14) that Pliny "in system and critical acumen, was incomparably the inferior of Celsus, and inferior even to Seneca. He had not the grip of principles, nor the sense of judgement and proportion we admire in Celsus . . . the medical part of Pliny is the worst of his collection. His bundles of recipes, anecdotes, curiosities, metaphors, and prejudices are thrown pell-mell without order, without interpretation." Allbutt's views, however, are refuted by W. H. Stahl, *Roman Science* (Madison, 1962), ch. 7, "Pliny's Theoretical Science," esp. p. 106, where he comments: "Time after time he [Pliny] makes some profound observation or draws an impressive inference (usually not his own), only to follow it immediately with some bit of lore that Frazer would compare to primitive folk beliefs." Cf. here also J. Stannard, "Pliny and Roman Botany," *Isis* 56 (1965): 420–25. J. Scarborough, *Roman Medicine* (London, 1969; repr. Ithaca, New York, 1979), pp. 63–64, is not as enthusiastic about Pliny as is Stannard, but certainly is far less harsh than Allbutt.

inflammationesque omnes"). His choice of vocabulary here reflects a sophisticated contemporary medical terminology very much in vogue,⁴ due considerably to the admirable translation of Greek medical idiom and Hellenistic theory into Latin by the Roman encyclopedist A. Cornelius Celsus (ca. 14–37 A.D.).⁵ Next, Pliny reverts without warning to the level of popular Roman folk medicine by advocating a charming metrical incantation in the form of an address to the *reseda* plant. It is to be repeated three times with three accompanying episodes of "spitting on the ground." The advocated incantation recalls the magical chants recommended to expedite various prescribed treatments by Cato the Elder (ca. 234–149 B.C.) in his *De agricultura*—one of our most important extant sources of Roman folk medicine.⁶ Thus the passage juxtaposes two traditions of contemporary Roman medicine: we find Pliny's comments couched in terms of sophisticated Hellenistic theory and practice, as well as those of the native Roman popular folk medicine.⁷

The translation of the short incantation needs attention. The first line contains a pun on the plant's name, which is likewise the imperative of the verb *resedare*, "to soothe, allay." Its meaning has posed no difficulty for translators. In the most recent translations, it is variously, but correctly, rendered: "Reseda, allay diseases,"⁸ or accommodating the pun, "Soother, soothe disease,"⁹ or "Réséda, sois le sédatif des maladies."¹⁰

With regard to the next two lines, *pullus* has been persistently taken to mean "chicken," and the lines, thus, interpreted as meaning:

Do you know, do you know, what chicken here uprooted you?
May he have neither head nor feet.

4. The first citations of these medical terms appear at this time: *discutiō*, *-lere* (to disperse, dispel morbid matter or conditions): Cels. *Med.* 5. 27. 4, 1. pr. 69, 3. 15. 5 *et saepe*; Vitruv. *De arch.* 8. 3. 17; Scrib. Larg. 263, 43; Sen. *Ep.* 55. 2. Elsewhere in Pliny *HN* 31. 63, 36. 137. *Collectiō* (a gathering of morbid matter, an abscess): Scrib. Larg. 206; Sen. *Ep.* 68. 8. *Inflammatiō* (an inflamed swelling, inflammation): Cels. *Med.* 2. 8. 30, 3. 10. 3 (the famous definition of the four cardinal signs of *inflammatio*: "... notae vero inflammationis sunt quattuor: rubor et tumor cum calore et dolore"), 4. 13. 3, 5. 19. 1; Scrib. Larg. 183. Elsewhere in Pliny *HN* 21. 130, 26. 86.

5. See here F. Marx (ed.), *A. Cornelii Celsi quae supersunt*, in *CML* 1 (Leipzig, 1915); W. G. Spencer, *Celsus "De Medicina"* (Cambridge, Mass., 1935); O. Temkin, "Celsus 'On Medicine' and the Ancient Medical Sects," *BHM* 3 (1935): 249–64; B. Meinecke, "Aulus Cornelius Celsus—Plagiarist or Artifex Medicinae?" *BHM* 10 (1941): 288–98; G. Baader, "Überlieferungsprobleme des A. Cornelius Celsus," *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 34 (1960): 215–18; J. Scarborough, *Roman Medicine*, pp. 59–63 and nn. 44–64, pp. 195–98, and "Celsus on Human Vivisection at Ptolemaic Alexandria," *Clio Medica* 11 (1976): 25–38; D. Daube, "The Mediocrity of Celsus," *CJ* 70 (1974): 41–42.

6. For example, Cato *Agr.* 160, where to expedite the treatment of dislocations we find: "Luxum si quod est, hac cantione sanum fiet. Harundinem prende tibi viridem p. IIII aut quinque longam, mediam diffinde, et duo homines teneant ad coxendices. Incipe cantare: *motas vaela daries dardares astalaries dissunapiter*, usque dum coeant. . . . Et tamen cotidie cantato et luxato vel hoc modo: *haut haut istasis tarsis ardanmabou dannaustra*." On Roman folk medicine, see in particular W. H. S. Jones, "Ancient Roman Folk Medicine," *JHM* 12 (1957): 459–72; Scarborough, *Roman Medicine*, pp. 15–25.

7. On Graeco-Roman medicine in general during the Early Empire, see especially P. Diepgen, *Geschichte der Medizin*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1949), pp. 102–18; R. H. Major, *A History of Medicine*, vol. 1 (Springfield, Illinois, 1954), pp. 162–87; Scarborough, *Roman Medicine*; A. S. Lyons and R. J. Petrucelli, "Medicine in Roman Times," in *Medicine: An Illustrated History* (New York, 1978).

8. W. H. S. Jones, *Pliny, Natural History*, vol. 7 (Cambridge, Mass., 1956).

9. Jones, "Ancient Roman Folk Medicine," p. 472.

10. Ernout, *Pline L'Ancien*, p. 65.

If *pullus*, however, is rendered by its alternative meaning, "a shoot, or sprout,"¹¹ the interpretation becomes more cogent:¹²

Do you know, do you know, what shoot here struck root?
May it have neither head nor feet.

The incantation is in the form of an address to a plant, appropriately in the context of agricultural idiom: *pullus*, "shoot," or "sprout" gives a normal meaning to *agere radices*, namely, "to strike, put forth root(s),"¹³ and *caput* describes the circumscribed base of the plant, where roots spread horizontally;¹⁴ accordingly, *pedes* here refers to vertical growth in the roots. Moreover, the incantation presumably aids the *reseda*'s ability to disperse abscesses and inflamed swellings. Appropriately, the medical context now includes a metaphorical command to the "abscess" or "inflamed swelling" not to spread.

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11. See Cato *Agr.* 51, 158. 1; cf. Lucr. 5. 1364.

12. Jones, "Ancient Roman Folk Medicine," p. 472, noted but did not substantiate effectively the possibility of another interpretation, if the alternative meaning of *pullus* was used. Ernout, the most recent translator, kept *pullus* = "chicken."

13. See Varro *Rust.* 1. 37. 5; Col. *Rust.* 5. 6. 8; Ov. *Rem. Am.* 106, *Met.* 4. 254. Elsewhere in Pliny *HN* 16. 129.

14. See Cato *Agr.* 36, 43, 51.

GERMANIA 13. 3 AND 46. 3

haec dignitas, hae vires magno semper electorum iuvenum globo circumdari, in pace decus, in bello praesidium. nec solum in sua gente cuique sed apud finitimas quoque civitates id nomen, ea gloria est, si numero ac virtute comitatus emineat.

[Tac. *Germ.* 13. 3]

Such is the text printed by Winterbottom.¹ Koestermann prints *semper et electorum* in the first line,² the reading of codex E, which Winterbottom does not even report. Koestermann presumably chose *et* as the *difficilior lectio*, and as more suited to the duality of expression which runs throughout the passage. Winterbottom suppressed *et* because by his stemma unique readings of E are worthless. Winterbottom follows in the tradition of Anderson,³ who comments: "Some MSS. (*E* and its congeners) read *magno et*,⁴ which in itself is attractive, the conjunction emphasizing the number and the quality of the members, *plurimi et acerrimi* above, *numero ac virtute* below. Cp. *Dial.* 10 *privatas et nostri saeculi controversias*. But it is unlikely that this group of MSS. alone preserved the genuine tradition." For the use of

1. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Ogilvie (eds.), *Cornelii Taciti Opera minora* (Oxford, 1975); henceforth cited as Winterbottom.

2. E. Koestermann (ed.), *P. Cornelii Taciti Libri qui supersunt*, vol. 2.2 (Leipzig, 1964); henceforth cited as Koestermann.

3. J. G. C. Anderson (ed.), *Cornelii Taciti de Origine et Situ Germanorum* (Oxford, 1938), p. 94.

4. Note that the citation is a slip: E reads *magno semper et*.