

suggest that *nitenti* has been lost between *frontem* and *ita*. For *nitenti* cf. 6.1 'id matrimonium ad maiora nitenti decus ac robur fuit'.

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NOCTES STATIANAE

I

hi praefixa solo uellunt munimina, at illi
portarum obiectus minuunt et ferrea sudant
claustra remoliri, trabibusque artata sonoro
pellunt saxa loco;

(*Theb.* 10. 525–8)

‡ariete

-que s.l. P¹ : *om.* N artata ω : artata Θ^c : ‡ariete P¹

These lines, which I cite according to Hill's forthcoming edition,¹ have caused scholars some difficulty of interpretation. *Trabibus* has generally been taken to refer to battering-rams and thus, for instance, we find in the Delphin edition as an interpretation of *trabibusque . . . loco* the words 'et strepenti ariete loco extrudunt lapides firme constrictos'. Certainly, if they drive stones from their place with a ram, it is the ram that is the best candidate for the epithet *sonorus* — a candidature every ω manuscript rejects, except two alleged by Barth. P, however, has *et ariete*, replacing the rather uninformative adjective *artata* and providing an explicit noun for *sonoro* to agree with; and P was followed by the early editors Lindenbrogius and Cruceus. 'Infeliciter', says Barth. Infelicitously indeed: *et* is deleted by P in the first hand and would not scan; without *et* the sentence does not construct and the line still does not scan — for the word is *ariēte* (see Hill ad 2.492).² Worse still, *ariete* which is only otherwise found as a variant in the hand of the corrector of Θ is transparently a gloss on *trabibus*, as Barth said, and has been drawn into the text of P by its accidental similarity to *artata*. It follows that amongst the manuscripts there is no significant deviation from the reading given at the head of this note (Klotz's 'trabibusque artata ω *interpolatione manifesta*' is hopelessly topsy-turvy) and that therefore curious conjectures like Kohlmann's *aut aere* or Postgate's *vel aere* (do they refer to hollow cannonballs?) can neither claim P's reading for support nor stand at all if we are able to interpret the reading of the manuscripts.

Barth reports the interpretation of a Vetus Scholiasta: 'saxa trabibus vineta, ut murum fortius contineant'. This he rejects without argument, but quite wrongly. The *trabes* are not the instruments with which the wall was attacked (the gloss *ariete* was mistaken) but the timbers with which the structure of the wall is packed (*artata*) and thereby strengthened. For in the preceding lines, which I have cited, there is likewise no mention of the instrument used, only of the object of attack; and there is another example of this sort of wall-building a few pages later, where

¹ Discussion of which with the author has led to these jottings.

Dilke, and others have wished to retain *arietibus* at 2.492.

² Mr. D. E. Hill observes that Klotz,

of a collapsing bridge it is said: 'iam saxa fatiscunt Emotaeque trabes' (865–6).

That leaves *sonora*, which is not in suspicion, according to Klotz, '*modo ne cum loco coniungatur*'. Yet with *loco* it clearly goes: why is the locus *sonorus*? Garrod implies the answer: in his apparatus he confesses to an, as we can now see, illicit desire — to emend the text to include a reference to Amphion. But Garrod's heart was in the right place: the locus is *sonorus* because the walls were brought there by music — a subtly Statian allusion, developed explicitly in 873 ff.

II

Through the night Argia, with the elderly Menoetes for companion, presses on towards the Argive corpses mouldering outside Thebes (*Theb.* 12.228 ff.). Finally, breathless, Menoetes says 'I think Thebes is not far off: the air is filthy, the birds of prey come back through the void. Yes, the walls are not far off: their shadows and the watch-fires can just be seen. The walls are near. Night was just becoming more silent herself and only the stars were loosening the blackening shades.' Argia shuddered.

Well she might shudder at such inconsequentiality. Why is the old man waxing lyrical in the imperfect tense about the darkness? He is not of course: in the editions the speech of the old man is not closed soon enough. It ends at *iuxta* (line 253) not *tenebras* (254). In fact this is a finely atmospheric piece of writing. The old man pants out a few words: his speech is broken: three times he says the walls are near, but each time gaining in assurance. He falls quiet. Silence. '*Modo nox magis ipsa tacebat*'. Only the stars break the darkness. We can feel the chill — and Argia does. Finally she too speaks. . . . Now read on.

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A MISDATED MANUSCRIPT OF GELLIUS

The manuscript B of Aulus Gellius, containing *N.A.* 9–12 and 13.5, and now split at *potuit/admonendi* 12.10.3 between Cod. Bern. 404 and Cod. Lugd.-Bat. B. P. L. 1925, is dated by Hosius (Teubner edn., I.xii) and Marshall (O.C.T. I.xvii) to 1173 on the strength of the *subscriptio* to an astronomical work immediately preceding Gellius in Cod. Bern. 404. This work is the 'Liber Atphargan'i [*sic*] in scientia astrorum et radicibus motuum caelestium' translated by Johannes Hispalensis;¹ the *subscriptio*, quoted in full by Hertz (*ed. mai.*, II.lxi), indicates the date as follows (I expand contractions): Expletus est die uicesimo quarto .V. mensis lunaris anni Arabum quingentesimi .XXVIII. existente, .XI. die mensis Martii era .M.C.LXXIII. It is surprising that no one till now has bothered to calculate the equivalent in our calendar of 24 Jumādā 'l-'Ūlā, A.H. 529: it is the period from sunset to sunset, or in astronomical reckoning from noon to noon, on 11–12 March 1135.

¹ See M. Alonso Alonso, 'Juan Sevillano: sus obras propias y sus traducciones', *Al-Andalus* 18 (1953), 17–49. Johannes' original was al-Farghānī's astronomical compendium (*Kitāb fī jawāmi'* 'ilm an-

nujūm), later translated anew by Gerard of Cremona; the title 'liber Atphargan' i etc.' implies *Kitāb al-Farghānī fī 'ilm an-nujūm wa-'uṣūl al-ḥarakāt as-samāwiyya*.