

considerable time after Labbé's death.¹ It was republished by Valpy as a supplementary volume to his edition of Stephanus. There the word appears as 'εικονώδης—*imuginosus* ο', the letter indicating that Labbé took it from an Onomasticon—which, we have no means of telling. It is repeated in the Latino-Greek section s.v. *imuginosus*.

There is, however another example of *εικονώδης* in an earlier lexicon, that of Simon Portius (*ob.* 1554), which was published in 1635. Curiously enough, the word does not appear in the Graeco-Latin section but in the Latino-Greek, s.v. *imuginosus* where, under the list of 'literary' Greek, interpretations, it is given as 'εικονώδης, φαντασιώδης', thus indicating that it is unlikely to have been Labbé's source, as he does not record *φαντασιώδης*.²

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¹ Scaliger wrote to both Charles and Pierre Labbé several times between 1601 and 1604 in connection with *Glossaria*. Casoubon also wrote in 1596 and 1602.

² The full title of Labbé's work is *Cyrylli, Philoxeni, aliorumque Veterum Auctorum Glossaria, Graeco-Latina et Latino-Graeca, a Carolo Labbaeo collecta*. The *Glossarium* of Cyril is absorbed within

this work. That of Philoxenus has been edited separately by M. Laistner (*Glossaria Latina*, Vol. 2, Paris, 1926) but *imuginosus* does not appear therein. Oddly enough, *εικονώδης* is not included by Kriaras in his *Lexicon of Mediaeval Greek* (Thessalonika, 1968—). The same vague reference to *Gloss.* is made even by D. Demetrakos in his *Lexicon Magnum* (Athens—Thessalonika, 1950).

CICERO, *PRO FLACCO*, 37

Haec quae est a nobis prolata laudatio obsignata erat creta illa Asiatica quae fere est omnibus nota nobis, qua utuntur omnes non modo in publicis sed etiam in privatis litteris quas cotidie videmus mitti a publicanis, saepe uni cuique nostrum.

In this section of his speech Cicero is defending the authenticity of a testimonial in support of Flaccus provided by the town of Acmona in Asia which the defence has produced as part of its case. The testimonial was sealed with 'creta Asiatica' in contrast with the prosecution's allegedly forged document which was sealed with wax. Cicero implies that a clay seal is an indication of authenticity—the prosecution did not question it—but that the use of wax indicates forgery; not too unreasonable a claim if the use of clay were as universal as this passage suggests.

One would have thought, however, that the words 'quae fere est omnibus nota nobis' would have sufficed for Cicero to make the point with his audience that the use of clay was virtually universal and one with which most of them were familiar. But he goes on to mention not only public documents such as was Acmona's testimonial, sealed with the town's official seal, but private letters which the majority of his audience has apparently been receiving from *publicani*. This latter part of the sentence seems to go beyond what is necessary to establish the universal use of clay and to do it in rather a strange way. Why introduce private correspondence which is not relevant to the point at issue? Why single out the *publicani* who were not the only private individuals in Asia sufficiently literate to write letters? And 'saepe uni cuique nostrum' is odd in two ways.

If something occurs *cotidie*, it must obviously occur *saepe*; and one would expect the emphasis to be on the number of the senders of letters rather than on the receivers, although *uni cuique* 'to each one of us' does make a climax. It must therefore be asked: what is the point of all this?

If we assume that it was written by Cicero—and there is no obvious reason why it should not have been—we must look for some purpose in introducing this flood of correspondence from the Asiatic *publicani*.

It is tempting to find in this passage as in the *pro Murena*¹ a reference to the *cause célèbre* of the Asiatic tax contract of 61 which had been settled by Julius Caesar only a few months previously.² Soon after the auction, at which the tax-gathering company had bid successfully for the Asiatic taxes in 61, it complained that it had bid an unrealistically high figure;³ and eventually it had got the price reduced by a third.⁴

It is reasonable, too, to expect that the process of collecting a province's taxes would lead to a steady flow of correspondence between the local members of the company and the head office at Rome. That this was indeed the case is shown by Cicero's account of the correspondence between the local manager and the head office of the company collecting the Sicilian taxes during the governorship of Verres.⁵ This passage, however, suggests a volume of mail greater than was normally the case. Furthermore, two-thirds of the jurors in this trial were drawn from the very classes who were members of the companies collecting the taxes,⁶ and the remaining third was drawn from the body to which application for the reduction of the contract had to be made. We know that this particular contract had been a major topic in Roman politics for eighteen months, and there must have been a long tale of woe from Asia and an extensive lobby pressing for the renegotiation of a bad bargain. Many of the jury would in the nature of things have had personal experience of this correspondence.

A number of reasons why Cicero should have introduced at this point a reference to the Asiatic tax contract can be suggested. Apart from reinforcing his reminder of their personal experience of the clay seals which one would find on a genuine document from Asia, Cicero could have expected to increase the good-will towards him of two-thirds of the jury by reminding them of the part that he had played in pressing for the renegotiation on their behalf.⁷ May this not, too, be one of the jokes for which Cicero was famous, even if not the notorious joke to which Symmachus refers?⁸ If his audience had been subjected to a continuous and well-orchestrated barrage of correspondence, any feeling of revulsion would be both near and remote enough to raise a laugh. The succession of 'fere . . . omnibus', 'a publicanis' with the final 'uni cuique nostrum', and the repetitive 'cotidie' . . . 'saepe' would be calculated to produce at least a wry smile as they recalled the pathetic stories with which they had been deluged.

This passage, then, should join *pro Murena*, 62 as a reference to the ill-judged Asiatic tax contract of 61.

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¹ 62.

² The speech was delivered in August 59.

³ *ad Att.* 1.17.9; 1.18.7; 2.1.8.

⁴ *ad Att.* 2.16.2; Dio Cassius, 38.7.4; Suet. *Div. Iul.* 20.3.

⁵ in *Verr.* II.2.171–2 3.167.

⁶ See n.4 above.

⁷ *ad Att.* 1.17.9 'Ego principes in adiutoribus atque adeo secundus'.

⁸ Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 2.1.13.