

('bare prepuce', for this meaning of *cutis* cf. e.g., Celsus 7.25.1A) with the *Iudaeum pondus*.<sup>5</sup> This *nulla sub cute* variant is unacceptable for two reasons: (a) It disregards the emphatic anaphora *sed...nuda* (3–4), *sed nudi* (5): excluding Laecania's slave everybody else is in the nude, and (b) it overlooks the comparison of Martial to his slave *sed meus, ut de me taceam, Laecania, servos/Iudaeum nuda sub cute pondus habet* (3–4) 'But my slave, not to speak of myself, has a *Iudaeum pondus* under his bare prepuce.' Since the issue is Laecania's covered slave, Martial first refers to the nudity of his slave, but in passing compares his endowment to his own. Thus the reading *nulla sub cute*, which circumcises the slave, unwittingly turns Martial himself into a *recutitus*.<sup>6</sup>

What is the nature, then, of the *Iudaeum pondus*, whose owner need not be a Jew? *Pondus* designates here the private parts of a male, whereas the attribute *Iudaeum*, which qualifies it, should be understood to convey the meaning 'such as Jews usually have,' 'befitting (or typical of) a Jew'; this meaning is further explicitly clarified and articulated by the words *mentula vera* (6).<sup>7</sup> Martial and his slave have a true super-*mentula*, such as is typical of lustful, sexually potent Jews;<sup>8</sup> still, both of them, as all the other males around, are uncovered and there for Laecania to behold. It is absurd, then, that she should insist on covering only her slave, as it would be absurd for her to cover her private parts while bathing in a female-only retreat.

Perhaps Martial did not own a Jewish slave after all.

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<sup>5</sup> This reading is preferred also by J. N. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (London, 1982), 73, who, however, correctly takes *cutis* to mean prepuce.

<sup>6</sup> The *nulla sub cute* reading, which initially came into being to do away with the prepuce, has generated a different (and quite preposterous) interpretation of *cutis*: a leather covering of the kind used by Laecania to cover her slave (*aluta*, v. 1), cf., e.g., P. Richard, *Les Épigrammes de Martial* (Paris, 1931), i.367 and 489, and Ker's translation in the Loeb series. This interpretation, however, does not solve the basic difficulty of the passage. Both Martial and his slave still have a *Iudaeum pondus*, which now is 'under no leather covering', and not 'under no prepuce'.

<sup>7</sup> Adams, who equates *pondera* with testicles, op. cit. 13, and cf. 212, nevertheless understands *Iudaeum pondus* to be a description of a male who is *bene mentulatus*; cf. also p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> For Jews' notoriety in this respect, cf. Tac. *Hist.* 5.2 *proiectissima ad libidinem gens*. Cf. the commentary of Stern, op. cit. ii.40ff.; Adams, op. cit. 13, who also cites Mart. 11.94, in which a lustful *verpus poeta*, who competes with Martial sexually, is attacked. The Romans treated Jews as a foreign ethnic group, one among many, and ascribed to them a stereotypic quality frequently ascribed to an ethnic group considered 'primitive', i.e. not effeminated by culture, cf., e.g., Mart. 7.3. It is not, however, a characteristic trait which appears in stereotypic descriptions of Jews in later literature; cf. also D. S. Barrett, *LCM* 9.3 (1984), 44.

#### A NOTE ON STATIUS, *THEBAID* 9.120f.

tandem intermissa iaculantum<sup>1</sup> nube potestas  
reddere tela fuit.

Hippomedon is stoutly defending the body of his fallen comrade Tydeus against a mass of Thebans who press him hard: there is a break in the attack allowing him to return fire<sup>2</sup> while his allies Alcon and Idas with their troops come to his aid. It is

<sup>1</sup> Printed by all the modern editors (P. Kohlmann [Leipzig, 1884]; H. W. Garrod [Oxford, 1906]; A. Klotz [Leipzig, 1908, rev. T. C. Klennert, Leipzig, 1973]; G. Aricò and A. Traglia [Turin, 1980]; D. E. Hill [*Mnemosyne* Suppl. 79, Leiden, 1983]) and apparently the reading of all the principal manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> The Loeb translator, J. H. Mozley (Cambridge, 1928), thought it was the Thebans who were returning fire, but the context clearly shows that it was Hippomedon who was under attack but

grammatically possible that *iaculantum* could be taken with *tela*, but style and word order make this most unlikely. It would be somewhat perverse to separate a genitive from the noun on which it is dependent by placing three words and a line boundary between them. To follow this by depositing that genitive noun squarely in the middle of an alien phrase would be to risk reducing the reader to total confusion. *Intermissa iaculantum nube* surely sounds to any sensitive ear like a unified phrase and also produces a clearly understood time sequence: there was at last, because of a break in the attack, a chance to shoot back. Our problem, therefore, is how to interpret *intermissa iaculantum nube*. *Nube* can be used of 'a great number of persons or animals moving together' (OLD 5b, citing Liv. 35.49.5, 'peditum equitumque nubes'; Luc. 7.530, 'glomerataque nubes'; Sil. 6.336, 'nubes densa Laconum': cf. *Il.* 4.274, *véφος* . . . *πεζών*), but *intermissa* makes a rare metaphor quite extraordinary and I can find no parallel for such a phrase. Though Statius can be very daring in extending the application of well known words,<sup>3</sup> and at the risk of being accused of 'simplifying' the text, perhaps we should read *iaculorum*. The metaphor of the 'cloud of missiles' is of course very common: e.g. Virg. *A.* 10.808, 'sic obrutus undique telis/ Aeneas nubem belli. . . / sustinet'; Luc. 2.262, 'telorum in nube'; Sil. 1.311, 'telorum . . . nube', 2.37, 7.595, 9.311f., 9.580, 12.177; for the simile cf. esp. Liv. 21.55.6 'velut nube iaculorum a Baliaribus coniecta'<sup>4</sup>. Indeed it appears in this very book, at Hippomedon's death, when we read 'premit undique nimbo/ telorum Phoenissa cohors' (9.526f.). These lines are in fact surely designed to echo the present passage: a second time the Thebans shower Hippomedon with their missiles but this time there will be no relief. Furthermore, that this metaphor is the more natural can perhaps be illustrated by the fact that Mozley prints *iaculantum* but translates, no doubt inadvertently, 'At last the cloud of darts grew less'.<sup>5</sup>

The manuscript evidence for *iaculorum* is slight but worth considering. It appears for example in a fourteenth-century Italian manuscript in the University Library at Cambridge,<sup>6</sup> as well, no doubt, as a number of other *recentiores*. If this is a correction it at least corroborates the suspicions outlined above. More elusive but more fascinating is the Middle Irish prose translation of the *Thebaid*.<sup>7</sup> The principal manuscript of this (MS Egerton 1781, British Museum) is dated 1487, another fragmentary specimen (T.C.D., H. 2.7) was written in 1379, and the language is generally classed as 'early Middle Irish'.<sup>8</sup> Good grounds exist, however, for believing the text to have been substantially modernized. Though some of the older forms which it exhibits (e.g. the dual and the neuter gender) could be explained as the result of one or more scribes' archaic taste,<sup>9</sup> nonetheless the widespread use of deponent verbs which are 'deeply embedded in the MS'<sup>10</sup> strongly suggests a much older origin, since these generally disappeared from Gaelic in the Early and Middle Irish periods, perhaps in the tenth and eleventh centuries. If the original translation was made in this period an older Latin manuscript of considerable but naturally unknown antiquity will have been used. The reading of the text therefore deserves our cautious attention. We are

now had a chance to retaliate. Compare Lactantius *ad loc.*, 'in se ab hostibus missa in ipsos iterum retorquere.' It was perhaps from this or a similar gloss that *iaculantum* entered the text.

<sup>3</sup> L. Legras, *La Thébaïde de Stace* (Paris, 1905), 316–19; R. D. Williams on *Theb.* 10.47, *Mnemosyne* Suppl. 21 (Leiden, 1972).

<sup>4</sup> See also O. Skutsch, *The Annals of Q. Ennius* (Oxford, 1985), on Ennius, *Ann.* 266, 'ferreus imber', for the history of the metaphor.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* ii.260f.

<sup>6</sup> *Ii* 3 13. I owe this reference to the *Classical Quarterly*'s referee.

<sup>7</sup> Edited by G. Calder as 'Togail na Tebe. The Thebaid of Statius, the Irish Text' (Cambridge, 1922).

<sup>8</sup> Calder, p. xi.

<sup>9</sup> Calder, p. xiii.

<sup>10</sup> Calder, p. xiii.

told that Alcon and Idas came to Hippomedon's aid 'agus ba foirithin dosum sin ona ceathaib cumasda cruadarm robadar as each aird air'<sup>11</sup> ('and that was a help to him from the confused showers of hard weapons that were on him from every quarter'). The key words are 'ceathaib...cruadarm', 'showers of hard weapons', which surely hint at *iaculorum* in the Latin original. It is true that this translation is in most respects very loose, and true also that medieval translators can make mistakes as easily as modern ones. Nevertheless, inconclusive though such evidence must necessarily be, we can consider it as at least possible that the Irish translator had before him a now lost manuscript perhaps as old as or older than *P*<sup>12</sup> and that it may have independently preserved the reading *iaculorum*. Despite Phillimore's belief that the translation is not precise enough for us to identify the family of the original manuscript,<sup>13</sup> I suspect that careful study of the Irish tradition could well yield something of use to future editors of the *Thebaid*, and I hope to address myself to this subject further.

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<sup>11</sup> Calder, p. 220.

<sup>12</sup> Codex Parisinus 8051 (Puteanus) Saec. IX, our oldest and most trustworthy manuscript of the *Thebaid*.

<sup>13</sup> Calder, p. xix.

#### A NOTE ON SUETONIUS, *NERO*

defunctoque circa Kal. Ian. altero e consulibus (Nero) neminem substituit, improbens exemplum vetus Canini Rebili uno die consulis.

(*Nero* 15.2)

*Circa*, implying that the consul died either before or after 1st January, will not do. A consul dying *after* 1st January, with the month or months ahead empty, would have to be replaced; only a consul dying *before* – and shortly before – might not need replacement and would fit the example to which Nero objected.

Read: 'citra Kal. Ian.' Cf. *Aug.* 43.4, 'citra spectaculorum dies'; *DJ* 81.2, 'non ultra Martias Idus'; *Vit.* 14.4, 'intra Kal. Oct.': *Dom.* 13.3, 'ultra Kal. Mai.'; Columella 2.8.3, 'citra Kalendas Octobris'. Gellius (12.13) discusses these phrases but hardly to our present advantage.

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#### Notice

The Ninth Congress of the International Federation of the Societies of Classical Studies (FIEC) will be held in Pisa from Thursday 24 August to Wednesday 30 August 1989. There will be three main Sections (I, Greek world; II, Roman world; III, More general questions concerning both ancient cultures), besides eight Colloquia on more specific topics. Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, Professor Franco Montanari, Università di Pisa, Dipartimento di Filologia Classica, Via Galvani 1, I-56100 Pisa, Italy.

One of the Colloquia at the Congress will concern current problems in the editing of classical texts. Scholars wishing to offer papers for this Colloquium are asked to communicate their proposals to Jean Irigoin, Collège de France, 11 Place Marcelin-Berthelot, F-75231 Paris, Cedex 05, France. The four proposals judged most interesting will be selected.