

independently reflect an otherwise unattested commonplace elaborated in the rhetorical tradition about Pompey.

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ANNALS 4.28.1 – AN OLD SUGGESTION

reus pater accusator filius (nomen utrique Vibius Serenus) in senatum inducti sunt. ab exilio retractus inluvieque ac squalore obsitus et tum catena vinctus peroranti filio <pater> praeparatur. adulescens multis munditiis, alacri vultu, structas principi insidias, missos in Galliam concitores belli index idem et testis dicebat¹

The text in *Annals* 4.28.1 has exercised scholars' attention since the rediscovery of Tacitus in the Renaissance. The text of the Medicean manuscript for the central words reads: 'vinctus peroranti filio praeparatur'. Two problems have been perceived: firstly that *praeparatur* lacks an expressed subject, although from the context it is perfectly clear that Serenus senior is meant; secondly, the meaning of *praeparatur* itself.²

The textual emendation required to insert *pater* is minor, although not easily explained by abbreviations in the Medicean, which in general are few and in this sentence affect only the *per-* of *peroranti*; what abbreviations were used in the ancestors of the Medicean, where any error will have begun, are not known.³ I. Gronovius emended *peroranti* into *pater orante*;⁴ Erricus Memmius, whose suggestion is recorded in the commentary of Lipsius, created *pater* from the *prae* of the Medicean's *praeparatur*. I shall argue that this is the best solution to this aspect of the textual problem, but shall reject the punctuation suggested by Memmius.

Despite the approving comment in, for instance, Bekker's edition (mostly a rehash of Lipsius and later scholars),⁵ Memmius' suggestion was not taken up by later scholars. Madvig proposed a solution involving greater divergence from the manuscript, but which has enjoyed great support: 'peroranti filio pater comparatur'.⁶ The creation of the prefix *com-* would not appear to be simple palaeographically, although it may make explicit the notion of 'combat', which some think necessary, and is a phrase familiar from the gladiatorial arena.⁷ It is not certain, however, that the idea of combat is foremost in Tacitus' mind (see below).

The advantage of the reading 'peroranti filio pater paratur' over 'pater oranti filio praeparatur' or '...comparatur' is threefold: firstly, the juxtaposition of *filio* and *pater* is acute and effective;⁸ secondly, the slip from *pater* to *prae-* is much easier to

¹ The text offered in the latest edition of *Annals* 4 by R. H. Martin and A. J. Woodman (Cambridge, 1989) (henceforth Martin/Woodman).

² Cf. Martin/Woodman, pp. 162f.

³ See the facsimile of the Medicean, S. de Vries, *Codices Graeci et Latini photographice depicti*, vol. 7.1 (Leyden, 1902), plate 98R.

⁴ (Traiecti Batavorum, 1721), followed by H. Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus*² (Oxford, 1896) (henceforth, Furneaux), C. D. Fisher, *Cornelii Taciti Annalium Libri* (Oxford, 1906), although both read *oranti*, and H. Rostagno, in the preface to de Vries (above n. 3), p. xiii, who takes the *poranti* of M as an error.

⁵ (Leipzig, 1831): 'audio virum magnum et meritis in litteras clarum Erricum Memmum legere: *perorante filio pater* ... et rei et hominis causa quis non comprobet?'

⁶ J. N. Madvig, *Adversaria critica ad scriptores Graecos et Latinos* (Hauniae, 1871–4). This suggestion has been accepted by K. Nipperdey and G. Andresen, *P. Cornelii Taciti Annales*¹¹, vol. i (Berlin, 1915) and by E. Koestermann, *Cornelius Tacitus Annales* 1 (Leipzig, 1960).

⁷ Cf. Suetonius, *Caligula* 35.2.

⁸ Cf. Martin/Woodman, p. 163.

understand – by the conflation of *pater* with *paratur*; and, thirdly, the use of the simple verb (*paro*) for the compound (*comparo*), which we might find in other authors, is a well-noted feature of the *Annals*.⁹

Paro in all its forms appears 176 times in Tacitus, *praeparo* three times,¹⁰ which illustrates his overwhelming preference for the simple form. A slender argument for the simple verb at *Annals* 4.28 may be found in that *praeparo* otherwise appears only in speeches, as Syme notes (presumably working from Gerber/Greef and the reading *comparatur* of Madvig).¹¹ Confusions of the prefixes of *paro* abound in Latin manuscripts.¹²

The setting of this scene is indubitably forensic and we should look for a meaning of *paro* or a compound from the same setting, rather than from the gladiatorial arena. Examples largely from the republic reveal a common, appropriate meaning. *Comparo* is used by Cicero of the nefarious activities of the prosecution in preparing, ‘coaching’ witnesses and suborning *accusatores*,¹³ although the procedure is innocuous when Cicero himself prosecutes.¹⁴ The simple verb *paro* is used similarly; ‘idem accusatorem parasset’ and ‘recuperatores... sibi parari videbat’, both of Verres against innocent defendants;¹⁵ ‘parantur testes, qui haec dicant’.¹⁶ The dative ‘sibi’ in the second example also provides a parallel to the ‘peroranti filio’ of Tacitus.

The second question is the meaning of *praeparatur*. Martin/Woodman comment: ‘*praeparatur* seems intended to combine incongruously with the participles *retractus*, *obsitus* and *vinctus* in order to provide an ironic comparison with the over-elaborate preparations of the younger Seneca below (*multis munditiis* etc.): his father’s circumstances represented the very opposite of preparation.’¹⁷ Certainly the continuation of Tacitus’ description with ‘*adulescens multis munditiis*’ suggests that this element of the acute visual contrast between the two is clearly in his mind, but might not incongruity operate on other levels as well?

Above all, the case demonstrates the perverted society of Tiberian Rome presided over by the arch-pervert Tiberius; moral norms are inverted; Tacitus’ words introducing the incident are ‘*miseriarum ac saevitiae exemplum atrox*’.¹⁸ Here the duty of *pietas* owed by the son to the father is denied; rather the son prosecutes his father. Tacitus portrays an inversion of the usual practice in Roman courts. Normally the defence counsel would have the defendant, his family and relatives appear in court to evoke sympathy from the jury;¹⁹ here the accuser produces the defendant in all his squalor to win the contempt of the court for one already convicted. Normally the defence counsel would prepare (*paro*) his client and witnesses, here ironically the

⁹ A. A. Draeger, *Über Syntax und Stil des Tacitus*³ (Leipzig, 1882); Furneaux, pp. 53f. *Paro* for *comparo*, *Histories* 4.74.2, as noted by A. Gerber/A. Greef, *Lexicon Taciteum* (Hildesheim, 1962), p. 1056.

¹⁰ D. R. Blackman/G. G. Betts, *Concordantia Tacitea: A Concordance to Tacitus* (Hildesheim, 1986), pp. 1232–3, 1334. At *Annals* 11.8, C. Halm, *Cornelii Taciti: Libri qui supersunt*⁴ (Leipzig, 1882), emends the manuscripts’ *praeparaberat* to *paraverat*.

¹¹ *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), p. 720.

¹² *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* x.1.412 51f.

¹³ *Pro Rosc. Amer.* 30; cf. *Pro Cluent.* 191.

¹⁴ *In Verr.* 2.1.2.

¹⁵ *In Verr.* 2.1.74, 2.3.55.

¹⁶ *Pro Quinct.* 75.

¹⁷ Pp. 162f.

¹⁸ *Ann.* 4.28.1. Cf. Martin/Woodman, 160f.

¹⁹ e.g. Cicero, *Pro Cluent.* 18, 192; *Mur.* 86; *Planc.* 21. Livy records the practice in the strictly forensic context (2.23.2) and also of a Locrian embassy dressed to win sympathy from the senate (29.16.6), a description Furneaux conjectures as the basis of Tacitus’ here.

prosecutor does; so, contrasting with Martin/Woodman, the incongruity and contrast is not so much that 'the [defendant's] circumstances represented the very opposite of preparation', but that the prosecution deliberately brought about the contrast. It may be no accident that the language of this sentence is comparatively Ciceronian. There is an abundance of antithesis and balance, even the sort of parallelism in construction which Tacitus regularly avoids for the sake of *variatio*.²⁰

If the forensic setting holds the key to the text, the meaning inherent in (*prae*)*paratur* would seem preferable to that in *comparatur*. Moreover, the simple form *paratur*, while not diminishing the contrast and offering the same meaning as the compound, is the word used by Cicero.²¹

The text for the relevant section of *Annals* 4.28 should read:

ab exilio retractus inlueque ac squalore obsitus et tum catena vinctus peroranti filio pater paratur. adulescens multis munditiis, ...

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²⁰ Parallelism: 'inlueque ac squalore obsitus' and 'catena vinctus'; antithesis and balance: 'reus pater accusator filius', 'retractus ... obsitus ... vinctus'. Ciceronian vocabulary: *squalor* (e.g. *Sest.* 68; *Verr.* 2.5.48; *Cluent.* 18, 192; *Mur.* 42, 86; *Planc.* 21), but far less frequent in Tacitus (*Germ.* 31.2, *Hist.* 4.72.3), in fact here only in the *Annals* and as such to be added to Appendix 48 of Syme's *Tacitus*, words not recurring after the first Hexad. *Inlueque*, by contrast, never appears in Cicero, but three times in *Annals* 1–6 (1.24.3, 6.43.2) always in the ablative singular.

²¹ *Praeparo* appears in Cicero speeches only once and not of preparing witnesses; in his philosophical works *praeparo* is more frequent, but never with a personal object.

ON THE DATE OF JOHN OF GAZA

According to a marginal lemma in the only manuscript that carries the poem (Palat. gr. 23 + Paris. gr. suppl. 384), the painting of the world described in a well-known ecphrasis by John of Gaza was situated in the winter baths of Gaza. According to the standard edition of John's poem by P. Friedlaender, these are the baths Choricus of Gaza refers to as in course of construction at Gaza in A.D. 535 or 536.¹ If so, then both the painting and John's poem would have to be later than this. And since the poem does not claim to have been written for the dedication of the baths, it might be considerably later. G. Krahmer even dated it to the seventh century, on the grounds that John misunderstood some details of the picture he was describing.²

Despite some sensible criticism by G. Downey,³ this is still the generally accepted date and location.⁴ But there are serious objections. In the first place, the passage of Choricus refers to *another* winter bath (ἑτέρον χειμῶνος ὥρα λουτρόν), implying that at least one existed already. Even if John did write at Gaza, he might have written on an earlier bath. Second, this same lemmatist repeats his lemma locating the baths in Gaza at the end of the poem – but then goes on to add 'or in Antioch' (ἢ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ). Third, in a further note on the beginning of the poem he remarks that the painting John describes was also mentioned by Procopius of Gaza (ταύτης τῆς

¹ P. Friedlaender, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius: Kunstbeschreibungen Justinianischer Zeit* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1912), p. 111; Choricus, *Or.* iii.55, p. 63. 14 Foerster-Richsteig. So too A. Ludwig, *Rhein. Mus.* 44 (1889), 197, 'offenbar in Gaza'.

² *De tabula mundi ab Joanne Gazaeo descripta* (Diss., Halle, 1920), p. 64.

³ 'John of Gaza and the Mosaic of Ge and Karpoi', *Antioch-on-the-Orontes II: The Excavations 1933–1936* (Princeton, 1938), pp. 205–12.

⁴ e.g. H. Hunger, *Die Hochsprachliche Profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, ii (Munich, 1978), p. 110; C. A. Trypanis, *Greek Poetry from Homer to Seferis* (Chicago, 1981), p. 402.