

first and the third books contain fifteen elegies each. Between the *Amores* and the *Metamorphoses* there exist complex and deep-rooted ties: his elegiac experience is not being cancelled or disowned but becomes—after being officially exhausted—one of the elements in the texture of an epic poem which for its greatest part is dedicated to the narration of the vicissitudes of love.¹⁰ The principle which governs the mechanism of metamorphosis requires that something of the previous form be maintained in the new one:¹¹ we can therefore include among the many footprints which the erotic elegy has left in the hexametric poem the structure based upon a total of fifteen books, an indication of continuity and transformation.¹²

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¹⁰ On the relation between amatory elegy and Ovidian epic, cf. P. E. Knox, *Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Tradition of Augustan Poetry* (Cambridge, 1986).

¹¹ With regard to that mechanism, see J. B. Solodow, *The World of Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Chapel Hill, 1998), 183–6 and Wheeler (n. 3), 12–13 and 33 (with emphasis on the poetic meaning).

¹² I wish to thank G. Rosati, S. Siegl-Mocavini, M. Telò, and C. A. Williams.

THE ELDER SENECA, *CONTROVERSIAE* 2.1.1: *SUB DOMINO SECTORE**

In a paper on the role played by Mark Antony in liquidating the confiscated property of Pompey (*CQ* 54 [2004], 161–73), I had occasion to cite a passage from the Elder Seneca (*Controv.* 2.1.1) that, in my view, illustrates how Cicero's oft-repeated charge that Antony was the *sector* of Pompey's property has left its mark in later literature. Seneca quotes as follows from the rhetorician M. Porcius Latro, a contemporary and fellow-student of his:

Vidi ego magni exercitus ducem sine comite fugientem; vidi <ab> ambitiosa turba clientium limina deserta sub domino sectore venalia.

Some of the best modern Latinists have struggled to make sense of the phrase *sub domino sectore*. Winterbottom in his 1974 Loeb edition of the Elder Seneca translates *sub domino sectore venalia* 'put up for sale, its owner the auctioneer', commenting (p. 205, n. 3): 'But *sector* should = "bidder"; and Latro perhaps meant: "the former owner's master bidding for it".' Courtney¹ states 'unfortunately the meaning of Sen. *Contr.* 2.1 pr. [sic] *limina sub domino sectore venalia* is obscure; see Winterbottom's note'. And, finally, Watt² interprets the meaning as follows: 'a house is up for sale at auction and its owner is bidding for it: a strange procedure, for which one can only guess at a reason (perhaps to force up the price)'. Watt goes on to propose the emendation *suo* for *sub*. Later, to judge from the notation 'sub *del. Watt*' in Håkanson's 1989 Teubner edition of Seneca Maior, Watt apparently communicated to Håkanson (see p. xix, n. 1) a different solution of what still appeared to him to be a difficulty posed by the preposition *sub*.

* I thank the following scholars who kindly read an earlier draft of this paper and offered valuable advice and encouragement: Allan Kershaw, D. R. Shackleton Bailey, P. G. Walsh, and Michael Winterbottom. They are not, of course, to be held responsible for the views expressed.

¹ E. Courtney, *Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal* (London, 1980), 161.

² W. S. Watt, 'Notes on Seneca Rhetor', *Latomus* 47 (1988), 852–3.

To arrive at the correct interpretation of this enigmatic passage, let us begin by identifying, if we can, the historical allusion contained in the quotation from *Latro*. We can then use that information, perhaps, to understand better what lies behind the puzzling *sub domino sectore*.

The reference to the forlorn flight of the commander of a *magnus exercitus* could on its own allude to any number of such incidents in antiquity. Certainly, however, the most recent and, therefore, the most likely to occur to the minds of Romans living in the Augustan age was Pompey's pitiful flight after his defeat by Caesar at Pharsalus.³ Furthermore, since Pompey's property was confiscated and sold at auction by Caesar in 47, it is quite natural to read the two statements introduced by *vidi* as alluding to the same person, Cn. Pompeius Magnus. Indeed, *magni* provides an additional, not so subtle, clue contributing to the correct identification of the figure whose fate is being held up by *Latro* to show that fortune is fickle. To be sure, Pompey was not strictly *sine comite* when he fled from Pharsalus to Larissa in order to avoid capture by Caesar, but the tradition that Pompey was accompanied by only four companions (App. *BCiv.* 2.81.343; δᾱίγοι according to Plut. *Pomp.* 73.1) can easily be viewed as having inspired the rhetorical exaggeration.

The sole bidder at the auction held by Caesar to sell Pompey's confiscated goods, according to Cicero (*Phil.* 2.64), was Mark Antony, whom he scornfully describes repeatedly in the *Philippics* as *Pompei sector* (*Phil.* 2.39, 65, 75; 13.50). Now a *sector* was a broker who bought property confiscated by the state and sold at auction: *sectores vocantur, qui publice bona mercantur* (Gai. *Inst.* 4.146). Such speculators paid their purchase price into the *aerarium* and then sought to recover their investment and turn a profit by reselling the goods piecemeal.⁴ A Roman of Antony's social standing would normally not become directly involved in such sordid business transactions (*Phil.* 2.65). Although performing a necessary function in the state, such profiteers were looked down upon (Sen. *Brev. vit.* 12.1).

Cicero was able to brand his enemy with the extremely derogatory term *sector* because, while Antony kept for his personal enjoyment Pompey's elegant town-house in the Carinae district, his *horti* on the edge of the Campus Martius, and one or two other properties, he sold off the many other estates and goods at a series of auctions. So complex was the task of finding buyers for such a vast quantity of real estate in order to raise cash for Caesar's coffers that the *sectio* stretched over more than a year and a half.⁵ Once we realize that the *sector* whom *Latro* had in mind was Mark Antony, we do not have to force *sector* to mean 'bidder', as both Winterbottom and Watt felt the need to do. The somewhat unique, double role of Antony, the fact that he was both owner/occupier (*dominus*) of Pompey's choicest properties⁶ and the broker (*sector*) of

³ Seneca (*Controv.* 1. pr. 18) informs us that *Latro* used to boast that he could relate the exploits of any general whose name was presented to him: *iubebat aliquem nominari ducem et statim eius acta cursu reddebat*. The battle (9 August, 48 B.C.) was not too remote in time for *Latro* (fl. 17 B.C.).

⁴ Ps.-Ascon. p. 236St, on Cic. 2 *Verr.* 1.52; cf. id. p. 239St, on 2 *Verr.* 1.61, and *RE* 2A.1 (1921), s.v. 'sectio'.

⁵ In *Phil.* 2.71 Cicero distinguishes between the money owed to Caesar by Antony for the properties that Antony was occupying (*pro domo, pro hortis*) and for all the rest that were already (or soon to be) resold at auction (*pro sectione*). For the details of this transaction, see J. T. Ramsey, 'Did Julius Caesar temporarily banish Mark Antony from his inner circle', *CQ* 54 (2004), 169–72.

⁶ Although Cicero can never bring himself to dignify Antony's occupation of Pompey's properties by styling him *dominus*, *Phil.* 13.11 clearly states that in the spring of 43 Antony was still in possession of Pompey's *horti*, his town-house (*aedes*) and certain unspecified urban properties (*urbana quaedam*), in addition to an estate at Tusculum.

the rest, will explain why *Latro* was able to use those two nouns to describe the person 'at whose hands' properties formerly belonging to Pompey were put on the auction block.⁷ The phrase *sub domino sectore* challenges the reader to ponder the riddle-like proposition 'when is a *sector* at the same time a *dominus*?'. Until now, all attempts to answer this question have been less than satisfactory.

The earliest of these attempts, of which I am aware, is that of Gronovius, who in proposing the emendation *sectore* for *rectore* of the MSS, concluded, as I do, that *Latro* was referring to Mark Antony's disposal of Pompey's *bona*.⁸ Gronovius, however, explained *domino* as an adjectival modifier (meaning *ad dominum pertinens*), citing as a parallel Juvenal 3.33 (*et praebere caput domina venale sub hasta*). To be sure, in Juvenal *domina* is unambiguously an adjective since the inanimate noun *hasta* cannot be characterized as a 'mistress'.⁹ In Seneca, however, *domino* appears much more likely to be a noun standing in apposition with *sectore*.¹⁰

The *TLL* (s.v. 1919.11–14) clearly takes *domino* as a noun in Seneca, citing this passage and Cic. *Quinct.* 50 to illustrate *dominus* in a technical sense (sc. *auktionis*) equivalent to *magister bonorum*, that is, one of a group of creditors who in a foreclosure proceeding against an insolvent debtor is given authorization by the praetor to arrange for the debtor's property to be sold at auction by a *praeco*.¹¹ The *OLD*, doubtless influenced by *TLL*, cites Sen. *Controv.* 2.1.1 (omitting *Quinct.* 50) under '*dominus*' 2a, 'the manager, superintendent, controller (of a troupe or team, also of an organized activity)'. If, however, the conclusion drawn above is correct, and the *sector* to whom Porcius *Latro* refers was Mark Antony, that particular *sector* cannot appropriately be described as a *dominus* in this technical sense, that is, a *magister*, one who organizes a sale on behalf of a consortium of creditors. This is an impossibility because Antony could not by any stretch of the imagination be viewed as one of Pompey's creditors, and therefore, both the *TLL* and *OLD* are wrong to cite Sen. *Controv.* 2.1.1 under this meaning of *dominus*.

Finally, it remains to consider and give my reasons for rejecting a third possible solution that was kindly sent to me by P. G. Walsh, who proposed emending *domino* to *domini*. At first glance *domini* is an extremely attractive emendation because *sector* is

⁷ For the meaning of *sub* in this passage, see *OLD* 13. P. G. Walsh has suggested to me that *sub* may have been introduced in this context under the influence of the common phrase *sub hasta*, meaning 'at a public (state) auction'. Cf. Pacat. *Paneg. Theod.* 25.2, *sub ipso sectore* (*sub* meaning 'at the feet of').

⁸ Johann F. Gronovius, *Observationes* 2.6 (Leyden, 1662), 250–1. I thank M. Winterbottom for urging me to consult Gronovius to see if that scholar offered any interpretation of the passage in connection with his emendation.

⁹ By contrast with the personal noun *meretrix* in Hor. *Epist.* 1.2.25 *sub domina meretrice*, *domina* is best regarded as a noun, as it is in Seneca. I thank Allan Kershaw for the reference. All examples of *dominus*, -a, -um cited from classical Latin by the *TLL* (s.v. 1941.31–44) are from the poets, and the nouns modified by *dominus* invariably denote things (like *hasta* in Juvenal), rather than persons.

¹⁰ M. Winterbottom confirms by e-mail that he is in agreement with me on this point.

¹¹ *Praetor . . . iubet conuenire creditores et ex eo numero magistrum creari, id est eum, per quem bona veneant* (Gai. *Inst.* 3.79). For a discussion of the role of a *magister*, see W. W. Buckland, *A Textbook of Roman Law*, rev. P. Stein (Cambridge, 1966³), 402–3, 643–44. In *Quinct.* 50 (*cui magistri fiunt et domini constituuntur*), *domini* and *magistri* appear to be employed as virtual synonyms: see T. E. Kinsey (ed.), *Cicero, Pro Quinctio* (Sydney, 1971), 132. Commenting on that passage, G. Long, *M. Tullii Cicero's Orationes* (London, 1855), 2.31 writes: 'The word *domini* means, I suppose, that the creditors exercise the *dominium* over the property, they sell as owners, though they are not owners.' One other instance of *dominus* in the sense of *magister* is perhaps to be discovered at *Quinct.* 19: *cum auctionem venderet, domini iussu quippiam promississet*.

quite frequently construed with the genitive of the person whose property was being liquidated,¹² and it is easy to imagine how *domini* could have become corrupted into the ablative under the influence of the preceding *sub*. Moreover, we find in *Controversia* 2.1, in close proximity to the phrase under consideration, several examples of the noun *dominus* that appear to have the meaning required if we read *sub domini sectore*: namely ‘the rightful owner but one who has lost legal title’.¹³ The trouble is, the genitive *domini* is unlike any of the other genitives with *sector* cited in note 12. If in the *Philippics* and *Florus* we should drop ‘(Cn.) *Pompei*’ or ‘*Pompeiorum bonorum*’, or drop ‘*proscriptionum*’ with *sectrix* in *Pliny*, we lose a great deal: that is, we can’t say whose property the ‘broker’ (*sector*) was liquidating. By contrast, if we read *domini* in *Seneca*, the genitive contributes nothing that is not already implicit in *sector*; *domini* is banal and otiose. Surely, every *sector* disposed of property that had previously belonged to someone else (before the state took it away by confiscation).

My interpretation, on the other hand, recommends itself not only because it is based upon the *lectio difficilior* (*domino sectore*) but because it permits us to see the prepositional phrase as adding a third striking paradox to *dux sine comite* and *limina sine clientibus*.¹⁴ The reader is invited to contemplate a *sector* who at the same time was the *dominus* (owner/occupier) of property that had previously belonged to a mighty *patronus* (*Pompeius Magnus*). This odd, seemingly contradictory, description is precisely how *Cicero* portrays *Antony* in the *Second Philippic*. Not only is *Antony* branded with being *Pompei sector*, but *Cicero* assures us that when *Antony* returned to *Rome* in 48 to serve as *Caesar’s magister equitum* and chief representative, *Antony* had no property to call his own until he seized first the house of *M. Piso* and later *Pompey’s* (*Phil.* 2.62).

A translation, according to my understanding of the passage will go as follows: ‘I have seen the commander of a great army take to flight without a single companion; I have seen his halls abandoned by the throng of self-serving clients and put on the auction block at the hands of the owner-broker.’¹⁵ The fact that *Porcius Latro* demonstrates an intimate acquaintance with *Cicero’s* portrayal of *Antony* in the *Philippics*, and even alludes elsewhere in one of his declamations to the notorious way in which *Antony* ‘swallowed up’ the goods of *Pompey*,¹⁶ makes it all the more attractive to read the excerpt from *Latro* in *Controv.* 2.1.1 as a clever allusion to the dual role played by *Antony* in connection with the disposal of *Pompey’s* property.

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¹² For example, *Phil.* 2.39 *cuius (Pompei) me amicum, te sectorem esse fateare*; *Phil.* 2.65 *Pompei sector*; *Phil.* 13.30 *sectorem Cn. Pompei*; *Florus* 2.18.5, *Pompeianorum bonorum, quorum sector ille (Antonius) fuerat, praeda devorata*. The one attestation of the feminine equivalent, *sectrix*, is similarly construed with the genitive in *Plin. NH* 36.116: *Metella mater proscriptionum sectrix*.

¹³ For example, just above (*Contr.* 2.1.1), *Porcius Latro* alludes to riches being put up for sale together with their owners (*cum ipsis dominis veneunt*); in 2.1.21, the rhetorician *Pompeius Silo* refers to ‘a house longing for its rightful owners’, who were the disinherited sons of a rich father (*in domo suos dominos desiderante*).

¹⁴ I thank my colleague *Allan Kershaw* for pointing out this additional argument in support of my interpretation of *domino*.

¹⁵ I thank *Bruce Frier* for suggesting to me the rendering ‘owner-broker’, which nicely captures the oxymoron *domino sectore*.

¹⁶ *Sen. Suas.* 6.3 (*videbis illas fauces per quas bona Cn. Pompei transierunt, illa latera, illam totius corporis gladiatoriam firmitatem*) language closely modelled on *Phil.* 2.63 (*istis faucibus, istis lateribus, ista gladiatoria totius corporis firmitate*).