

if we were to read οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἐχόμενον σημείον σημείον, τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ διαίρεσις ἢ σύνθεσις, the meaning being that a point cannot be immediately next to another point, and the point is practically the same as division and composition.<sup>9</sup>

Still, it need to be explained why an interpreter should produce this gloss on a well-known use of the term σημείον. There seems to be a simple answer. The preceding argument on points (*Gen. Corr.* 317a2–11) has consistently been using the term στιγμή, and the phrase that we are concerned with is the first passage using σημείον since 316b31.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the interpreter would certainly have expected στιγμή in the conclusion, and when he found only σημείον, he helped future readers by writing ἢ (or ἥτοι) στιγμή στιγμής, probably as an interlinear gloss. Later this helpful comment found its way into the text thereby corrupting it.

Finally, I should point out that this particular kind of corruption is known from other parts of the Aristotelian texts as well. Two examples will suffice.

In the *De Anima* 416a11 all the most important manuscripts read τῶν σωμάτων ἢ τῶν στοιχείων, but Torstrik, supported by the ancient commentators, rightly, in my opinion, excised ἢ τῶν στοιχείων as a gloss, and he was followed by Ross. And in the *De Memoria* 452a29 almost all manuscripts read: ὥσπερ γὰρ φύσει τόδε μετὰ τόδε ἐστίν, οὕτω καὶ ἐνεργεία. However, a few manuscripts<sup>11</sup> read ἢ δυνάμει instead of ἐστίν, and the reason for this is clearly that ἢ δυνάμει was at one time written as a helpful comment on ἐστίν above the line. Unfortunately, some scribe mistook the comment for a correction and therefore replaced ἐστίν with the gloss.

To sum up, I believe that the usual interpretations of Aristotle's *De Generatione et Corruptione* 317a11–12 are wrong, but the passage can easily be understood through the textual emendation proposed above, which clarifies not only the meaning of the term σημείον but also the analysis of the following τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ διαίρεσις ἢ σύνθεσις.

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## EUROTAS: WIDE OR DANK? A NOTE ON RUFINUS *AP* 5.60 21 PAGE

Παρθένος ἀργυρόπεζος ἐλούετο, χρύσεια μαζῶν  
 χρωτὶ γαλακτοπαγεί μῆλα διαινομένη  
 πνυγαὶ δ' ἀλλήλαις περιηγέες εἰλίσσοντο  
 ὕδατος ὑγροτέρῳ χρωτὶ σαλευόμεναι  
 τὸν δ' ὑπεροιδάινοντα κατέσκεπε πεπταμένη χεὶρ  
 οὐχ ὅλον Εὐρώταν, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἡδύνατο.

The poet describes a girl bathing, as though he was watching her. The first couplet focuses on her wet breasts, which are golden upon her milky skin (the precise sense of the dative χρωτὶ γαλακτοπαγεί is unclear).<sup>1</sup> Her feet, in contrast, are silvery. In the second couplet, the poet's attention is on the girl's buttocks, which

<sup>8</sup> Cf. e.g. E. S. Forster (n.5), 182–3, reading καὶ for ἢ: 'So much for division and composition', which is certainly not right.

<sup>9</sup> On this cf. *Gen. Corr.* 316b6–8, where ἀφή (= σύνθεσις), διαίρεσις and στιγμή (= σημείον) are equal terms. Cf. also *Metaph.* 1060b12–19.

<sup>10</sup> In particular, one should note 317a2–3: ἐπεὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστι στιγμή στιγμής ἐχομένη, ...

<sup>11</sup> Urb. gr. 37 (M), Par. suppl. gr. 314 (C<sup>c</sup>) and Par. gr. 2034 (i). These three manuscripts are closely related.

gyrate as she moves; again there is a reference to her skin, which is more supple (or more moist) than water. Finally, in the third couplet, a hand, the fingers splayed or outspread, covers a swollen *Eὐρώτας*—not all of it, but as much as it can. To what does *Eὐρώτας* refer, and why is it called by the name of a river?

Four solutions suggest themselves—or have been put forward by others—concerning the reference of *Eὐρώτας*. On the first, it is the man's (that is, the poet's) phallus. This interpretation seems to be proposed by the *Suda*, which cites the last couplet (along with Antipater Thessal. *AP* 7.531.7–8) under the entry *Eὐρώτας* (E 3709) with the comment: *περὶ αἰδοίου ἀνδρὸς ὁ λόγος*.<sup>2</sup> This view has been uniformly dismissed by modern scholars, perhaps too hastily (see below). The second possibility is that *Eὐρώτας* designates the girl's buttocks, which have just been mentioned; if, moreover, *Eὐρώτας* is meant to suggest *εὐρύς* or 'wide', then the most natural reference might seem to be the bottom or anus (cf. *εὐρύπρωκτος*); no one appears to have defended this view, and indeed *τὸν δ'* in v. 5 might rather indicate that Rufinus is about to mention yet another part of the anatomy. Finally, the most common view is that *Eὐρώτας* refers to the girl's genitals. Jacobs,<sup>3</sup> taking *Eὐρώτας* as a pun on *εὐρύς*, explained that the woman is *εὐρεῖα* in that organ because of a high frequency of sexual intercourse (cf. Latin 'laxus').<sup>4</sup> Denys Page countered that the girl is a *παρθένος* (Page finds the sense of *Eὐρώτας* hopelessly obscure, even though he claims that 'the meaning is obvious'),<sup>6</sup> to which Barry Baldwin responded in turn that *παρθένος* does not necessarily indicate a 'virgin'.<sup>7</sup> This is true, in highly restricted contexts, but *παρθένος* hardly suggests ample sexual experience.<sup>8</sup> Baldwin adds that 'The vagina is commonly described in terms of its width', but he cites in evidence only the term *εὐρύπρωκτος*, which points to the wrong region (note that the girl's wide open hand suggests she is trying to cover something too broad for it).

The fourth solution as to the reference of *Eὐρώτας* is that it refers—to the Eurotas river. This view, which was put forward by Alan Cameron (1981), requires that *κατέσκεπε* in v. 5 means not 'cover' (sc. a part of the body) but 'ward off' (181–2); it is the river that is swollen, and the girl, suddenly aware of the effect she is having on the river-cum-deity, checks his gaze. Cameron cites *Anacreontea* 17.9

<sup>1</sup> Cameron's emendation of *χωρτί* to *χειρί* is unconvincing. A. Cameron, 'Notes on the erotic art of Rufinus,' *GRBS* 22 (1981), 179–86 at 183.

<sup>2</sup> B. Baldwin, 'Rufinus, *AP* v 60', *JHS* 100 (1980), 182–4 at 183 affirms that the *Suda* takes *Eὐρώτας* as 'an obscene synonym for the female genitals', adopting without comment Toup's emendation of *ἀνδρός* to *γυναικός* (but contrast his n. 16); so too G. Bernhardt, *Suidae Lexicon. Graece et Latine. Tomi Prioris Pars Altera* (Halle and Braunschweig, 1853), translates: 'pudenda uero nimis quantum tumentia manus expansa continuit: non tota quidem, sed quatenus potuit', and comments: 'ubi de pudendis feminae uerba fiunt'.

<sup>3</sup> F. Jacobs, *Animadversiones in Epigrammata Anthologiae Graecae* 2:3 (Leipzig, 1801).

<sup>4</sup> J. N. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (London, 1982), 173.

<sup>5</sup> So too H. Beckby, *Anthologia Graeca. Griechisch-deutsch* 1 (Munich, 1965–7<sup>2</sup>); Waltz, *Anthologie Grecque* 2 (Paris, 1928), citing Jacobs (ibid.), writes: 'N'oublions pas que Rufinus est un ironiste: il nous fait croire qu'il fait le portrait d'une belle jeune fille, et sa description finit en queue de poisson—ou pis encore'. Cf. J. F. Dübner, *Anthologia Palatina* 1 (Paris, 1864) ad v. 6: 'adduntur haec a poeta in uituperium puellae, ceterum formosae, sed a nimio ueneris usu *εὐρυτιώσης*. De Ulysse similiter, sed in laudem, ut de uiro in Lusib. Priap. LXX, 17: Huius et Alcinoi mirata est filia membrum/frondenti ramo uix potuisse tegi.'

<sup>6</sup> D. Page, *The Epigrams of Rufinus* (Cambridge, 1978).

<sup>7</sup> Baldwin (n. 2), 183 in fact affirms that the term was 'regularly applied to girls who were not virgin', which is false.

<sup>8</sup> Conceivably a *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* joke lurks here: the reader expects an innocent *parthenos*, but she turns out to be lax in the vagina.

(actually 18.9) for this sense of the simple form *σκεπάζω* (LSJ s.v. def. II; the object is *καῦμα*, 'heat'); so too, we may add, *σκεπάω* is used of promontories keeping off waves stirred up by the wind (Homer, *Od.* 13.99). But the girl in Rufinus' epigram is not keeping an unwanted observer at bay with her hand, but blocking his view, and there is no evidence that forms of *σκέπω* can bear this sense. Cameron argues further that the expression 'more fluid than water' prepares the reader for the mention of the Eurotas, for the water in question is just the river: 'The buttocks that wobble around so alluringly do not toss about with flesh more fluid than water, but with flesh more fluid than *the* water, the water of the river she is bathing in' (180). The absence of the article or any other demonstrative with *ῥδατος*, however, seems fatal to so strong a reading of the word.

We return, then, to the idea that *Εὔρωτας* conceals a pun. There is a model for this kind of word-play in another epigram of Rufinus (*AP* 5.36 12 P), in which the name *Μηριόνης* (2) is employed to signify the region between a woman's thighs (*μέσος μηρῶν*, 5), presumably the vagina.<sup>9</sup> But must *Εὔρωτας* suggest width? If a pun lies behind the choice of the river's name, then a better candidate for word play is *εὐρώτα* < *εὐρώς* 'dankness, sliminess'. The word differs from *Εὔρωταν* only by the latter word's addition of *nu*. The vagina was typically regarded by men in classical antiquity with a certain revulsion as clammy, malodorous, or swamplike. In Latin literature, as Amy Richlin states, 'The female genitalia are almost exclusively described as disgusting—squashy and foul in texture and constitution . . . , salty and rank.'<sup>10</sup> (That Rufinus speaks adoringly of the vaginas of three girls in another poem [*AP* 5.36 12 P] does not mean that he cannot allude to the misogynistic tradition here).<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the pun works not only on the level of the signifier but also on that of the signified: the idea of dampness, which picks up the imagery of moisture in the first two couplets (evoked also, perhaps, by the epithet *γαλακτοπαγεῖ*), is echoed in the use of a river as metonymy for the female pudenda (*ὑπεροιδαίνοντα* too may connote a billowing sea, cf. Aratus 909, *οἰδαίνουσα θάλασσα*, Eurip. *Hipp.* 1210 *ανοιδῆσαν* of a wave; so too in English one speaks of a swollen river; Baldwin notes that 'silver-footed' is a common epithet of Thetis, which again would evoke the notion of the sea).

What then of the *Suda*'s claim that the lines refer to the male member? *ὑπεροιδαίνοντα* in 5 might well, at an initial reading, suggest an erect penis, which the poet, excited by the sight of the girl's supple buttocks, makes an effort to conceal; one might compare Erycius *API* 242.5–6, where Priapus is ordered to hide his swollen phallus: *ἀλλὰ καταπρήνυε τὸν ἐξωδηκότα φαλλὸν/τόνδε καὶ ἀνθηρῇ κρύψον ὑπὸ χλαμύδι*. However, the final line, with the euphemism *Εὔρωταν*, corrects this first impression. Therein lies the joke, a kind of *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* (possibly the reader is meant to remain somewhat baffled as to who is hiding what, if the meaning of *Εὔρωτας* was not wholly unambiguous).

<sup>9</sup> G. Burzacchini, 'Rufin A.P. V 36,2', *GFF* 7 (1984), 111–12 sees an allusion to Meriones in the *Iliad*, who is compared to Ares 'slayer of men' (2.261, 7.166, 8.264, 17.259); he suggests too that the name Rhodopē calls to mind *ῥή* = *cunnus*. Cf. Strato *AP* 12.247, where a boy is compared to the Homeric Meriones, again with an obscene implication; also Antipater of Sidon *AP* 12.97 = 65 G-P, though here the allusion is rather obscure.

<sup>10</sup> A. Richlin, *The Garden of Priapus. Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor* (New York and Oxford, 1992<sup>2</sup>), 26.

<sup>11</sup> See too J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse. Obscene Language in Attic Comedy* (New York and Oxford, 1991<sup>2</sup>), 145ff. on *secreta muliebria* and cf. *CIL* 4.1516. Henderson notes that there are no euphemisms for female genitals in ancient Greek Comedy.

The poet seems to be aroused by the girl's quivering buttocks—a common theme in erotic poetry. We may compare Rufinus' own epigram (*AP* 5.35 11 P), in which he judges the buttocks of three girls and concludes that Paris would have preferred their *πιγαί* to those of the very goddesses (note the identical expression, *χρωτὶ σαλευόμεναι*). But the girl in our epigram is busy hiding her pubes (hence, the imperfect *κατέσκεπε*), though rather uselessly, it must be said (she is presumably washing herself in front, not in back). He of course can see both sides of her, since he refers in the first couplet to her breasts (the gaze of the poem moves from the girl's breasts to her posterior to her vagina). Another joke, then, is that the part the girl is hiding is not the one that is arousing the viewer. He is clearly enjoying the flow of her backside, while the poor girl, unaware, or perhaps just become aware, of his gaze, attempts to cover her vagina—that dank, slimy thing, the poet implies, wet with its own fluids (like a river), as opposed to the clear and clean liquid glistening on her breasts and lithe buttocks. We may compare Nicarchus' poem (*AP* 11.328), in which the speaker shares an old woman with Hermogenes and Cleobulus; he gets 'to dwell in her grey sea' (*πολύην ἄλα ναιέμεν*, 3), evidently the vagina, while Hermogenes obtains as his share 'the hateful dank abode' (*στυγερὸν δόμον εὐρώντα*, 5), that is, the woman's rear, which is compared to Hades (Cleobulus, who gets her mouth, attains heaven).<sup>12</sup>

In his commentary on the *Odyssey*, Eustathius cites both the last verse of Rufinus' epigram and a verse by Callimachus, in which he calls the Eurotas *καιετάεσσαν*, which may mean 'full of cavities',<sup>13</sup> Eustathius observes that 'Eurotas' usually is a river, but may also be part of the body.<sup>14</sup> Conceivably Rufinus had the Callimachean epithet in mind when he transferred the name of the river to the girl's pudenda.

There is also an intertextual reference to an epigram by Philip (*AP* 9.709), who coined the expression *ῥδατος ὑγρότερον* in a poem about a bronze representation of the river Eurotas, described as 'bathed (*λουσάμενον*) in fire'. The bronze is so animated that it is more liquid than water. This cannot be mere coincidence, as Page thinks; the allusion prepares the reader for the joke on *Εὐρώτας*.<sup>15</sup> Conceivably, the cross-reference to a poem about a statue is Rufinus' hint to the reader that the girl in his poem too is modelled on a statue, which the viewer goes round and examines from all sides.<sup>16</sup> If so, then he may have had in mind sculptures of the type of the Aphrodite Anadyomene. A parallel passage in Lucian, *Amores* 13 is

<sup>12</sup> G. Nisbet, *Greek Epigram in the Roman Empire. Martial's Forgotten Rivals* (Oxford, 2003), 84-85) writes: 'In Nikarkhos' revision, the epithet "wide" which Homer applied to Zeus's domain is transferred to the Underworld taken by "Hades"/Hermogenes, viz. Aristodike's anal passage. This has to be read as a sly comment on years spent as a prostitute, a neat bit of characterization by the back door.' Nisbet has evidently mistaken the epithet *εὐρώντα* for *εὐρόν* (he translates 'hateful, capacious hall').

<sup>13</sup> Cf. A. Hollis, *Callimachus Hecale. Edited with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford, 1990) on *Hecale* fr. 47. It was Strabo who understood *καιετάεσσα* in this way; the alternative interpretation is 'full of mint'.

<sup>14</sup> The source for this notion is probably just Rufinus' epigram, which suggests that it had achieved some notoriety.

<sup>15</sup> See Cameron (n. 1), 180-1; Cameron also cites Pliny *HN* 34.78 on Eutychides' statue of the Eurotas (the same statue Philip describes): *ipso amne liquidiore*. The expression makes perfect sense in Philip's poem (it is a common topos in epideictic epigrams to describe works of art as 'more lively' than the original), but it is somewhat strained in Rufinus. This suggests that Rufinus is deliberately alluding to Philip.

<sup>16</sup> Cameron (n. 1), too, thinks of a statue here, but of the river god Eurotas.

striking. Visitors enjoy the sight of Praxiteles' Aphrodite, who is naked *πλὴν ὅσα τῇ ἐτέρῃ χειρὶ τὴν αἰδῶ λεληθότως ἐπικρύπτειν*. It is possible that Ovid too was thinking of such a statue when he wrote: 'ipsa Venus pubem, quotiens velamina ponit/protegitur laeva semireducta manu' (*AA* 2.613–14).<sup>17</sup>

The play of allusions is stunning: the girl, analogized to a statue, hides her *Εὐρώτας*, even as the description of her supple buttocks summons up descriptions of a statue of that very river. What she hides, however, is a part that is dank in another and, for the poet, less appealing way—and this too lies hidden in the river's name.

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### POLYBIUS ON 'SEEING' AND 'HEARING': 12.27<sup>1</sup>

(§1) *δυεῖν γὰρ ὄντων κατὰ φύσιν ὡς ἂν εἴ τινων ὀργάνων ἡμῖν, οἷς πάντα πυνθανόμεθα καὶ πολυπραγμονοῦμεν [ἀκοῆς καὶ ὁράσεως], ἀληθινωτέρας δ' οὐσης οὐ μικρῶ τῆς ὁράσεως κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον ὀφθαλμοὶ γὰρ τῶν ὥτων ἀκριβέστεροι μάρτυρες* — (§2) *τούτων Τίμαιος τὴν ἡδὴ μὲν, ἡττω δὲ τῶν ὁδῶν ὥρμησε πρὸς τὸ πολυπραγμονεῖν*. (§3) *τῶν μὲν γὰρ διὰ τῆς ὁράσεως εἰς τέλος ἀπέστη, τῶν δὲ διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς ἀντεποιήσατο. καὶ ταύτης (δι)μερ(οὺς) οὐσης τινός, τοῦ μὲν διὰ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων \*\*\*<sup>2</sup> τὸ δὲ περὶ τὰς ἀνακρίσεις ῥαθύνως ἀνεστράφη, καθάπερ ἐν τοῖς ἀνώτερον ἡμῖν δεδῆλωται*. (§4) *δι' ἣν δ' αἰτίαν ταύτην ἔσχε τὴν αἵρεσιν εὐχερὲς καταμαθεῖν. ὅτι τὰ μὲν ἐκ τῶν βυβλίων δύναται πολυπραγμονεῖσθαι χωρὶς κινδύνου καὶ κακοπαθείας. ἐάν τις αὐτὸ τοῦτο προνοηθῇ μόνον ὥστε λαβεῖν ἢ πόλιν ἔχουσαν ὑπομνημάτων πλῆθος ἢ βυβλιοθήκην που γειτνιώσαν*. (§5) *λοιπὸν κατακείμενον ἐρευνᾶν δεῖ τὸ ζητούμενον καὶ συγκρίνειν τὰς τῶν προγεγονότων συγγραφέων ἀγνοίας ἀνευ πάσης κακοπαθείας*. (§6) *ἡ δὲ πολυπραγμοσύνη πολλῆς μὲν προσδεῖται τالαιπωρίας καὶ δαπάνης, μέγα δέ τι συμβάλλεται καὶ μέγιστόν ἐστι μέρος τῆς ἱστορίας*. Polybius 12.27.1 6 (ed. Büttner Wobst)

(§1) We naturally have two, as it were, tools, by which we learn and research everything, [hearing and sight,] but of these the sight is by a long way more truthful, according to Heraclitus—for the eyes are more accurate witnesses than the ears. (§2) Of these Timaeus embarked on his research by the more pleasant but lesser route. (§3) For he completely avoided the things done through sight, but applied himself to the things done through hearing. And given that the latter has two parts, <he engaged in> the part that is done through documents, but acted lazily in the part involving examining witnesses, as I showed earlier. (§4) It is easy to understand his reason for making this choice. Things from books can be researched without danger and hardship, if the person simply has the foresight to adopt a city well supplied in documents or a library somewhere nearby. (§5) All that is left is to lie back and search out what one is looking for and compare the mistakes of previous historians without any hardship. (§6) But *polypragmosyne*<sup>3</sup> needs a great deal of labour and expense, but is immensely useful and is the most important part of history.

In this famous passage Polybius, like various other ancient historians, distinguishes between two methods of researching history: by the 'eyes'—primarily personal

<sup>17</sup> M. Janka, *Ovid Ars Amatoria. Buch 2. Kommentar* (Heidelberg, 1997), ad loc. suggests that the reference is to the Cnidian Aphrodite of Praxiteles or, more probably, to a statue that stood on the Capitoline hill.

<sup>1</sup> My thanks to Roger Brock, Malcolm Heath and Chris Pelling for their comments on earlier drafts of this note.

<sup>2</sup> The lacuna must cover some phrase like 'engaged in': Büttner Wobst proposes *μέρους φιλοπόνως ἀντίχετο*, Pédech suggests *ἡψατο*.

<sup>3</sup> For the significance of this word see below.