

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS/NOTES DE LECTURE

PETRONIANA

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WHERE RELEVANT, I have given page-references to E. Courtney, *The Poems of Petronius* (Atlanta, Ga. 1991).

*grex agit in scaena mimum: "pater" ille uocatur,
"filius" hic, nomen "diuitis" ille tenet.
mox ubi ridendas inclusit pagina partes,
uera redit facies, assimilata perit.* Sat. 80.9

"Petronius is talking about actors on the stage, not characters in a book, so *pagina* should be obelized," says R. G. M. Nisbet, *JRS* 52 (1962) 227-232, at 231. Courtney (23) still retains *pagina*, taking the reference to be to a script, presumably that of the prompter, rolled up at the end of the performance. I do not believe that, any more than I believe emendations denoting a stage-appurtenance like *machina* (= the pegma) or *pergula* (a hut conceivably used as a changing-room); none of these three nouns serves as a convincing subject for *inclusit* ("has brought to an end"; *OLD* sense 6). A more convincing subject would be *fabula*: the play, when finished, brings the actors' roles to an end. I would attribute the corruption to (a) the common confusion of *f* and *p*, (b) the general similarity of *fabula* and *pagina*.

*et mihi cordi
quippe cremare uiros et sanguine pascere luxum.
cerno equidem gemina iam stratos morte Philippos
Thessaliaeque rogos etc.* Sat. 121, lines 109-112

Fortuna agrees to Pluto's request that Romans (*uiros*) should be slaughtered in large numbers. The latest discussion of this passage is that of Erik Wistrand, "Five Critical Notes," *BICS* Supp. 51 (1988) 162-165, at 164. He rightly rejects *luxum* on the ground that Fortuna's activity will indeed cost Rome much bloodshed but cannot in any way be said to "nourish luxury"; one might add that with this reading there is no discernible connection between the two parts of the hexameter. Wistrand proposes to replace *luxum* with *lusum*, and to translate the phrase "gratify (cherish, feast) my (cruel) sport with blood," a poetical equivalent (he claims) of *ferro ignique uastare*; this seems to me to be equally unconvincing. I suggest *bustum*, than which

no word could be more natural after *cremare*; blood then takes the place of the wine with which, after the corpse has been consumed, the ashes were drenched (Virgil *Aen.* 6.227, Statius *Silvae* 2.6.90). The confusion of initial *b* and *l* is frequent, as for example with *breuis* and *leuis*; and exactly the same corruption has occurred at Manilius 5.461 if Bentley's *uiui bustum* (for *atri luxum*) is accepted.

talis humus uenerem molles clamauit in herbas.

Sat. 127.9, line 6

The context concerns the love-making of Zeus and Hera. Courtney (31) points out that, even if we accept *clamo* (= "invite") construed with an indication of place whither (a construction not found again before late Latin), *humus* is a very improbable subject for it; one might add that *uenerem*, "love-making," is an equally improbable object. Courtney replaces *clamauit* with *cumulauit* (presumably in OLD sense 6, "consummate"), but I do not see how it is possible to construe *cumulare* with an indication of place whither. Appropriate sense could be obtained by reading *uenerem molli stimulauit in herba*; the phrase *uenerem stimulare* is found at Lucan 8.413 and Pliny *HN* 28.99 and 32.52. I suggest that the corruption could have begun with the first letter of *stimulauit* becoming attached to the end of *molli*.

*qui uultur iecur intimum pererrat
†et querit pectus† intimasque fibras
non est quem lepidi uocant poetae
sed cordis <mala>, liuor atque luxus.*

fr. 25

The subject is Prometheus. For the corrupt passage four solutions have been proposed: (1) *et pectus trahit*, an early conjecture; (2) *et pectus quatit*, Buecheler; (3) *et pectus terit*, Courtney (47); (4) *pectusque eruit*, Nisbet (*JRS* 52 [1962] 232). I add another, *et pectus uorat*; for a word beginning with *u* acquiring an initial *q* see Livy 3.67.11, where *uidemus* has become *quidem*; Martial 11.79.3, where *uia* has become *quidem*; Ovid *Ibis* 291, where *uictus* has become *quintus*.

*exemptus populo patria migrabit ab urbe
et non ieiuna sabbata lege premet.*

Anth. Lat. 696(R.).5-6

Any Jew who refuses to be circumcised must leave his community. The text given above is that printed by Courtney (70). I have adopted his emendation *patria* for *Graia*, but I am not convinced by his attempt to extract sense from the transmitted text of the next line: "he will break the sabbath by his non-abstinent observance"; this rendering of *non ieiuna lege*

seems quite impossible. One's natural inclination is to take *ieiuna lege* as an ablative of quality with *sabbata*, "the sabbath with its law of fasting," in which case *non* is corrupt. I think it should be *mox*, which has been corrupted to *non* elsewhere (e.g., at Quintilian *Decl. min.* 350.9).

*sed sic sic sine fine feriat
et †tecum† iaceamus osculantes.*

Anth. Lat. 700(R.).6-7

Since *iaceamus* is a true plural (sc. *ego et tu*), *tecum* is impossible. It has been usual to seek an adverbial expression to replace it, e.g., *tractim*, *tecte*, *lentum* (Courtney 73), none of which commends itself; more ingeniously, *aeternum* (for *et tecum*; L. Herrmann), but that merely repeats *sine fine*. I suggest *et lecto*.

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