AETNA 49

Pelion Ossa creat summus premit Ossan Olympus

'A few months ago nothing was farther from my thoughts than this poem: towards the end of last October I had the pleasure of collating for Professor Ribbeck a manuscript of the *Culex* in our public library; and on finishing it I looked through the *Aetna* which came after . . .' So wrote H. A. J. Munro in 1867 by way of introducing his edition of the poem (p. 25); and it was by a happy coincidence that the conjecture I here advance came to me while 'I looked through the *Aetna*' in that same Cambridge manuscript, University Library Kk.V.34 of the tenth century.

I give the text above as it is given by all known manuscripts of the poem (apart of course from the capitalization), and no context is needed: the theme is the piling of Olympus on Ossa on Pelion. The first verb *creat* is manifestly wrong, and conjectures abound: see the second major contribution by a Cambridge scholar to the emendation of the *Aetna*, the edition by F. R. D. Goodyear (Cambridge, 1965) with his note ad loc. Munro favoured Jacob's conjecture *grauat*, Goodyear (both in the *ed.maior* and in the *OCT* of the *Appendix Vergiliana* [Oxford, 1966]) *premit*, arrived at independently by Clausen and Kenney. Most of the other conjectures propounded follow the same line, of substituting for *creat* another verb. In the two which take a different line, Brakman's *arte* and Goodyear's own *supra et*, I 'find nothing to commend' (Goodyear's phrase, p. 112[2]).

Were *grauat* or *premit* given by any or all of the manuscripts, I should not feel any inclination to intervene, for neither conjecture is in any way objectionable in itself; about stylistic appropriateness nothing can be said, since the poem is anonymous and very corrupt. But *grauat* and *premit* remain conjectures, when all is said and done, and neither explains how on earth *creat* got into the text. *grauat* was no doubt created by playing with letters (*G* looking like *C* and so forth); *premit* assumes a jump by a scribe. I too assume a jump by a scribe, and propose for consideration

Pelion Ossa imum, summus premit Ossan Olympus.

What I imagine to have happened is that *imum* was passed over by a copyist eager to reach *summus* = *s-iimmu-s*. For the loss of a word within a line, cf. 4, where the correct *dexter uenias mihi carminis auctor* has become in some manuscripts *dexter mihi carminis auctor Apollo* via the unaccountable omission of *uenias*. More complex interpolation to mend an initial loss is in evidence at 161 where G's correct *certo tibi lumine res est* is corrupted to *tibi lumine certaque retro* by all the rest.

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A CONTENTIOUS MATTER: PETRONIUS 11.2–4

risu itaque plausuque cellulam implevit, opertum me amiculo evolvit et 'quid agebas' inquit 'frater sanctissime? quid? †verti† contubernium facis?' nec se solum intra verba continuit, sed lorum de pera solvit et me coepit non perfunctorie verberare, adiectis etiam petulantibus dictis: 'sic dividere cum fratre nolito.'

This passage describes Ascyltos' reaction on discovering Encolpius and the boy Giton joined in a passionate embrace. The text here is that of Müller (Teubner, 1995). In addressing the difficulty of the well-attested *verticontubernium* most editors adopt the unparalleled *vesticontubernium*, written in a later hand in the margin of the codex

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Leidensis Scaligeranus 61. This accords with the circumstances since it was evidently a commonplace for (homo)sexual encounters to take place under a cloak or mantle,[1] and it is preferable to the restoration *quid agebas . . . qui diverti contubernium facis*, which Bücheler prints in his minor editions. Nevertheless, as has been observed by Fuchs,[2] both readings fail to satisfy.

Fuchs suggests reading *quid? sub veste contubernium facis?* This makes much clearer sense than *vesticontuburnium* while still according with the topos of sex under cover of a cloak.[3] Nevertheless *sub* is difficult to account for palaeographically and *sub veste* is repetitive after *opertum . . . amiculo*.

Instead I propose emending *verticontubernium* to *vero contubernium*, that is *quid agebas . . . frater sanctissime? quid vero? contubernium facis?* This adds to the note of sarcasm in *sanctissime*, is a suitable prelude to *petulantibus dictis*, and also admits a pun on *contubernium*: the word can be used of sexual relations with boys,[4] but is more strictly used of sharing a tent, especially in the army: see *TLL* 4.791.61ff. s.v. *contubernium* [Gudeman], *OLD* s.v. *contubernium* §1 and note Veg. *Mil*. 2.13 *ipsae centuriae in contubernia divisae sunt, ut decem militibus sub uno papilione*[5] *degentibus unus quasi praeesset decanus qui caput contubernii nominatur*.[6] Reading *quid vero? contubernium facis?* would have Ascyltos mockingly likening Encolpius' cloak to an army tent in loaded contrast to his sexual activity.[7] Encolpius is mocked again in military terms at 82.3 where, having rushed out armed and in search of revenge after Ascyltos has won Giton's affections, he encounters a *miles* or *nocturnus grassator* who asks *age ergo . . . in exercitu vestro phaecasiati milites ambulant?*

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[1] See e.g. K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (London, 1978), 98–9.

[2] Harald Fuchs in Hellfried Dahlmann and Reinhold Merkelbach (edd.), *Studien zur Textgeschichte und Textkritik* (Köln and Opladen, 1959), 59.

[3] Müller compares *A.P.* 5.165.3 *ὑπὸ χλαίνῃ*; cf. also e.g. 169.3–4, 173.1–2; and note Ovid, *Am*. 1.4.47-8 *saepe mihi dominaeque properata voluptas / veste sub iniecta dulce peregit opus*; *Epist*. 16.224 *superiecta . . . veste*.

[4] *TLL* 4.792.41ff. s.v. *contubernium* [Gudeman] cites Suet. *Iul*. 49.1 *pudicitiae eius* [*Caesaris*] *famam nihil quidem praeter Nicomedis contubernium laesit* and *Cal*. 36.1 *Valerius Catullus . . . iuvenis stupratum* [*Caligulam*] *a se ac latera sibi contubernio eius defessa . . . vociferatus est*.

[5] For *papilio* meaning 'tent', see *TLL* 10.253.61ff. s.v. *papilio* [Hodges].

[6] See too the glosses *συνσκήνιον* and *συ(ν)σκηνία* in *CGL* (Goetz): 2.115.13 and 21, 447.36, 503.15, 3.443.79

[7] Comparable to a certain extent is the contrast between military campaigning and sexual dalliance in Cicero's disparaging use of *contubernium* at *Verr*. 5.104: *ubi illud contubernium muliebris militiae in illo delicatissimo litore?*

TWO NOTES ON LUCAN 6

I

6.452–8

carmine Thessalidum dura in praecordia fluxit
non fatis adductus amor, flammisque seueri
inlicitis arsere senes. nec noxia tantum
pocula proficiunt aut cum turgentia suco
frontis amaturae subducunt pignora fetae:
mens hausti nulla sanie polluta ueneni
excantata perit.

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