

## TWO TEXTUAL PROBLEMS IN LUCIAN'S *PISCATOR*

*Pisc.* 14. ... ἀλλὰ τούναντίον ὅπερ ἂν ᾗ καλόν, ὥσπερ τὸ χροσίον ἀποσπώμενον, τοῖς κόμμασι λαμπρότερον ἀποστίλβει καὶ φανερώτερον γίγνεται<sup>1</sup>).

ἀποσπώμενον β: ἀποσπόμενον γ (Γ<sup>4</sup> inter -σ- et -ω- μ supra ras. exaravit; ang. sup. ext. Ω, ἀποσπόμενος τ. κομμ ... man. quaedam scripsit) τοῖς κόμμασι L recc. plerique, bcd vulg.: τοῖς κόμμασιν Γ olim (nunc τοῖς σκόμμασιν, sed σ<sup>1</sup> et pars sinistra litt. ω serius inferta; marg. τοῖς κομμ, ut vid. man. rec. (?)) Σα τοῖς σκόμμασι Φ, sine dubio olim Ω (nam nunc |κό|μμασι (= ras.) praebet), β γίγνεται Γ Φ: γίγνεται Ωβ

In this passage, Philosophy is chiding her followers for being angry with Parrhesiades (i.e. Lucian), who had been making fun of them. She compares their situation with the treatment accorded her by Comedy at the Dionysia, noting that she still considers Comedy her friend, in spite of the ridicule. She then goes on to make a thoughtful remark about the effect of σκόμμα on things in general. In her view, nothing is the worse off for a joke, but just the opposite is the case: whatever is fine shines all the more brightly.

We may, first of all, dispense with the variant ἀποσπόμενον. The word supposedly refers in the context to mining (i.e. =

1) Adapted from my dissertation, *A Critical Edition of Lucian's Vitarum Auctio and Piscator*, (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974). For most dialogues, including *Piscator*, the manuscript tradition can be conveniently divided into two classes, β and γ, the former best represented, for our dialogue, by B (Vind. 123, tenth century), and U (Vat. 1324, eleventh century), the latter by Γ (Vat. 90, tenth century), Φ (Laurentianus C. S. 77, tenth century), and Ω (Marc. 434 (840), tenth or eleventh century). The other *testes* quoted in the apparatus: Γ<sup>4</sup>, a late corrector of Γ, L (Laur. Plut. 57. 51, eleventh century), the editions (Edd.) a (Editio Princeps, Florence, Alopa, 1496), b (Ed. Aldina prior, Venice, 1503), c (Ed. Aldina altera, Venice, 1522), d (Ed. Juntina, Venice, 1535), the vulgate (vulg., Ed. Reitziana, Amsterdam: Wetsten, 1743), Σ (Vat. 224, fourteenth century), P (Vat. 76, fourteenth century), s<sup>7</sup> (Urb. 121, fifteenth century), ξ (Vat. 87, fourteenth century), Ψ (Marc. 436 (314), fourteenth century), N (Par. 2957, fifteenth century), R (Laur. Plut. 57. 28, fifteenth century).

ἀνορνυτόμενον)<sup>2)</sup>, but to apply such a usage to it would surely strain the Greek. It is, in fact, the result of a simple scribal error. The real problem lies in the words *τοῖς κόμμασι(ν)/σκόμμασι*. The former has been generally accepted, since it is the vulgate reading and was the original reading of the prestigious *G*. It is also found in the old manuscript *L* (Laurentianus Plut. 57. 51, eleventh century) and in many *recentiores*, as the apparatus shows. Now, much energy has been expended to explain the meaning of *κόμμασι* in the context. Some of these interpretations are found in scholars' notes included in Reitz's edition. According to Gronovius, who read the false *ἀποσπώμενον*, a certain type of gold used to be beaten on being dug up<sup>3)</sup>. Even if we were to accept *ἀποσπώμενον*, Gronovius' interpretation would be open to criticism, since the Greek tells us that the *κόμματα* are used *while* the gold is being dug up. Graevius claimed that *κόμμα* refers here to the *act* of striking, an interpretation which the Greek will not tolerate, and that the gold, when struck in the mint, became shinier<sup>4)</sup>. Jacobs, some years later, opined that *κόμμασι* refers to the blows by which metals were cleansed of slag<sup>5)</sup>. *ἀποσπώμενον* really means 'being wiped off', and only by a far-fetched interpretation of the Greek could one think that there is a reference to some smelting process here.

Few have defended the variant *σκόμμασι*. Eduard Schwartz thought that it could indeed be retained if a semi-colon (·) is placed after *ἀποσπώμενον*, producing a half-completed simile<sup>6)</sup>. The text proposed by Schwartz is feasible, but quite awkward, especially since *σκόμματος* had just occurred in the preceding clause.

The problem can be solved rather easily. I submit that *κόμμασι* became *σκόμμασι* via dittography and the orthographical error *ο/ω*, but that *κόμμασι* is itself a corruption due to dit-

2) Cf. Lucian, *Charon*, 11: οἱ μεταλλέοντες ἀνορνύττουσι. Cf. Reitz, ed., *Luciani Samosatensis Opera*, 4 vols., (Amsterdam: Wetsten, 1743), I, 585 for the false interpretation of *ἀποσπώμενον*.

3) *Ibid.*

4) *Ibid.* Professor T.V. Buttrey has informed me that in Mexico low-grade (10%) silver coin-blanks are dipped in silver, making them a dull white (they had been of a greenish tint). Upon striking, they become shiny. He knows of no parallel in the ancient world.

5) J. T. Lehmann, ed., *Luciani Samosatensis Opera*, 9 vols., (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1822-31), III, 556.

6) E. Schwartz, "Lucianus Recognovit J. Sommerbrodt. Voluminis primi pars posterior...", *BPhW*, 10, (Aug. 2, 1890), 998.

tography in an uncial manuscript. The exemplar of this manuscript would have read TOICOMMACI (with lunate sigma) and was in copying corrupted to TOICICOMMACI (IC became ICIC). The combination IC closely resembles uncial kappa, hence the corruption *τοῖς κόμμασι*. *ῥμμα* is generally a poetic word, but is found in Plato and Thucydides, two authors Lucian had studied, as well as in Lucian's own works<sup>7</sup>). In our sentence, *τοῖς ῥμμασι* can be taken as a dative of reference. The solution offered here provides for an eminently readable text, and avoids the pitfalls of the bizarre *κόμμασι* and the awkward *σκόμμασι*. We may translate: '... but, on the contrary, whatever is good, like gold being wiped off, shines more brightly in our eyes and becomes more conspicuous'.

*Pisc.* 33. ἐπει καὶ οἱ ἀθλοθέται μαστιγοῦν εἰώθασιν ἢν τις ὑποκριτῆς Ἀθηρᾶν ἢ Ποσειδῶνα ἢ τὸν Δία ὑποδεδυκῶς μὴ καλῶς ὑποκρίνηται μηδὲ κατ' ἀξίαν τῶν θεῶν, καὶ οὐ δὴ ποῦ ὀργίζονται αὐτοῖς ἐκεῖνοι, ὅτι τὸν περικείμενον αὐτῶν τὰ προσωπεῖα καὶ τὸ σχῆμα ἐνδεδυκῶτα ἐπέτρεψαν παῖεν τοῖς μαστιγοφόροις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤδοντ' ἄν, οἴμαι, μαστιγομένῳ.

ἀθλοθέται β: ἀγωνοθέται ΓΩ νομοθέται Φ τὸν Δία β: δία γ ὑποκρίνηται γ: ὑποκρίνοιτο β αὐτοῖς: αὐτῶν Φ (-σ in -ν serius conv., ut vid.) post ἐκεῖνοι ras. 2 litt. B (hic desinit col. sinistra) ὅτι β: διότι γ (δι' ὅτι Γ) ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤδοντ' ἄν οἴμαι β: ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤδοντ' ἄν μᾶλλον ΓΩ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἢ δοῖτ' ἄν μᾶλλον Φ (inter η- et -δ- foramen membranae; -ν- suprascr. man. sec.) ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤδοντ' ἄν οἴμαι Ps<sup>7</sup> ΞΨ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤδοντο ἄν, οἴμαι, NΣEdd.vulg. ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤδονται, οἴμαι, K.Schwartz ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤδοντ' ἄν, οἴμαι, μᾶλλον Lehmann (monente Jacobs) μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ἤδοντ' ἄν οἴμαι Fritzsche in app. μαστιγομένῳ Bekker LR: μαστιγομένων βγ

The passage involved is part of the speech for the defense delivered by Parrhesiades, in which the theme of the hypocrisy of latter-day philosophers is constantly played upon, and compared to the actor's performance on stage. It is important to note that the author is vividly describing a present (at least in the literary sense) and continuing custom. The clause of which *ὀργίζονται* is the verb continues the vivid tone of the passage: '... and doubtless they [the audience] do not get angry with them...' The problem is twofold. In the first place, both variants for the main verb of the clause beginning *ἀλλὰ καὶ*, the contrary to fact and the future less vivid, are out of place here because the passage, as noted above, speaks vividly of a

<sup>7</sup>) Cf. Thuc. II. 11, Plato, *Tim.*, 45C, Lucian, *Dial. Mort.*, I. 3, XXXVIII. 1.

current practice. In addition, the variants οἶμαι and μᾶλλον are suspect: the former is perhaps superfluous, since the presumption of the spectators' attitude had already been succinctly expressed with δὴ ποῦν, while the latter is cumbersome after ἀλλὰ καί. Since the conjectures listed in the apparatus include one or both of these words, they suffer from the same blemishes. Let us note, however, that K. Schwartz, in postulating ἤδονται, recognized the parallelism of this verb and ὀργίζονται. A sharp eye could perhaps discern the doubtful elision -αι (i. e. ἤδονται) hiding behind ἄν in β (ἤδοντ' ἄν). In this case, ἄν would have to refer to μαστιγομένῳ. Here again, however, the particle injects a note of potentiality which is unwarranted in the context.

The sharply contrasting variants οἶμαι and μᾶλλον, both of which are suspect, probably have a common origin. I would suggest that both are derived from a note written above the line. I see the stages of corruption this way: ἤδονται was changed to ἤδοντ' ἄν (cf. β). Next, a redactor wrote οἰ μαλλ(ον) above the line, using, perhaps, a diagonal stroke for -ον or even an extreme form of suspension, μᾶ. The note was intended as an emendation for ἤδοντ': 'οἰ (i. e. ἤδουιτ') preferred'. In the γ-recension, -οἰ- in fact replaced -ο- in ἤδοντ' but μᾶλλον was added to the text. In β, οἰμαλλ(ον) or οἰμα was corrupted or misunderstood as οἶμαι, and subsequently made part of the text. Hence the divergent texts of β and γ. The use of the present imperfective ἤδονται without qualifiers such as οἶμαι and superfluous adverbials as μᾶλλον provides a sentence which is consistent with the lively and sharply defined tone of the passage. We may translate: 'Since the umpires customarily beat any actor who, in the role of Athena, Poseidon or Zeus performs poorly and in a manner unworthy of the gods, and doubtless they [the audience] do not get angry with them, because they turn the actor who put on their masks and played their parts over to the whippers to be beaten, but they are even glad that he is being beaten'.