

hatred and destruction have been unable to replace the Old religion adequately. They have produced a New Verse that is lifeless and insufferably pretentious divorced from the general feeling of the common man.

Contemporary poetry has a very small market and very few shrines. It is predominantly cliquey, propagandist and ideological. The general reader has found nothing strong enough in it to attract him. No poetry that lacks a compelling force can endure. And what is there strong enough in modern belief to be poetically compelling? Expression of physical and ideological violence may exercise a certain amount of morbid fascination especially on the younger generation but its spell is soon broken. There can be no compelling force in mere technique which, as the body is more important than its raiment, cannot be more important than the subject-matter and its emotional content. The muse for the time being has returned to Olympus waiting for better times, times that will be glorified as in the times of great creative Art by the compelling force of the Ideals that feed the sacred fire of Inspired Poetry.

## CALPURNIANA

By H. MACL. CURRIE

THE edition of the *Eclogues* of Calpurnius Siculus (along with the *Laus Pisonis* and the *Laus Caesaris*) published in 1954 by M. Raoul Verdière (*Collection Latomus*, vol. xix) represents the latest contribution to Calpurnian studies, but it has not, in many respects, assisted the interpretation of this author, for the editor, dazzled by some of M. Léon Herrmann's more subtle but yet improbable hypotheses, has loaded his introductory material and notes with wild conjectures and eccentric opinions, thus dismaying and dissatisfying the reader. Of previous editions those of J. C. Wernsdorf (*Poetae Latini Minores*, vol. ii, Altenburg, 1780) and of C. H. Keene (London, 1887) are the most useful. Below are discussed several points which still seem to require exegesis or deserve reconsideration.

Eclogue 1, 54-57:

candida pax aderit; nec solum candida vultu  
qualis saepe fuit quae libera Marte professo,  
quae domito procul hoste tamen grassantibus armis  
publica diffudit tacito discordia ferro.

*publica* codd.; iubila G. Hermann; vulnera Leo; lubrica Phillimore (C. R. xl, p. 43); fulmina H. Schenkl;<sup>2</sup> p. confodit t praecordia f. Maehly (quoted in app. crit. by Giarratano, *Calpurnii et Nemesiani Bucolica*, Paravia ed., Turin, 1943).

If *publica* is right, *discordia* must be plural of *discordium*, a rare neuter form. (J. W. and A. M. Duff, *Minor Latin Poets*, Loeb Classical Library, revised ed., 1935, p. 223). Research, however, shows that the existence of *discordium* is extremely doubtful — see Thes. Ling. Lat. 1340, 30, and 1341, 79. Could we take *publica* as plural of the neuter noun *publicum* and treat *discordia* as an adjective? For *publicum* (— 'the commonwealth', 'community', 'State', 'city' etc.) L. and S. cite Pliny Ep. 9, 13, 21, *consulere in publicum*, and Livy 26, 27, and 39, 44, may be compared for the same usage of the word. Here Calpurnius could be using a poetic plural; or there could be a special point in the plural — 'the different constituent members of the State'. Janus Ulitius in his *Auctores rei venaticae antiqui cum bucolicis Nemesiani et Calpurnii cum commentariis* (Leyden, 1635) made this suggestion but it has been ignored (although Keene re-

fers to it). If we are not going to attempt emendation (a risky and dubious venture in this instance), it is better to accept the plural (not elsewhere found) of an attested neuter noun than the plural of a noun whose very authenticity has not been definitely established.

ibid., 73-76:

exsultet quaecumque Notum gens ima iacentem  
erectumve colit Boream, quaecumque vel ortu  
vel patet occasu mediove sub aethere fervit.

patet codd.; tepet Postgate (C.R. xv, p. 213) followed by H. Schenkl, *Corp. Poet. Lat.*, vol. ii, 1905; fervit GP; servit NV.

Palaeographically there is nothing between *fervit* and *servit*, but the meaning is much better accommodated with the former reading. Accepting it and wishing to introduce the balance which he felt necessary, Postgate proposed *tepet* which has not been generally favoured. 'Moderate warmth' may not seem to be a true opposition to the strong expression *fervit*, but it is certainly a better one than *patet* with which there is no antithesis at all. Words cognate with *tepere* are quite often found in Calpurnius – viz. 5, 31, *tepefecerit* and ibid., 60, *tepscere*; at 2, 79 and at 5, 27 and 102, *tepidus*. At 5, 41, too, *patenti* is found in one group of inferior MSS (w in Schenkl), while the other group (v in Schenkl) has *tepentis* which is certainly right.<sup>1</sup> Considering this evidence, then, as well as the needs of the context, we ought to receive *tepet* in 76.

Eclogue 4, 58-63 (Corydon is speaking):

quod si tu faveas trepido mihi, forsitan illos  
experiat calamos, here quos mihi doctus Iollas  
donavit dixitque: 'truces haec fistula tauros  
conciliat, nostroque sonat dulcissima Fauno.  
Tityrus hanc habuit, cecinit qui primus in istis  
montibus Hyblaeis modulabile carmen avena.'

Corydon in this poem is clearly Calpurnius himself, but who is *Iollas*? E. Cesareo (*La Poesia di Calp. Sic.*, Palermo, 1931, p. 174) leaves the question open, but Wernsdorf saw a reference to some poet or scholar who had encouraged Calpurnius in his literary efforts. Theocritus has been canvassed as a possibility, but, it has been argued, if this is so, then *Tityrus* cannot be Virgil. Firstly, however, in this eclogue at 161 the poet indisputably uses the name *Tityrus* to signify Virgil and secondly

<sup>1</sup> Giarratano does not approve of Schenkl's subdivision into v and w, we may note.

this identification was commonly held in antiquity – see, for example, Propertius 2, 34, 72 and Martial 8, 55. The assumption that *Iollas* = Theocritus is, further, attractive for, with these two identifications accepted, the lines would be exhibiting, as it were, an apostolic succession in the genre of bucolic poetry. The difficulty over chronology could be removed by an alteration in the punctuation. Take from *truces* to *Fauno* as an utterance of *Iollas* and leave *Tityrus* to *avena* in the mouth of *Corydon*. By this means the poet would be saying that *Iollas*, speaking a commendatory word or two, had given him the pipes (the sign and symbol of bucolic poetry) and that *Tityrus* once owned them. With this interpretation *Iollas* would be seen as the patron and promoter of this literary genre (i.e. Theocritus), controlling and dispensing ability in it. He had bestowed his gift on Virgil and, Virgil turning to other kinds of poetry,<sup>2</sup> he now bestows it on Calpurnius. Presumptuous immodesty this may be, but such hopeful claims to comparison with great predecessors are not uncommon amongst Roman writers. The rebuke, too, of Meliboeus in 64 (*magna petis, Corydon, si Tityrus esse laboras*) would seem to confirm the ascription of 62-3 to *Corydon*.

What of *istis* in 62? Would it not more appropriately come from the lips of *Iollas* than from those of *Corydon*? Not necessarily, for frequently *iste* has a general reference and simply = 'this, that'. The sense 'those of yours' need not, however, be absent here; *Corydon* could rightly use the word thus inasmuch as with the new punctuation he would be addressing his countryman, *Meliboeus*.<sup>3</sup>

Eclogue 6, 76-78:

tu modo nos illis (iam nunc, Mnasyllae, precamur)  
auribus accipias, quibus hunc et Acanthida nuper  
diceris in silva iudex audisse Thalea.

How is *Acanthida* to be explained? Alii alia. Wernsdorf, for example, in a learned note (op. cit., excursus xvii) recalls the witch of the same name in Propertius 4, 5, 63, and remarks on the appearance elsewhere in bucolic poetry of witches. Keene refers us to Wernsdorf and to Adelung (who assumes *Acanthis* to be a shepherd) but is hesitant. Propertius was probably known to Calpurnius – see P. J. Enk's edition of the first book (Leyden, 1946) where there is given a list of lines in later poets other than Ovid

<sup>2</sup> In 160-3 of this eclogue C., referring to the patronage of Maecenas, actually traces Virgil's career as a poet.

<sup>3</sup> *Meliboeus* = Seneca, C.'s patron (G. Sarpe, *Questiones Philologicae*, Rostock, 1819). For other identifications of M. see the two Duffs, op. cit., pp. 211-2, and the literature there cited.

which may owe something to Propertius — but such an allusion here would surely be gratuitous and obscure, whilst Adelung's shepherd seems to do very little for the required meaning. The comments of Verdière are daringly speculative; *Acanthis* is the title 'd'un poème animalier dans le genre du Moineau de Catulle, du Perroquet d'Ovide et du Perroquet que Stace devait écrire par la suite'. This is ingenious but quite unsubstantiated. L. Herrmann (cited by Verdière) pursues his theories concerning the interior prosopography of the pieces and regards *Astylus* as the fabulist Phaedrus and *Acanthis* as one of his rivals.

Such conjectures read too much into the lines. Can a solution not be bought more cheaply? The context shows that the three lines quoted above must contain some gibe at *Astylus* (hunc).<sup>4</sup> The word *acanthis* as a common noun obviously meaning some bird of sweet song has already occurred in the eclogue.<sup>5</sup> May not *Lycidas* be insultingly repeating it here (= 'a good singer', 'someone who really can sing'), thus provoking the angry retort of *Astylus*? This suggestion (not apparently made hitherto) would rid us of the difficulty. The previous use of the word by the same speaker in conversation with the offended party strengthens it. And to apply the name of an animal to a human being with the implication that he possesses qualities or characteristics of that creature is not unusual. Compare the use of ἀηδών and of *asinus*.

Purser (quoted by Keene) may well be right when in 78 he takes *Thalea* as a nominative (= 'a true bucolic muse'), but something could perhaps be said for the view that *Thalea* is a proper noun doing duty as an adjective (cp. Virgil, *Aeneid* 4, 552, *cinis Sychaeus*) qualifying *silva*, the whole line being a reference to Virgil, Eclogue 6, 2, *nostra nec erubuit silvas habitare Thalea*. Whatever be the correct way to understand *Thalea*, to print *acanthida* (with a small 'a')<sup>6</sup> and treat it as a common noun, as is suggested above, would give easier sense to the passage, for *Lycidas*' taunt could be interpreted thus: 'Please listen to our competition with those ears (i.e. open and unprejudiced) with which you listened to the performance of this man and of a true artist and you will not fail to notice my superiority to him.'

<sup>4</sup> Cp. 79-80: *non equidem possum, cum provocet iste, tacere; rumpor enim merito; nihil hic nisi iurgia quaerit.*

<sup>5</sup> 6-8 (*Lycidas* speaking): *Nyctilon ut cantu rudis exsuperaverit Alcon, / Astyle, credibile est, si vincat acanthida cornix, / vocalem superet si dirus aedona bubo.* Thompson (*Greek Birds*) thinks the *acanthis* is a goldfinch or linnet; Royds (*The Beasts and Bees of Virgil*) a warbler of some kind. C.'s *acanthis* is clearly a notable singer.

<sup>6</sup> We may observe (although it does not prove anything) that according to Verdière's app. crit. at least two MSS. have *acanthida* (with a small 'a').

## LA POESIA ITALIANA D'OGGI

By G. CURMI

LE tre più importanti scuole letterarie che fiorirono in questa prima metà del Novecento — la scuola crepuscolare, la scuola futurista e la scuola ermetica — durarono quasi uno stesso periodo di tempo, circa vent'anni: tutte e tre suscitavano grandi polemiche e diedero qualche poeta di pregio, ma tutte e tre sono ora per sempre tramontate, e rinchiuso nel casellario o nel sepolcreto della storia, coi loro meriti e coi loro demeriti, col loro bene e col loro male, con le loro vittorie e con le loro sconfitte. E senza dubbio nessuno penserà mai a risuscitarle. Quale è dunque la poesia d'oggi? E quale sarà la poesia nuova, la poesia di domani?

Nel passato, nei secoli scorsi, era costume di indicare le caratteristiche d'una data tendenza letteraria quando questa aveva già preso fisionomia e consistenza, e aveva già dato i suoi poeti e i suoi prosatori. Nel nostro secolo questo processo venne invertito: si tracciò, o si dettò, le caratteristiche di una data tendenza letteraria prima che questa fosse ancora nata, e si chiamò a gran voce, o addirittura si obbligò gli scrittori ad aderire a questa tendenza, col risultato logico ed ovvio che si ebbero non scuole letterarie vere e proprie, ma vere e proprie rettoriche letterarie. Perchè la poesia, soffio dell'anima, non può avere imposizioni di sorta. Non le si può dire: questo deve essere il tuo argomento; questa deve essere la tua forma.

Errore grave fu dunque quello dei Novecentisti di escogitare formole, di dettare regole, di preordinare gruppi, perchè soltanto nell'autonomia più assoluta e nell'indipendenza più completa fioriscono e irrobustiscono gli artisti.

Ma l'uomo è caparbio, e non si lascia ammaestrare dagli insegnamenti della storia. Gli errori ormai ripetuti per quasi tre generazioni, con risultati sempre più disastrosi, non sono stati sufficienti ad aprire gli occhi a nessuno, e si stanno per ripetere un'altra volta. Si sta per ricadere nello stesso errore dei cinque decenni scorsi. Si vuole anch'oggi segnare limiti, suggerire programmi, additare orizzonti, creare ambienti, delineare ordini nuovi.

Il Papini, ad esempio, riconoscendo che l'epoca attuale non può durare, perchè è in pieno dissolvimento, e sostenendo che l'epoca nuova non può essere nè romantica nè medioevale, predice e predica un ritorno al Rinascimento. Lui così vivo, così moderno, così polemista in nome della vita,