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Notes on the First Eclogue of Vergil

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expressly assigned to Hermes. The natural subject of ὥπασε would be Herodotus, and the purpose of these remarks is to suggest that such in fact is the case. True, there has as yet been no mention of Herodotus in the poem; but in l. 9 he is clearly implied. There Pindar might naturally have written καὶ τὸν Ἡρόδοτον; but he could hardly have made the name of a mere mortal balance that of a god (Φοῖβον), so he has substituted the more dignified phrase, τὰν ἀλιερκέα Ἴσθμοῦ δειράδ', the Isthmus being sacred to Poseidon (l. 32). None the less Herodotus is in the poet's mind, and it is with him as subject, I think, that he continues ἐπεὶ στεφάνους ἐξ ὥπασε κτλ., καλὸν πατρίδι κῶδος. And it may be added that this view seems supported by the word πατρίδι, which needs a point of reference.

This is not the only passage where Pindar supplies from the context a subject not formally expressed. I might quote *Nem.* viii. 21: ὅψον δὲ λόγοι φθονέροισιν ἄπτεται δ' ἐσλῶν αἰεὶ, κτλ., where φθόνος must

be taken from φθονερόισιν as subject for ἄπτεται. But a stronger example would be *Pyth.* ix. 99: νικάσαντά σε—εἶδον, ἄφωνοί θ' ὥς ἕκασται φίλτατον παρθενικαὶ πόσιν ἢ υἱὸν εὖχοντ', ὃ Τελεσίκρατες, ἔμμεν. In these lines is described the havoc wrought by the gallant Telesicrates in the bosoms of the fair spectators of his prowess in the arena at Cyrene: 'the maidens beheld thee victorious and in silence each for herself prayed for thee as a husband or to be her son.' That the maidens should pray for such a husband was right and fitting; but that they should pray for such a son was felt to be premature, even by the scholiast, who well suggests, that a second subject (αἱ γυναῖκες) is to be supplied in sense, suggested by υἱόν: 'the maidens prayed for thee as husband or (*the mothers*) craved thee as son.' I venture to think we have a similar instance of Pindar's allusive manner in the passage before us.

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NOTES ON THE FIRST ECLOGUE OF VERGIL.

VERGIL Eclogue i. 27-45. *The Position of Tityrus.*

It appears to have been commonly assumed that Vergil is guilty of entire confusion, or of hopeless inconsistency, as to the standing and conduct of Tityrus in the matter of his manumission. But surely this is to do wrong to the poet. Such elementary blundering or lack of definite realisation is unthinkable in the great Mantuan.

We learn that Tityrus is and was the occupier of lands for pastoral purposes. He was formerly a slave, has now become free, and has to thank the divine 'iuvenis' who allowed him to keep his tenancy. The questions which arise are:

- (1) How could he be a slave and yet occupy lands which were evidently his own, at least to the extent of their full use to his own profit? (2) If he was really the bailiff of his master,

why should Tityrus himself go to Rome to secure his occupation of the land, when that possession or occupation was the master's concern? (3) If he has been manumitted, how does he come to be still in the same situation as to the land, which ought apparently to belong to the master still? Meliboeus says simply *ergo tua rura manebunt*.

The following answer will, I think, remove all perplexity from the passage and make the situation and course of action quite clear.

The *iuvenis* is in no way confounded with the slave's master, nor did the land ever belong to that master. The *rura* in question were semi-public lands, upon which small farmers, shepherds, etc., might make a livelihood, so long as they were not confiscated by the government. Tityrus was indeed of servile standing, but, like the χωρὶς οἰκοῦντες of Greece, he lived apart from any *familia*, and was allowed to keep herds on the land in question, making such profit as he could

after paying a certain fixed sum or ἀποφορά to his master. By saving a sufficient *peculium* over and above this tax and the cost of his own maintenance (and that of Galatea or Amaryllis), he could purchase his freedom from his master and then continue on the land as a free man. For a long time his infatuation for the extravagant Galatea prevented him saving for this purpose,

namque, fatebor enim, dum me Galatea tenebat,
nec spes libertatis erat nec cura peculi.

But, after he had given up Galatea for Amaryllis, he managed to save and

libertas . . . sera tamen respexit inertem.

But he found that the land was to be confiscated, and, if he wished to secure the manumission for which he was saving, he must go to Rome and interview the powerful *iuuenis*, who, acting as *praesens divus*, would give him leave to retain the use of the lands (v. 45). In this way he could (and ultimately did) pay down to his own master the price of his liberty (libertas . . . longo post tempore venit). He will now carry on his old occupation, but as a freed man.

The meaning of

quid facerem? neque servitio me exire licebat

is not that he was obliged to go to Rome in order to be manumitted, but that, if he did not go (on the errand of appeal to Octavius) his manumission became an impossibility (as merely begging him). The sense of the imperf. *licebat* is that it was turning out impossible (after all), and *me* is preferable to *mihi*, since the sense is 'my quitting slavery was proving out of the question'.

I believe that if the whole passage is now read in the light of this explanation no difficulty whatever will be felt.

Vergil Eclogue i. 67-69:

en umquam patrios longo post tempore fines,
pauperis et tuguri congestum caespitem culmen,
post aliquot mea regna videns mirabor aristas?

Sad trouble has been made of the interpretation of these lines through an initial misunderstanding. Commentators always imagine Meliboeus to be saying, 'Shall I ever see my home *again* and wonder at its neglected condition (under its new owners)?' They are then met by an extremely broken

or involved construction, with which no one is satisfied. But in reality the word (or suggestion) 'again' cannot be read into the sentence. The poet does not say *revisens*, but *videns*.

Meliboeus has complained that the small occupiers are to be scattered to the ends of the earth, and he has no notion of returning. What he says is, 'We are to be exiled to Africa or Scythia or Britain, and in those desolate parts *shall I ever, a long time hence, behold a country of my own* (for a home), *and the completion of some poor cottage built of sods, (and), later on, some few ears of corn, my (little) realm, and make much of them?*' He will make his settlement in those distant wilds, construct as best he can a turf hut, and at last manage to grow a few ears of corn, to his own admiring wonder. He will, in short, do precisely what pioneer colonists always do. With this rendering there is a distinct and obvious significance in the words *pauperis, congestum caespitem, mea regna, and mirabor*, while *videns* bears its proper sense.

The only doubt which might conceivably arise is as to *patrios*. Perhaps it is this word which has led readers into error. It is natural to think of *patrios fines* as the land in which one was born. In *Aen.* i. 380, however, Aeneas, who was born at Troy, says *Italiam quaero patriam*. This might indeed be taken (see Conington) as 'Italy, whence my ancestors came,' and would therefore not be conclusive for a sense 'I seek Italy as my country.' But in *Aen.* xi. 24, *egregias animas, quae sanguine nobis | hanc patriam peperere suo*, the meaning is indubitably 'have won this to be our country (permanently)'.

mea regna is thus in apposition to *aliquot aristas* and is correctly placed.

It is in keeping with this easy interpretation that Vergil should use *congestum culmen tuguri* rather than the simple word 'hut'. Considering the careful diction of the poet, little justice is sometimes done to that feature of his style in the Eclogues. 'Shall I behold, built up of sods, the top of a cottage?' = 'shall I behold my cottage of sods built and roofed (*i.e.* at last finished and habitable)?'

Three stages are represented: (1) the settling down in a new country to become his home, (2) the finishing of a hut, (3) the first scanty cultivation. T. G. TUCKER.