NOTES • KORT BYDRAES

JUVENAL 2. 161


Although agreeing that such corruptions are possible, also that Courtney’s explanation ‘Because they cannot have any more’ is odd, I see no need to fiddle with the text. In saying that the Britons are content with their short nights, Juvenal does no more than refine a literary commonplace. Homer, Od. 10.83–5, suggests that the short northern nights are good for herdsmen since they enable them to earn a double wage; Strabo (2.75) similarly refers to the ‘eudaimonia’ of those who live in such climates.

For those who do not favour this interpretation, a more economical alternative to changing the text would be to take ‘contentos’ as coming from ‘contendo’ rather than ‘contineo’, with the Britons thereby understood to be exerted by their short nights which give them little sleep and so vigorous, a meaning that would suit Juvenal’s comparison here between the primitive virtues of savages and Roman effeminacy.

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HANGING BATHS

In her generally admirable article on Asclepiades of Bithynia, Elizabeth Rawson expresses uncertainty over the precise nature of ‘balneae pensiles’, also over how they were heated. Concern is indeed legitimate for, although not made explicit in her discussion, the two passages quoted from the elder Pliny suggest different functions. In HN 9.168, Sergius Orata is said to have invented them out of greed—they were a selling point in the villas he used to fit out and sell. At 26.16, Asclepiades is credited with the first use of such baths for therapeutic purposes. In his Loeb translation here, W.H.S. Jones translates ‘hot-air baths, heated from below,’ albeit the Latin reads simply ‘tum primum pensili balinearum usu ad infinitum blandiente’. Rackham understood Orata’s innovation to be a shower-bath.
However, although these details are worth drawing attention to, the real purpose of this note is to point out a passage in the sixth-century Byzantine bureaucrat and scholar, John Lydus. In De Mag. 2.21, whilst enlarging on the (to him) congenial topic of the depraved luxury of John the Cappadocian, Lydus upbraids him for ἐπὶ τοῦ ἄδρος κρεμάσας βαλανεῖν καὶ τὴν φῶς τῶν ὕδατων εἰς ὑπὸς ᾠδακτον ἀναφέτιν συνοδήσας. In his new edition and commentary, A.C. Bandy takes this to mean a bath on the roof. But the Greek more naturally suggests a hanging bath, and it was so interpreted in the earlier translation of T.F. Carney.

Lydus thus provides both an answer to Rawson’s questions and a salutary reminder of how Byzantine texts can serve to throw light on to classical ones.

NOTES

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A NOTE ON SENeca CONTROVERSIAE 1.1.16

Latro colorem simplicem pro *ādulescente* (introduxit): habere non quo excitset sed quo glorietur.

In the absence of a personal object *excuso* should take an accusative of the thing to be excused (*ThLL* 1303.14ff; *OLD* 1b). Hence Haase’s ‘quo *excuset* (se)’, adding the reflexive personal object se. If a personal object is expressed, or if the verb is passive, the thing for which excuse is sought may be given in a variety of ways, but only rarely the simple ablative, which is mainly reserved for duties or punishments from which one is excused, or the excuse (e.g. *ignorantia*, Sen. *Contr*. 10.5.19). Haase’s supplement in any case destroys the balance of the two phrases and gives a false emphasis.

I suggest ‘*habere nōn quōd ēxcsēt, sed quo glorietur*’, which avoids the troublesome ablative and gives good balance and emphasis as well as an elegant variety with the following *quo* (by which the error may have been caused).

NOTES
1. Text as in M. Winterbottom’s Loeb.
2. *ThLL* 1302.73ff gives a few exx. of *excuso* + ablative = ‘pardon (someone) for something’, but it is not the youth’s place to pardon himself.
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