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 βαλανέον καὶ τὴν φόσιν τῶν ὑδάτων εἰς ὕδως ἀπακτον ἀναφεύγειν συναθήσας. 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 ádulescente ( introduxit): habere non quo excuset 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 nón quód excúsét, 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.
3. I am grateful to Dr M. Winterbottom for his comments on this matter, and the HSRC for financial aid.

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TWO NOTES ON CALPURNIUS FLACCUS

(a) DECL. 9 (p.9.8–9 Häkanson)

*talis es, adulescens, ut excæcare volueris patrem, ut et excaecari velit mater.*

patrem, aut te excæcare velit pater codd. Lehnert

Häkanson writes (Eranos 70 (1972) 62), ‘It is obvious that *aut te . . . pater* must be corrupt’, and sets down Gronovius’ and Schulting’s conjectures, neither of which, as Häkanson says, is convincing. His own (see above) achieves acceptable sense: ‘You are such, young man, that you would blind your father just in order that your mother should want to be blinded too’ (Eranos p.63). In support of this reading Häkanson cites the beginning of the speech: *Invenit, iudices, pessimus adulescens, quomodo utrumque excaecaret parentem.*

Häkanson’s reading involves four changes, albeit each one palaeographically slight; is the problem such that this nexus of alterations is justified? Clearly it would not make sense for the father to say that the youth is so bad that either he wanted to blind his father or his father wants to blind him. It is the father’s claim (p.8.21–22) that the son did blind him, so that there can be no question of exclusive alternatives. But *aut* need not indicate that: it may replace a statement with a more satisfactory formulation, in other words shift the emphasis (s.v. OLD 6b (cf. 6a); LS IIc; ThLL is less helpful here, but s.v. 1564.77ff, 1565.29ff). I would suggest retaining the MSS reading, which I take to mean, ‘You are such, young man, that you wanted to blind your father – or rather that your father wants to blind you.’

This statement is a strong indication of the extremity of the father’s feelings, but it is entirely justified by the facts of the case: the son (it is alleged in the speech) blinded his father, who now petit talionem (see p.8.21–22). For the father to succeed in putting his desire for an eye for an eye to use in his case against the son would show very well the ingenuity prized in declamation.

The clausula is not as elegant as that of Häkanson’s conjectural text (not however unparalleled), but the awkwardness of a sequence *talis . . . ut . . . ut . . . in which the second *ut* bears a different sense from the first is avoided. *Ut* must, according to MSS, be understood in the second limb, but a parallel for this is provided in the same declamation (p.9.4–5). Both *patrem* and *pater* stress the enormity of the son’s badness, so that the placing of parts of the same word at the end of each limb of the *ut* sequence gives a very effective emphasis.2

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