

HORACE, TIBULLUS AND CASSIUS PARMENSIS

Abstract: Cassius Etruscus and Cassius Parmensis are the same person.

Key words: Horace, Tibullus, Cassius Parmensis, Cassius, Etruscus.

Resumen: Cassius Etruscus y Cassius Parmensis son la misma persona.

Palabras-clave: Horacio, Tibulo, Cassius Parmensis, Cassius Etruscus.

In her paper «On Horace and *Pedum*», followed by a brief *Appendix* added by me (all is being printed in *Orpheus*) Dr. Heather White has solved the problems seen by critics at Hor. *Ep.* I, 4, 1ss. The editors printed:

Albi, nostrorum sermonum candide iudex,
quid nunc te dicam facere in regione Pedana?
scribere quod Cassi Parmensis opuscula vincat,
an tacitum silvas inter reptare salubris,
curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est?

The said problems are well known. Why should Tibullus' wandering in a *locus amoenus*, in search of poetic inspiration, cause him to wish to produce poems intended to compete exclusively and explicitly with those of Cassius¹, instead of with those of the other elegists then living, who were Tibullus' rivals just as Cassius was?

Why should —pointedly and explicitly— the area where *Pedum* had existed, instead of any *locus amoenus*, inspire Tibullus to compete with Cassius? Villeneuve (in his Budé edition of Horace's Epistles, *ad loc.*) saw these two difficulties, which H.White has solved: Horace's reference to *Pedum* would be meaningless unless we accept her solution of the textual problem.

If we punctuate as Dr.White suggests, i.e.

quid nunc te dicam facere in regione? Pedana
scribere quod Cassi Parmensis opuscula vincat,
an tacitum silvas inter reptare salubris,
curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est?

¹ Marx's thesis, according to which Cassius was «a literary model» for Tibullus, as such to be admired and imitated by this latter, is ungrounded, as Flower Smith has shown (in his commentary on Tibullus, p. 38f.). There is no evidence that Tibullus was a republican, and, moreover, Cassius was a literary rival, not a political model, for Tibullus, who wanted to vanquish (*vincat*) Cassius

on the poetic battlefield. Cassius wrote hexameter poems and elegies, and evidently wrote either epic poems or elegies on the Pedan wars. Elegists like Ovid wrote hexameter poems (*Metamorphoses*) as well as elegies, and the elegist Tibullus may well have been imagined by Horace to wish to write either elegies or hexameter poems on the Pedan wars.

all the above mentioned problems disappear, as Dr. White has very lucidly explained. It must be added that H.White's explanation is not only valid from the point of view of logical sense: it is, *par dessus la marché*, confirmed by the *usus auctoris*, because Horace likes to use a word placed, in enjambement, at the end of the line and preceded by a question mark. The words

...in regione? Pedana /
... opuscula ...

are paralleled by *Sat.* 1, 10, 61 f.

...cenatus? Etrusci/
quale fuit...

by *Sat.* 1, 1, 78 f.

... hoc iuvat? horum/
... bonorum ...

and by *Sat.* 1, 6, 82 f.

...quid multa? pudicum/
qui primus virtutis honos servavit...

I should like now to clarify a crucial point concerning the identity of Cassius Parmensis. In Horace, *Sat.* 1, 10, 61 ff. we read

... Etrusci
quale fuit Cassi rapido ferventius amni
ingenium, capsis quem fama est esse librisque
ambustum propriis.

In this Satire, Horace refers to famous poets (Virgil, v. 45; Ennius, v. 54; Lucilius, v. 64; etc.): that he should include amongst them an otherwise unknown² person called Cassius Etruscus is manifestly absurd. For this logical reason alone, most critics have identified this Cassius Etruscus with the noted poet and politician Cassius Parmensis (on him cf. RE, s.v. *Cassius* 80), whom Horace mentions at *Epist.* I, 4, 1-7. Logic is fully vindicated by ancient evidence because the scholiast (cf. *infra*) identifies Cassius Etruscus with Cassius Parmensis.

Two objections were raised against the scholiast's identification: they are clearly expounded by Lejay, *loc.cit.*, who writes: a) «Parma est une ville de la Gaule Cisalpine, non de l'Étrurie» ; b) Cassius Parmensis «était encore en vie du temps de cette satire». Dr.White has elegantly refuted the first objection. The scholiast (cf. F.Pauly, *Scholia Horatiana*, vol. II, Prague 1861, p. 213) says,

² Cf. P. Lejay, in his commentary on Horace's Satires, *ad.loc.* «Nous ne savons ... rien de ce Cassius que ce que nous en dit Horace ici».

in *Serm.* I, 10, 60-61: «*Etrusci: Parmensis qui de Parma civitate fuit Etruriae... Cassium Etruscum Parmensem dicit*», and we now know that Parma is a town «*ubi Etrusci antiquitus sedem habuerunt*» (so Forcellini-Perin, *Onomasticon*, s.v. *Parma*, quoted by H. White). The scholiast uses the word *Etruriae* in the sense «*nova Etruria*» or «*Superior Etruria*» cf. Forcellini-Perin, *op.cit.*, s.v. *Etruria*; cf. also *Encicl. Ital.* s.v. *Parma*, p. 385, on «*Parma etrusca*», and s.v. *Etruschi*, p. 511, on the «*etruscità degli abitanti della Padana*»³, recorded by Livy and other ancient writers. Cassius Parmensis evidently boasted a long lineage, i.e. Etruscan ancestry, like Maecenas.

The second objection is ungrounded: Horace says «*fama est*», i.e. he reports («*Horace ne garantit point l'authenticité de l'anecdote qu'il rapporte... ici*»: Villeneuve, in his Budé edition of the Satires, *ad loc.*; cf. also Lejay, *op.cit.*, *ad loc.*) a rumour then current in Rome, to the effect that Cassius Parmensis had died and had been cremated, evidently far from Rome (on Cassius' dangerous military adventures in foreign parts cf. RE, s.v. *Cassius* 80, 1743, 19ff.): this rumour, which Horace guardedly reports as such («*fama est*») was later to prove ungrounded (on Cassius' death cf. RE, *loc.cit.*, 1743, 34ff.).

GIUSEPPE GIANGRANDE

³ Cf. also (*ibid.*) «*gli Etruschi ... dominatori della Padana*». Cf. moreover, the fundamental paper by J. Gorrochategui «*Los Alfabetos de Italia y el Alfabeto Latino*», especially pages 62 and 80 (in *La escritura y el Libro*

en la Antigüedad, edited by J. Bartolomé, M.C. González and M. Quijada, Madrid 2004). Much material in Forcellini-Perin, s. v. *Etrusci*, p. 560; cf. Livy 39, 55, 7 *in agro, qui Tuscorum fuerat*.