

Trimalchio himself.³² In this case the reference is both retrospective and proleptic, inviting us to recognize in Trimalchio's behavior a reflection of the preferential treatment he himself had received in his master's household (63. 3; cf. 76. 1) and to foresee for the young slave a successful career similar to that of his benefactor. This brings us full circle to the original basis of the allusion to Clesippus, the humble, even sordid, origins from which he rose to prosperity and social prominence. In Roman society no freedman could fully escape the stigma of his servile past: that reality lies at the heart of Petronius' portrait of an aspiring social climber, and that reality ultimately makes Trimalchio, like Clesippus, a pathetic as well as a comic figure.

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32. Well observed by R. Schievenin, "Trimalchione e il *puer non inspeciosus* (Petron. 75. 5)," *BSL* 6 (1976): 302. Note also 73. 6 "*hodie servus meus barbatoriam fecit*," introducing the banquet's "second act" (cf. Hubbard, "Narrative Architecture," p. 203).

AULUS GELLIUS AND THE PROPERTY QUALIFICATIONS OF THE *PROLETARII* AND THE *CAPITE CENSI*

In *Noctes Atticae* 16. 10. 10–13, Aulus Gellius explains the word *proletarii* and describes the place these citizens held in the political and military structure of republican Rome. The passage is unique, in that Gellius distinguishes between the terms *proletarii* and *capite censi*, which elsewhere refer to the same group, and specifies different property qualifications for each. Gellius' account has been accepted by some scholars.¹ Others have rejected it, entirely or in part, but have not explained where the error lies.² A close examination of the passage in question reveals that he, or his source, made a single simple error and then constructed an elaborate scheme to explain it.

The Roman census system was fundamental to the political and military organization of the Roman Republic.³ At regular intervals citizens were required to declare the value of their property to the censors. On the basis of these declarations the censors would assign each citizen to one of a large number of centuries, which served as the voting units in the *comitia centuriata*. Most of the centuries were in turn assigned to one of five property classes, each with its own minimum property qualification. Those whose centuries belonged in one of these classes were called *assidui* and were eligible for service in the legions. Below the fifth and lowest class there was a single century of *proletarii*, those with little or no property, who served in the army only in emergencies.

1. See T. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*³, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1888), p. 230; G. W. Botsford, *The Roman Assemblies* (New York, 1909), pp. 84–91; A. Rosenberg, *Untersuchungen zur römischen Zenturienverfassung* (Berlin, 1911), pp. 42–43.

2. See E. Gabba, *Esercito e società nella tarda repubblica romana* (Florence, 1973), p. 9; P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.–A.D. 14* (Oxford, 1971), p. 403, n. 3; M. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, vol. 2 (London, 1974), p. 625, n. 6.

3. The census is described in detail in G. Pieri, *L'histoire du cens jusqu'à la fin de la République romaine* (Paris, 1968).

The only complete accounts of these arrangements are found in Livy (1. 43. 1–10) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* 4. 16–17). Both specify the minimum qualifications for each of the census classes, Livy in *asses*, Dionysius in drachmas. With a conversion rate of 1 drachma = 1 *denarius* = 10 *asses*, there is only one discrepancy between them: Livy places the minimum property qualification for the fifth class at 11,000 *asses*, Dionysius at 12,500 (i.e., 1,250 dr.). Other authors give different sums for this important boundary: Polybius (6. 19. 3) places the lower limit for military service at 4,000 *asses* (i.e., 400 dr.);⁴ Cicero (*Rep.* 2. 22. 40) says that the minimum for the *assidui* was 1,500 *asses*. These differences suggest that the minimum property qualification for the fifth class—and thus, for military service—was lowered progressively during the second century B.C., probably in response to a shortage of men available for military service.⁵

The most puzzling passage encountered in the study of these matters is *Noctes Atticae* 16. 10. 10–13. While discussing the word *proletarii*, Gellius quotes the poet Julius Paulus, a contemporary with strong antiquarian interests.⁶ Paulus allegedly maintained that those who had reported to the censors property worth no more than 1,500 *asses* were called *proletarii*, whereas those having no more than 375 *asses* were called *capite censi*. From neither of these groups, he claimed, were men called up in normal circumstances, though the *proletarii* could be conscripted in an emergency; the *capite censi* never served.

This account is problematic in two respects. First, the distinction between *proletarii* and *capite censi* is found nowhere else and is contradicted by other authors. Cicero (*Rep.* 2. 22. 40) confirms that 1,500 *asses* was the lower limit for the *assidui* but virtually equates the terms *proletarii* and *capite censi*: “. . . eos, qui . . . omnino nihil in suum censum praeter caput attulissent, proletarios nominavit.” Festus (253 L.) is more explicit: for him, the *proletarii* and the *capite censi* are identical. Furthermore, there is the striking figure given for the *capite censi*, 375 *asses*, which seems to offer an excessive (and unparalleled) precision: ordinarily, assessments were based on estimates given in round numbers—in all other cases, multiples of 500.⁷ Perhaps, then, we should examine more closely the figure that Gellius gives and the context in which it stands.

The crucial portion of Gellius' account runs as follows (16. 10. 10): “‘qui in plebe’ inquit ‘Romana tenuissimi pauperrimique erant neque amplius quam mille quingentum aeris in censum deferebant, proletarii appellati sunt, qui vero nullo aut perquam parvo aere censebantur, capite censi vocabantur; extremus autem

4. For the relative value of the *denarius* and the drachma in Polybius, see R. Thomsen, “The Pay of the Roman Soldier and the Property Qualifications of the Servian Classes,” in *Classica et Mediaevalia Francisco Blatt Septuagenario Dedicata*, ed. O. S. Due, H. Friis Johansen, and B. Dalsgaard Larsen (Copenhagen, 1973), pp. 194–208.

5. See Gabba, *Esercito e società*, pp. 3–17; Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, pp. 403–4.

6. This Paulus appears on three other occasions in the *NA* (1. 22. 9, 5. 4. 1, 19. 7. 1) and is praised each time for his learning. E. Diehl, “Julius (no. 381),” *RE* 10 (1917): 690, speculated that this Julius Paulus is to be identified with the Paulus whom Charisius (*GL* 1. 143. 9, 217. 3, 241. 2) described as a commentator on Coelius Antipater and Afranius.

7. Livy (1. 43. 1–8) and Dion. Hal. (*Ant. Rom.* 4. 16–17) provide the figures for all five classes: (1) 100,000 *asses*; (2) 75,000 *asses*; (3) 50,000 *asses*; (4) 25,000 *asses*; and (5) 11,000 (Livy) or 12,500 (Dion. Hal.) *asses*. Pliny (*HN* 33. 13. 43) and Festus (100 L.) give 120,000 *asses* as the minimum for the first class. The different figures for the fifth class have been given in the text.

census capite censorum aeris fuit trecentis septuaginta quinque.’” In this passage, the monetary unit is indicated by *aeris*. In general, sums of money were expressed in terms of *asses* or *sestertii*; each *sestertius* originally contained two-and-a-half *asses* and later contained four, after its retariffing in the mid-second century B.C.⁸ The word *aes*, when used as a specific unit, is usually equivalent to *as*. When used more broadly it can refer to copper coinage or to money in general.

Now note the result if we understand the alleged property qualification of the *capite censi* not in terms of *asses* but in terms of *sestertii* worth 4 *asses* each: the amount, 375 *sestertii*, equals 1,500 *asses*—the same figure that Cicero and Gellius give as the upper limit for the property of a *proletarius*. Gellius (and presumably Paulus, if he was in fact Gellius’ informant) clearly thought that the first and second figures—1,500 and 375—were given in the same units, but an error would not have been difficult to make. Originally such limits were given in *asses*. If someone, writing after the *sestertius* was revalued, had recomputed 1,500 *asses* as 375 *sestertii* but had not clearly specified the unit, a reader easily could have assumed that *asses* were meant. It should be noted that Latin authors frequently do not express the monetary unit that they are using: see, for example, Livy 37. 58. 1 “centum milia multa irrogata est,” where a specific amount of money is mentioned, but the units, presumably *asses*, are not identified. A possible variant could involve the use of the word *aes* in the general sense “money,” as a sentence at *Noctes Atticae* 5. 2. 2 shows: “hoc autem aeris nostri summa est sestertia trecenta duodecim.” Here, a specific number of *sestertii* is placed in the general category of *aes*. If this sentence did not contain the word *sestertia*, the reader naturally would assume that *aeris* denotes the monetary unit, as it does at Livy 24. 11. 7 “qui . . . milibus aeris quinquaginta . . . census fuisset.”

If this surmise is correct, it explains the odd figure, but an additional problem remains. According to Gellius, Paulus held that the *proletarii*, although normally exempt, could be conscripted in times of danger, whereas the *capite censi* could not. This is unlikely. The rigid distinction between *assidui* and others certainly was not always maintained in practice. In emergencies, individuals who were not usually required to serve could be enrolled: for example, *proletarii* fought in the war against Pyrrhus (Oros. 4. 1. 3), and in the Second Punic War freedmen and even slaves could be found in the legions (Livy 22. 59. 12, 23. 14. 1–4). Gellius’ (or Paulus’) assertion that one group of citizens never could serve in the army is unique, and it is difficult to see how this distinction could have worked. The alleged difference between the property qualifications of the *proletarii* and the *capite censi* is slight—so slight that the two groups so defined probably could not have been easily distinguished outside the censors’ lists. In times of danger the magistrates responsible for an emergency levy would have had neither the inclination nor the opportunity to search these lists or to make such minute distinctions in wealth and status. They would have tried instead to raise the necessary manpower as quickly as possible.⁹ Gellius’ informant clearly was mistaken on this point.

8. See Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 2:612–15, 621–25.

9. For examples of emergency levies, see Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, pp. 629–30.

In making this fine distinction between the military responsibilities of the *proletarii* and those of the *capite censi*, Gellius and his informant clearly were influenced by the military nature of the census system. This same influence can be seen in the accounts of the census given by Livy (1. 43. 1–10) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* 4. 16–17). These authors explain the existence of each of the census classes by assigning to each slightly different arms and armor. The equipment they describe does not fit that of any historic period and is clearly the result of antiquarian speculation.¹⁰ If Gellius' informant mistakenly thought that the *proletarii* and the *capite censi* were two different bodies, he may have tried to explain the distinction in a similar manner, by giving to each its own military role. Since the *proletarii* could serve only in emergencies, the *capite censi*, thought to be their inferiors, must never have served.

The solution to the problem presented by this passage is now clear. Gellius or Julius Paulus or their source encountered an author who gave the property qualification of the *capite censi* in *sestertii* while not clearly specifying the unit. This reader also found a property qualification of 1,500 *asses* for the *proletarii* in another source. Thinking that two separate groups were involved, he justified their existence with a contrived military explanation.

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10. See R. M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy Books 1–5* (Oxford, 1965; repr. 1970), pp. 166–68.

AN UNPUBLISHED EMENDATION OF WILAMOWITZ ON *ANTHOLOGIA PALATINA* 7. 50. 3

In 1986 Mr. C. A. Stray (Swansea) discovered amongst the papers of W. H. D. Rouse (1863–1950) a postcard of Wilamowitz to W. R. Paton (1858–1921), canceled 17 January 1914 and addressed to “Monsieur W. R. Paton, Vathy, Samos, via Triest, Kais. österreich. Post.” Mr. Clive Rouse kindly allows me to publish the document, which is in his possession. I append my transcription:

Verehrter Freund

Der Palatinus der Anthologie ist photographirt, mit einer guten Praefatio bei Sijthoff in Leiden erschienen. Sie müssen fordern, daß Ihnen das Buch von Loeb zur Verfügung gestellt wird. Wenn Sie an die Emendation gehen, werden Sie freilich schwerlich jemals fertig werden.

VII 50, Archimelos [*sic*], ist ἐπίκροτος eine Änderung ohne Probabilität und nicht einmal ein erwünschtes Wort. In solchen Fällen kann nur palaeographische Evidenz die Überzeugung geben, das richtige gefunden zu haben. Ich habe an ἐπίρροπος = -ρεπής gedacht. Das würde passen; aber neue Wörter darf man auch nicht leicht erfinden.