Such allegations were easily made, and almost impossible to refute, especially at times of high excitement when the 'victim' was well known to be acutely disliked in some quarters or an awkward obstacle or threat. Again, there is no need to multiply examples *praeter necessitatem*: one thinks of the stories that Aemilianus was murdered – presumably by poison – at the height of his opposition to the Gracchan Land Commissioners in 129 B.C. (one version even implicated his wife, Tiberius Gracchus' sister Sempronia); and the corpses of Livia's alleged victims if laid end to end would reach pretty well from the Janiculum to the Aventine. Modern forensic science would almost always be able to determine the truth of such suspicions.[4] But the ancient world was backward in this field. There is not the slightest evidence that any individuals or individual were ever arraigned on the charge of having murdered Ephialtes. Why not, if there was even the slightest *prima facie* evidence that would stand up for five minutes in a court of law? Ephialtes did not lack eloquent friends – Pericles among them – or popular support. Those friends would presumably have wished to see his murderer(s) brought to justice, or at least have welcomed the chance to bring the enemies of reform into public disrepute.

There is no reason why Ephialtes should not have died of a heart-attack, or a cerebral occlusion, or suchlike. Most of us know of cases of sudden and quite unexpected death from such a cause. Certainly, we must allow that the mere fact that stories that he was murdered were put about and remembered, even if they could not be substantiated, attests that they could seem plausible, and underlines the heightened passions of the time and the magnitude of the issues which were felt to be at stake. But, following Mark Twain's advice, I would not myself want to hang a little yellow dog on that sort of evidence.

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[4] Not invariably. Some years ago, the Home Office pathologist, Dr Francis Camps, told me that he had had to conduct one of his earliest post-mortems in a small shed attached to a village police station. When he had finished his dissecting and turned to gather up his specimens, he found that they had all been eaten by a mangy stray dog which had quietly slipped in from the next shed by an unlatched door. He reported this in some embarrassment to his then chief, the great Sir Bernard Spilsbury, who simply said: 'Ah, yes – should have warned you about that. Happened to me once. Never mind, keep a sharp eye on the dog.'

ROBORTELLO'S 'CONJECTURE' AT AESCHYLUS, *SUPPLICES* 337

At *Supplices* 337, as part of the increasingly tense stichomythic testing between the Danaids and Pelasgus, the Danaids utter an emotional question, which reads in all the MSS, that is M and the apographa Ma, Mb, Mc, Me, Md(E):[1]

τίς δ'ἂν φίλους ὤνοιτο τοὺς κεκτημένους

τὶς Me cφίλους Mb

The whole verse has exercised editors and commentators, the variously attempted readings filling eight lines in Wecklein's *Appendix* and another three in Dawe's *Repertory*. But the main issue has been that of the verb. Here, while a few commentators,

[1] None of the MSS assigns the verse; there is almost complete modern consensus that it should go to the Danaids (or their leader), but Wilamowitz gives it to Pelasgus.

such as Rose, have preferred Casaubon's οἴοιτο,[2] the prevailing choice has been between ὠνοῖτο and ὄνοιτο. Hermann, Weil, Tucker, Wecklein, Mazon, Smyth, and Untersteiner all read ὠνοῖτο, with the verse then meaning something like Smyth's 'Who would purchase their lords from among their kin?' The reading occurs first in Turnebus' edition of 1552. ὄνοιτο, on the other hand, is the selection of Paley, Sidgwick, Wilamowitz, Vürtheim, Murray, Friis Johansen, and Page, with the meaning then becoming, with Paley, 'Why, who would object to masters if they were friends?' or, with Friis Johansen (who also accepts Marckscheffel's participial φιλοῦc'), 'What woman, I ask, would criticize her lord if she loved him?'

My purpose in this note is not to explore the relative merits of ὠνοῖτο and ὄνοιτο beyond stating that, like Friis Johansen and others, I believe Aeschylus wrote φιλοῦc' ὄνοιτο, but rather to pinpoint the origin of ὄνοιτο. Some apparatuses in effect give no origin. Murray's (in both the 1937 and 1955 eds.) will illustrate: ὤνοιτο *MΣ: volebant* ὄνοιτο, *ut accentus docet*.[3] It is hard, however, to be convinced that the accent in M's text and scholium leads more strongly to ὄνοιτο than the lettering does to ὠνοῖτο. Thus, a more specific source for ὄνοιτο should be sought, and indeed many apparatuses supply one, namely Robortello. Page in the new OCT is typical: ὄνοιτο Robortello: ὤνοιτο M *et* M^{Σ}.

Yet there are difficulties with this apparently straightforward solution. The first arises when one turns to Robortello's edition of Aeschylus, also published in 1552 but some months earlier than Turnebus's (and in Venice, while Turnebus's was published in Paris), and finds Robortello's text reading at *Supplices* 337: τίc δ' ἂν φίλουc ὤνοιτο τοὺc κεκτημένουc, i.e. exactly the same reading as in the MSS. But Robortello's edition starts with an extensive *praefatio*, one section of which is a list of conjectures made either by Robortello himself or by Michael Sophianus, a young and learned friend with whom he discussed his edition. At the very bottom of the first of three pages of entries (thirty-six in all) for the *Supplices*, the following reading of line 337 occurs: Rob. [i.e., this entry derives from Robortello; entries deriving from Sophianus begin with 'Soph.'] τίc δ' ἂν φίλουc ὄνοιτο τοὺc κεκτημένουc. The source of ὄνοιτο once again seems plain: Robortello has made a sound conjecture in his prefatory list of *coniecturae nonnullae*, a conjecture accepted by many recent editors, although for whatever reasons he himself has not carried it forward into his actual text.

This reconstruction, however, is also deficient. The list in Robortello's *praefatio* regularly takes the form of two columns, in the first of which Robortello gives what he calls *scriptura vetus*, i.e. the reading of his own source(s), while in the second column he gives his *emendatio*. But in some cases, four altogether for the *Supplices*, Robortello gives only the *scriptura vetus*, followed not by an *emendatio* but simply by a comment on the *scriptura vetus*. The entry for line 337 falls into this latter category. There is no second column containing a conjecture; Robortello's reading is followed just by a comment, the contents of which I withhold for a moment. In other words, Robortello's ὄνοιτο must *not* be thought of as his own conjecture but rather as his reproduction of the reading in his source(s), his *scriptura vetus*. The source(s) for Robortello's text of the *Supplices* have been unknown and the subject of some dispute in the past, but it can now be stated firmly that his principal source was Ma (S. Marco

[2] Until the work of H. Friis Johansen (*Aeschylus, The Suppliants*, vol. I (Copenhagen, 1970), pp. 40–1), Stanley was credited with the conjecture.

[3] The reference to the scholia, when pursued, leads only to a marginal scholium in M which reads: κατ' ἔχθραν δῆλονότι [accents thus] · τίc γὰρ τοὺc ἄνδραc δεcπότας ὤνοιτο; all the apographa of M containing scholia (Ma, Mb, Mc, Md(E), Mg, Mi, Mj, Ml) also read ὤνοιτο (Mb miscopies M as ὤνοιτοι).

222) and that he used as a secondary source the Aldine edn (1518).[4] Yet we have already seen that Ma, an apograph of M, follows M in reading ὤνοιτο, and the Aldine edn also turns out to read ὤνοιτο, following *its* own direct source, another of M's apographs, Mc (Guelf. 88).

There thus seem to be roadblocks on all sides. Robortello's prefatory list gives what looks like a solid conjecture, ὄνοιτο. But it is not printed in his actual text; it is entered in the *praefatio* in the format that categorizes it not as an *emendatio* but as a reproduction of Robortello's *scriptura vetus*; and each of Robortello's two sources reads ὤνοιτο, as indeed does the whole scanty manuscript tradition.

But what of Robortello's comment, referred to above, on his *scriptura vetus*? In fact, this is where resolution of the problem lies, in astonishingly accessible form, and it is both instructive and sad to realize that scholars apparently have, quite literally, not seen the solution because to do so involves turning Robortello's page, in order to move from the *scriptura vetus* of line 337, which, as mentioned, is at page bottom, to Robortello's comment on that reading at the top of his next page overleaf. When we execute this bold manœuvre, we see the following entry:

> Nota morem emendi sponsos. de quo Vergilius etiam libro 1. Georg. cum ait.
> Teque sibi generum Tethys emat omnibus undis. [Georg. 1. 31]

emendi sponsos and *emat* make Robortello's intentions clear instantly. He has ὤνοιτο in front of him in his two sources, understands it as ὠνοῖτο (that is, he is unaware of the mistake in accent), accepts it unquestioningly, prints it in his text, and also thinks the expression of 'buying husbands' striking enough to merit reproduction and comment, including a Vergilian parallel, in his prefatory list. But, at some point in the sequence, whether by Robortello's own hand or in the printing process, ὤνοιτο is *miscopied* as ὄνοιτο, and a (probably) true Aeschylean reading is recovered and printed, totally by accident.

ὄνοιτο does first appear in Robortello, and the many *app.* which ascribe the reading to him are in the end largely correct to do so, but not, as the editors have assumed, because Robortello printed a deliberate conjecture. Thus, to be completely accurate, the ascription should credit the *edition* of Robortello, not Robortello himself. A similar instance of an even more certain Aeschylean reading being recovered entirely through accidental miscopying in an early edition occurs at *Supplices* 1055, with Stephanus the unwitting beneficiary.[5] Both passages attest the varied and sometimes fortuitous ways in which sixteenth-century editors and editions handled and improved their sources. Wherever luck played a part, it is necessary to recognize its presence and be grateful.[6]

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[4] 'The Sources of Robortello's Edition of Aeschylus' *Supplices*', *BICS* 28 (1981) 79–102.

[5] 'A Problem of Attribution at Aeschylus *Supplices* 1055: Stephanus' Source', *Arktouros. Hellenic Studies presented to Bernard M. W. Knox* (Berlin and New York, 1979) pp. 109–14.

[6] I wish to thank K. R. Bradley and E. Courtney for suggesting improvements to a draft of this paper.