

TOLMIROS SKAPANEAS
HOMENAJE AL PROFESOR
KOSTAS A. DIMADIS

ΤΟΛΜΗΡΟΣ ΣΚΑΠΑΝΕΑΣ
ΑΦΙΕΡΩΜΑ ΣΤΟΝ ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΗ
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On the Shoulders of Giants: Appraising the Criterion of *divinatio* in the cases of Adamance Coray and A. E. Housman

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Introduction

The careful reader has no difficulty in detecting and thus recognizing the attested in the critical apparatus readings which proceed from attempts of great scholars. In order to elucidate or even make such an attempt intelligible, one may undertake a lifetime effort to an aptitude for perceiving the matter in question. This should be carried out to balance probabilities arising out from the weighing of the regarded infallibility of the manuscript tradition or from the appraising of the act of conjectural emendation. But in extreme cases of a wrongly transmitted passage the conjectural critic may have to incur censure in the way of *divinatio* upon the «improbable» text. If *divinatio* is cultivated as a conscious theory of constantly restoring the text to its original form (coinciding with the author's volition or stylistic preferences), then the conjectural critic could postulate his ambitions as general principles emerging from the varying optimism about the unlimited power of the human mind's rationalism: behold the conceiving frame of Richard Bentley's characteristic dictum «Nobis & ratio & res ipsa centum codicibus potiores sunt»¹. Since Bentley's era, when *divinatio*² in the terms of the divining faculty of conjecture was legislated as the honourable criterion by which we should distinguish the eminent among critic scholars, and

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till modern times we cannot but resort to J. Willis' remark on the notion of *divinatio*: «a grand word for 'conjecture', as 'conjecture' for 'guess'» (Willis 1972, 228).

In this paper I aspire to set a few considerations towards the marking that Adamance Coray as well as A. E. Housman are decedants from the famous Dutch philological school of Jean Le Clerc or Clericus (1657-1736), Tiberius or Tjebbe Hemstherhuys (1685-1766), Lodewijk Kaspar Valckenaer (1715-1785) and David Ruhnken (1723-1798) and from the foster English one of Richard Bentley (1662-1742), Richard Dawes (1709-1766), Jonathan Toup (1713-1785), Thomas Tyrwhitt (1730-1786) and Richard Porson (1759-1808)³, in the 18th century whereby substantial changes culminated in the study of antiquity⁴. According to W. Freund's handbook this so-called «englisch-niederländische Periode», the third period in the History of Classical Scholarship –beginning in the end of the 17th cent. with the *Epistola ad Ioannem Millium* (1691) by Bentley⁵, a typical example of a synthetic approach to the classical subject⁶, and ending with F. A. Wolf's (1759-1824) *Halle'sche Lehrthätigkeit* (1783)⁷, who, apart from already knowing that his *Prolegomena* did actually constitute an idionymous penetration in a Dutch region⁸, had many reasons to praise the supremacy of Ruhnkenius as *princeps criticorum*⁹, and has been the first philologist to introduce *recensio* (not a mere *recognitio*) as an innovative verifying method which could

¹ On Bentley's dictum see Kenney 1974, 71-74; also Maehly 1868, 56-57 and Pfeiffer 1976, 153-154.

² Those interested in the history of this notion should consult Schaefer 1977.

³ See Freund 1879, 57-77; Reinach 1883, 10-13; Thereianos 1889, 102-105; Urlichs 1892, 76-103; Drerup 1930, 25-31; Schouten 1964, *passim* (e.g. 38-41, 519 for the 'Schola Hemsterhusiana'); Kenney 1966 and 1974, 114-117; Jensen 1981, 145, 152-153; Muhlack 1985, 108; Vogt 1997, 123-124; Kalospyros 2006a, 431-443 and mainly Müller 1869, *passim*. Grafton 1991, 11 implies that in many handbooks on the History of Classical Scholarship there is a certain system of periods referring to a dominating national name of philological schools.

⁴ See Benz 1945.

⁵ See the commentated edition by Goold 1962; cf. Wilamowitz 1998, 35-37; Hentschke & Muhlack 1972, 63; Pfeiffer 1976, 149-150.

⁶ See Goold 1963, 287-290 and Pfeiffer 1976, 143-158.

⁷ See Freund 1879, 57; Goold 1963, [5]; Pfeiffer 1976, 173-177 and Grafton 1991, 12-21.

⁸ F. A. Wolf dedicated his study 'Davidi Ruhnkenio principi criticorum' (Grafton 1991, 230). See also Kenney 1974, 97-98.

⁹ Sicking 1998, 243.

draw sound conclusions¹⁰–, has been also called κριτική¹¹ due to the henceforth identical usage of the terms κριτικός and φιλόλογος. The next «German period/school» is characterized by the universalism and the hermeneutical encyclopaedism of *Altertumswissenschaft*¹² and by the main focusing on Lachmann's imperatives which banished textual criticism from its throne to a single instrument in the course of classical scholarship¹³; even the systematization in exercising *emendatio*¹⁴ (owing to this «German school») should be regarded as the continuous itinerary due to the contribution of the great figures in the English-Dutch school¹⁵.

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The notion and importance of *divinatio*

P. Collomp rightly stated that to draw an emendation is an «affaire de talent», to justify it an «affaire de science»¹⁶. Although to the editor's benefit modesty must accompany every talented scholar¹⁷, as well as the conviction that despite of being unfortunate an emendation could offer the opportunity of leading to a better one, a critical edition is sometimes bound to be judged by the acumen ascribed to the editor's *divinatio*, i.e. the *par excellence* stage towards the rectification of the error:

Finally, in the third category, of editorial method, the eclectic *divinatio*, or 'divining' of the truth of a reading through an in-

¹⁰ See Flashar 1979; Bolter 1980; Funke 1990 and Hentschke 1998. Nietzsche considered the date of the 8th of April 1777, when Wolf adopted for himself the title *stud. philol.*, the birthday of classical philology: on Nietzsche and Wolf see Riedel 1996, 119 n. 1.

¹¹ See Reinach 1883, 10. Müller 1869, 97 called 'critical' the school of Ruhnken and Valckenaer.

¹² See Freund 1879, 77 sqq.; Hentschke & Muhlack 1972, 65 sqq. (who insist on a Germanocentric view, neglecting the contribution of English and Dutch scholars –except from Scaliger, Vico and Bentley); Latacz 1995 and Lossau 1996. Then the crossing of classical philological and historical sciences was intensified (: Muhlack 1979).

¹³ So Unte 1990, 256.

¹⁴ See Birt 1913, 124-163 ('Die emendatio des als grundlegend erkannten Textes').

¹⁵ The reaction to Lachmann's method arose mainly in Holland and England (Grafton 1977, 172); in the end of the 19th cent. classical scholarship fully adopted the targeting of the exact sciences: see Hentschke & Muhlack 1972, 63-65 and 66-80, and Busche 1997, 4. On Lachmann's 'strenghistorische' method see Ziegler 2000.

¹⁶ Cf. Kenney 1974, 129.

¹⁷ According to Coray 1800, clxvi.

spired self-identification with one's author (a method associated both with consciously belletristic editing and perhaps unexpectedly with the technically more rigorous system of genealogy) had to confront the new emphasis on bibliography as part of the history of technology. (Greetham 1994, 315)

We must not ignore that Paul Maas believed that a wrong emendation should be preferable compared to the ignorance of a problematic passage and the failure to underline such erroneous readings obtruded upon the text¹⁸. Along with the effort to acknowledge the possible effectiveness through *recensio* as stated by Lachmann, the necessity of emendation emerges, because a conservative adherence to the data of the *codex optimus* may entail the reckless entertainment of embracing folly, to the warning by R. R. Bolgar (1979, 95). In other words, *divinatio* forms part of a tradition set up by Renaissance, whereby the combination of imagination and critical thought conducted to the revealing of classical spirit¹⁹. So Cobet in his *Observationes criticae et palaeographicae in Dionysii Halicarnassensis Antiquitates Romanas* (1877) by neglecting the *stemma codicum* suggested by Ritschl²⁰, insisted doctrinally on the principle of restoring the genuine text *sive ex antiquis membranis sive ex ingenio*, by which Scaliger and Ruhnken modulated their method²¹.

Whether difficult or simple, the theoretical formula for the handling of the problem 'archetype and original' is easily given: if the wording of the reconstituted archetype is unobjectionable, it is accepted as original; if not, *divinatio* strives to recover it by conjecture. (Zuntz 1955, 296)

Divinatio as criterion in the case of Adamance Coray

Coray (1964, epist. 36 [15.8.1790], 131) in a letter addressed to his friend Dem. Lotos confessed that

τὸ νὰ διορθῶνῃ τις τὰ κακῶς γεγραμμένα καὶ νὰ ἐξηγῇ τὰ δυσνόητα εἰς τὰ βιβλία τῶν παλαιῶν συγγραφέων, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν Ἑλλήνων, ὀνομάζεται κριτικὴ ἐπιστήμη [to

¹⁸ See Lloyd-Jones 1982, 217 (on Paul Maas).

¹⁹ See Grafton 1991, 103.

²⁰ See Kenney 1974, 117-123.

²¹ See Janssen 1990, 19.

correct the erroneously written and to explain the obscure passages in the books of the ancient authors, especially of the Greeks, is called critical science];

being an advocate of Bentley's teaching he used to be cautious against the transmitted text. Of course, he was aware of the dangers resulting from a *divinatio* without considering the examination of the manuscripts. He wrote to Chardon de la Rochette: «Les passages, mon cher ami, sur lesquels vous avez bien voulu me consulter, paroissent si embrouillés pour la plupart, que je n'aurois pas osé vous communiquer mon avis, si je ne savois par expérience que les conjectures les moins fondées peuvent quelquefois donner lieu à en faire de meilleures» (Coray 1964, epist. 75 [after 6.7.1792], 260). The majority of his *Observationes Miscellaneae* (from the Chios ms. 490)²² refer to the correction of passages through consulting the respective manuscript tradition; to that aspect he kept pace with the view of textual criticism as historical study, a perception which amounts to Poliziano's philological injunction²³. But it wasn't a binding term for exercising his *divinatio*; for instance, commenting upon Pindar's *Pyth.* 1, 26 he wrote: «§ XIII Pyth. 1. Str. 2.τέρας μὲν θαυμάσιον προσιδέσ- / θαι, θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παριόν- / των ἀκούσσαι. Si parmi Dix mille manuscripts il n'y avoit qu'un seul qui lut παρ' ἰδόντων, je ne balaiverois par un seul moment d'adopter cette dernière leçon» (*Obs. Misc.* 6. 35)²⁴.

The Corayan *divinatio* seems a spontaneous and unforced product of experience in classical literature. «Τῆς κριτικῆς τὸ ἔργον εἶναι πολ- λάκις, ἢ μᾶλλον πλεονάκις τύχης δώρημα παρὰ λογισμοῦ γέν- νημα» [«The act of criticism is in many cases, and rather mostly, a present of fortune than a product of thought»] is Coray's (1979, epist. 697 [10.7.1816], 481) reiterating opinion. He regarded his travel to Holland, where he learned the right method to divine, a benefaction from above²⁵. This kind of *divinatio* may prove sometimes reckless and Coray (1815, πβ') recognized this impending fear without pretences:

Ἀλλὰ δὲν εἶμαι πρῶτος τῶν τοιούτων τολμητής· τολμηρότε-
ρον ἴσως κάποτε μ' ἔκαμεν ἢ ἀγανάκτησις νὰ βλέπω συγ-

²² On the catalogue of these "Miscellaneous Observations" by Coray see Kalospyros 2006b.

²³ See Grafton 1991, 57-58.

²⁴ Cf. Kalospyros 2006a, 414.

²⁵ See Coray 1964, epist. 22 [11.7.1786], 65.

γραφεῖς Ἕλληνας ἀσχημισμένους μὲ πολλὰς λόγου ἀμαρτίας, δι' ὅχι ἄλλο, πλὴν διὰ τὸν ὅποιον ἔχουσι τινὲς δεισιδαίμονα σεβασμὸν τοῦ κειμένου. [«But I am not the first daring one with them; sometimes my indignation to observe Greek authors disfigured by many errors in phrasing turned me more daring, if not for anything else but for the superstitious veneration some people hold towards the text].

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Here the adverb «κάποτε» indicates the depending-on-the-case estimation, a fast rule in every scholarly study, even in the modern consideration of an «open» or «closed» recension²⁶. In 1809, whilst editing the *Vitae Parallelae* of Plutarch, he noted down that he advanced more easily to the act of emendation while getting older («ὅσον προβαίνω εἰς τὴν ἡλικίαν, γίνομαι ἴσως τολμηρότερος» Coray 1833, 379). To paraphrase the title of a sub-chapter by J. Delz (1997, 59-70), in Coray's case *examinatio* is presented relatively, since it is confined in the rough to him data, but *emendatio* is presented absolutely, in an enterprising function. For F. Blass' *Konjunkturalkritik* the critic scholar settles himself in author's position, and then no rules can be given and, in the same time, the unique target of a critic scholar is reinforced by the degree of being acquainted with and having fully understood (*sich assimilieren-allseitig verstehen*) the ancient author's style (see Blass 1892, 287). By observing Coray's conjectures such as the following in Sophocles' «Oedip. Col. 610. Φθίνει μὲν ἰσχὺς γῆς, φθίνει δὲ σῶματος· malim legere, ut legere jubet sequens σῶματος: Φθίνει μὲν ἴς ψυχῆς etc. Ab is est ἴφθιμος unde ἴφθιμους ψυχὰς dixit Homerus Il. A. 3» (*Obs. Misc.* 7. 1), we must notice that in Coray's time the science of textual criticism didn't cause its servants those feelings of awe in front of the manuscript tradition, which B. Axelson (1967, 58) liked to describe by means of psychoanalytic terms as «Handschriftenfetischismus» or «Korrupptelenkult», so as to let any common critic to treat with suspicion the adventures of textual criticism's correctional paths. According to Coray (1833, 291-292),

κάνένα κριτικὸν δὲν λανθάνει, εἰς ποίαν ἀθλίαν κατάστασιν εὐρίσκονται τῶν σωζομένων ἀντιγράφων τὰ περισσότερα δὲν λανθάνει κάνένα, ὅτι αἱ ἐκδόσεις δὲν τελειοῦνται πλὴν μὲ τὴν πρόοδον τοῦ χρόνου, ἀφοῦ ἀπὸ πολλοὺς πολλὰ τοιαῦτα παραβαλθῶσι, καὶ ἀνακαλυφθῶσι τέλος

²⁶ See Alberti 1968, 60.

πάντων αἱ γνήσιαι γραφαί. Συμβαίνει καμμίαν φοράν νὰ συντημηθῇ ὁ ἀναγκαῖος εἰς τοῦτο χρόνος ἀπὸ τὴν εὐφυΐαν τοῦ ἐκδότου, ὅστις μαντεύει καὶ τὰς ἐννοίας καὶ τὰς λέξεις τοῦ συγγραφέως, καὶ χωρὶς τῶν ἀντιγράφων τὴν βοήθειαν· ἀλλ' οἱ τοιοῦτοι μάντεις δὲν εἶναι πολλοί. Ἐκεῖνοι μόνοι οἱ ἐκδῶται εἶναι ἄξιοι νὰ κρίνωνται αὐστηρά, ὅσοι, ἀνάξιοι αὐτοὶ νὰ κινήσωσι τὴν κριτικὴν ἔρευναν τῆς ἐκδόσεως βῆμα μόνον ἐν ἀπ' ὅπου τὴν εὐρηκαν παρέκει, οὐδὲ νὰ ὠφεληθῶσιν ἀπὸ τῶν προγενεστέρων τοὺς κόπους εἶναι καλοί. [None critic overlooks the fact of the wretched situation, in which most of the preserved manuscripts are found; it does not elude anybody that editions cannot attain perfection unless in the course of time, after a lot of that kind are collated by many and are, at last, the genuine readings revealed. Sometimes it happens that the time necessary for such an enterprise is abridged through the editor's intelligence, who divines both the meanings and the words of the author, even without the assistance of the manuscripts (copies); but there are not many of these diviners. Only the editors who are neither capable of advancing critical research to a single step forward from the status they have come across nor of availing themselves of their predecessors' labours, deserve to be severely criticized.]

Coray indirectly opines that the illuminous critics are much more to admire than to imitate.

Divinatio as criterion in the case of A. E. Housman

Coray's case should be studied as that of a great critical scholar standing in the orbit of other famous European philologists and scholars, such as Villoison, Brunck, Schweighauser, F. A. Wolf, Wyttenbach, and Porson; Coray deserves a more distinguished place in the so-called «Dutch-English school» of scholarship than existing studies allow him. This orbit of talented critics who sealed European classical scholarship apparently claims its eminent position in A. E. Housman's essay «The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism» (Housman 1922)²⁷, since to him textual criticism is a matter of common sense²⁸, a tactic of personal habit and ingenious deve-

²⁷ Cf. Ham 1958-59, Kenney 1974, 128-129 and Fiesoli 2000, 382-384.

²⁸ See A. Hudson-Williams 1956.

loping of a concrete reading (Housman 1922, 68, 78 and *passim*). The logic discussion and the philological instinct (superscientific and superrealistic for not being acquired) are two basic requirements to understand not only Coray's but also Housman's formation of conjectures²⁹. For example, when we notice Housman's (1932, 14; also v) decision to adopt in the text of his edition of Manilius' *Astronomicon* I 423 his own conjecture *eguit love* (1903) instead of *esurcione* (Matritensis M 31 15th cent.) and *dubitavit* (Gemblacensis, Bruxelensis 10012 and Lipsiensis 1465, both of the 11th cent.), it is expected to consider Housman as a continuator of the tradition of the English-Dutch philological school³⁰ on account of i) his almost exclusive occupation with textual criticism, and ii) his known views about the nature of critic activity. It is noteworthy that his versification is entirely placed in the 19th cent., even in his romantic dogmatism, while his scholarly research continues the tradition of the 18th century and concentrates almost exclusively on textual criticism³¹. In other cases he wrote that

Here we pass from recension to emendation; and that is a thing which encounters much ill will. Any attempt to demonstrate and correct an error is likely to evoke the irrelevant proposition that the text of Lucan is good. [...] Emendators should thank their stars that they have the multitude against them and must address the judicious few, and that moral integrity and intellectual vigilance are for them not merely duties but necessities. (Housman 1950, xxvi-xxvii)

and that

I have placed in the text not only conjectures which I think certain, such as *ferendis* at VI 195, but also others, such as *ac similis* at XIV 269, which I think doubtful. This I do to arrest attention and challenge opposition. What is important is not that I should correct and explain Juvenal but that Juvenal should be corrected and explained: if the text is right, and I have missed the sense, let others trace it; if the text is wrong, and I have failed to right it, let others try. The conjecture of which I expect to hear most evil is *ramitis* at XI 168. That conjecture will entice its adversaries to do what they have never done before, to read the passage

²⁹ Cf. also Shackleton 1964; Luck 1981, 167-170 and Nisbet 1991.

³⁰ See Flores 1979.

³¹ See Lloyd-Jones 1982, 184-187; Page 1983 and Naiditch 1990.

with attention. If they can then attempt a defence of *diuitis*, let them attempt it by all means: if it succeeds, I shall claim half the credit. (Housman 1956, xxx).

In his review of H. E. Butler's *Sexti Propertii Opera Omnia* he noticed: «Mr Butler seems to share with the majority of conservative critics one of their favourite fancies, –that the chief merit of an emendation is closeness to the MSS, and that conjectures are probable in inverse proportion to the number of letters which they alter. Hence it naturally happens that he adopts some very bad conjectures» (Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. II, 635). Housman had criticized Ellis' superficiality to discern between possible and probable as well as between probable and veritable concerning the judgment about the merits of a manuscript³², which means that in constructing a valid opinion there must be an *emendatio* within the confines of philological assessment, reliable and logically competent. In reviewing R. Ellis' edition of *Catulli Carmina* he remarks:

Levity in conjecture and a haphazard treatment of evidence are the two chief faults of Mr Ellis's edition (Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. II, 626). It has often enough been said, most pungently and frequently by Housman, that no method or rule of criticism is anything but a codification of common sense, and of common sense no age or country has a monopoly. (Kenney 1974, 101-102)

Stepping on the same logical path Lachmann respected only two intellectual conditions: knowledge and ignorance (or: right and wrong)³³. Trying to weigh the probability of alternative solutions approaching a question from more sides than one Housman (Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. I, 61-62) wonders in the strophic verse of Aeschylus' *Agam.* 110 ξύμφρονα τὰν γᾶν:

How are we to amend τὰν γᾶν? Blomfield writes ταγόν, Hermann τάγαν: I am bound to suppose that these scholars attached some meaning to the phrase *a unanimous captain*, but what that meaning may have been I cannot divine. [...] The correction which is instantly suggested by the requirements of the sense is as old as the earliest apographs of the Medicean: ταγάν.

³² See Naiditch 1988, 50.

³³ See Kenney 1974, 107-109.

Avoiding haphazard alterations of readings into conjectures which produce a molested text, he assures the reader that «error as error provokes no dislike; it only becomes unwelcome when it takes the form of conjecture. Still, truisms, and even the pleasant halves of truisms, have at any rate the merit of being true» (Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. II, 765). Above all Housman respects formal philological logic: «One of the causes why any proposal to correct a verse or sentence alarms and distresses the natural man is that it makes an unusual demand upon his intellect and entails the weary work of reading and considering the context» (Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. III, 969).

The critic editor resembles the poet, since he is in the service of textual criticism's Muse *Ἐνστοχία*,³⁴ even if somebody could blame R. G. M. Nisbet's essay (see Nisbet 1991, 68 and Bieler 1958, 39-40) for British empiricism.

The rules of criticism are a very inadequate outfit for the practice of emendation, which is mainly an affair of natural aptitude and partly even of mere luck; but problems will now and then present themselves which the rules of criticism, with no aid from genius or fortune, are competent to solve. (Housman in Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. II, 928)

According to Housman, critics are not to be regarded as mere practitioners of literature but as inspired and laboriously tutored scholars who get used to experiencing poetical mind; by assimilating critics «to poets rather than to students of literature successfully denied his profession any assumption of literary responsibilities as opposed to philological duties» (Sullivan 1962, 122). Still we must mention that Housman believed that Bentley had a prosy and not a poetical mind³⁵. In reviewing T. G. Tucker's edition of *The Supplices* he didn't hesitate to observe that «this edition gives proof of many virtues: common sense, alert perception, lucidity of thought, impatience of absurdity, a rational distrust of MS tradition, and a masculine taste in things poetical» (Housman in Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. I, 120). We have to agree with M. Landfester (1979, 163) that for Wilamowitz method was of heuristic value³⁶ and to renew our loyalty to J. Bédier's observation that in textual criticism our ex-

³⁴ See Kenney 1974, 147 and Nisbet 1991, 91. On Housman's character-paradox concerning the sensitive poet and the rigid scholar see Bolgar 1979, 102-103.

³⁵ See Getty 1962, 34 and n. 3.

³⁶ Cf. Kenney 1974, 150-151 and Calder 1975, 452. See also Postgate 1907-08, 162-163 on 'critic's paradox'.

perience in perceiving as methodological practice is the prevailing factor³⁷; «I am accustomed to reach conclusions by reasoning and to commend them by argument» wrote Housman (Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. III, 964). In his brilliant essay «The Application of Thought to textual Criticism» (1922; Housman in Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. III, 1058-69) we read among his scintillating conclusions that

Textual criticism therefore is neither mystery nor mathematics: it cannot be learnt either like the catechism or like the multiplication table. This science and this art require more in the learner than a simply receptive mind; and indeed the truth is that they cannot be taught at all: *criticus nascitur, non fit*. [...] Progress there has been, but where? In superior intellects: the rabble do not share it. Such a man as Scaliger, living in our time, would be a better critic than Scaliger was; but we shall not be better critics than Scaliger by the simple act of living in our own time. Textual criticism, like most other sciences, is an aristocratic affair, not communicable to all men, not to most men. Not to be a textual critic is no reproach to anyone, unless he pretends to be what he is not. To *be* a textual critic requires aptitude for thinking and willingness to think; and though it also requires other things, those things are supplements and cannot be substitutes. Knowledge is good, method is good, but one thing beyond all others is necessary; and that is to have a head, not a pumpkin, on your shoulders, and brains, not pudding, in your head. (Housman in Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. III, 1059, 1069).

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Housman disrelished editorial choices if the editor was assailed by temptation for mechanical conjectures, for textual criticism requires a measure of intuition:

The worst that I can find to say of Dr Pearson's conjectures is that they are sometimes mechanical and not methodical, and that like so many of his countrymen he is apt to approach emendation from the palaeographical rather than the critical side. [...] Conjectures which stick close to the MSS are neat if true, but if not true they are not even neat (Housman in Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. III, 1095);

he disrelished even rules that become presumptuous if used against philological sense, for textual criticism requires also a measure of literary understanding:

³⁷ See Malato 1985, 22-23.

MSS present exceptions to every rule; a rule to which they presented no exception would be no rule, but something too vague to be worth formulating. But it is not every rule that these reactionaries try to upset. If they did, I could respect them; they would at least be consistent, and they might profess a principle, if only a false one. But their attempts are sporadic and capricious and betray their origin; they spring from prepossessions and from whim. In these circumstances we know what to expect: fresh and superfluous proof of the weakness of man's reason and the strength of his passions; 'mens bona ducetur minibus post terga retortis / et pudor et castris quidquid amoris obest.' The investigator equips himself with blinkers, permitting him to see nothing but the mere examples, and excluding all surrounding objects and all illumination from without. (Housman in Diggle & Goodyear 1972, vol. III, 1114-1115).

Of course, nobody would disavow Housman's caution against the incursion of the «literary mind» into the field of textual criticism (Housman 1969). His injunctions refer as cautions administered to candidate critic scholars: in the field of textual criticism amateurs are to be rooted.

Divinatio: the criterion itself in the History of Classical Scholarship

In the History of classical scholarship the unaided *divinatio* of a predecessor frequently led Coray to an eluded palmary conjecture; a brilliant emendation could be offered for a wrong-seeming reading still preserved by the accidents of transmission and restored by conjecture. I cite Pfeiffer's words (1976, 154; also 161):

But he [sc. Bentley] had hardly any doubt of the correctness of the text restored by his criticism; on the contrary he had complete confidence in his own 'divination'. On his conjecture of the rare word *vepris* for the manuscript reading *veris* at c. 1 23.5, he commented: 'nihil profecto hac coniectura certius est; suoque ipsa lumine aequae se probat, ac si ex centum scriptis codicibus proferretur'. In the preface to his Horace there is a sort of climax in his admonitions to the scholar starting 'noli...librarios solos venerari; sed per te sapere aude'; going on to 'sola ratio, peracre iudicium, critica palaestra', and culminating with the need for divination, *μαντική*, which cannot be acquired by labour and long life, but must be innate. Con-

fidence in his own divination led Bentley to the belief that he knew what the poet ought to have written. In Bentley's view Horace as a classic poet could not have written anything inconsistent with the harmonious measures of classical poetry. [...] The true critic must recognize the errors of transmission and restore the original harmony.

Therefore, *divinatio* (μαντική or *divinandi peritia*) was a criterion itself of high intelligence in scholar activity, as Kenney stated for Heinsius:

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What distinguished Heinsius from all other critics of Latin texts was his peculiar combination of natural genius and laboriously acquired expertise. Housman saw Heinsius' talent as one that 'resided in felicity of instinct' rather than one which proceeded from 'the perfection of the intellectual power'; it might be said, Politian with modern improvements. Heinsius' divinatory skill leaps to the eye on every page of his editions; in the range and quality of his conjectures he will stand comparison with, may even be thought to excel, Bentley himself' and also 'the reply of Rendel Harris, who, when asked for the evidence for a theory he was advancing, 'answered very gravely: It rests on something better than evidence...Conjectural emendation'. (Kenney 1974, 58).

The exemplary *divinatio* practiced by Coray or Housman substitutes largely for the stages of a diagrammatic *repraesentatio* (where *emendare* as activity is a deliberate knot)³⁸; Lachmann in utmost sincerity acknowledged that «Überhaupt ist die Kritik keine Wissenschaft, sondern eine Kunst: die Principien sind für sie Tod» (see Fiesoli 2000, 361 and n. 5)³⁹. If we further attempt to prove that each philological consideration is completed within the constants suggested by a rigid and undeviating textual logic, we will reach the practice which Paul de Man called «theoretical reading» (Gumbrecht 1998, 239 and n. 4; cf. Man 1986, 3-20). In an era when *divinatio* was preponderant as methodological ordinator, compared to that of Housman, we may conclude that Coray's attitude towards textual criticism is neither conservative nor radical, but an advisable position emerging from his ability to discern false from right, just as F. Leo remarked that «Kritik ist weder konservativ noch liberal, son-

³⁸ See Fiesoli 2000, 137.

³⁹ Cf. Kenney 1974, 143.

dern sie sondert das Falsche vom Richtigen» (Fraenkel 1960, 193)⁴⁰. Both Coray and Housman exceeded the illusory dilemma about the sort of criticism which drives the unexperienced into polarizations: i.e. unrestricted practice of rejecting transmitted readings and an in advance defending of the text given by manuscript tradition, as J. Willis («criticism: conjectural and conservative») entitled a chapter of his book (Willis 1972, 3-12). According to D. Ruhnken (1822, ii), «haec [sc. criticism] aliquando incidit in ingenia furiosa, quae nullo rationis tanquam freno coercentur, aliquando in ieiuna et angusta, quae non caperent tantae rei vim et auctoritatem». The editors constitute the order of the scholars specialized in solving textual and critical questions (Shackleton 1964, 102) provided that in the elucidation of a doubtful passage, scientific and aesthetic judgment are equally needed as requirements to acquire the subtle sense of literary creation⁴¹. Housman meets Coray and the others famous critic scholars in this point, in entertaining editorial experience as artistic eclecticism; henceforth B. Gentili included philological science in art studies⁴², whilst P. Davison would like to refer to the *ad casum* right to test human imagination in textual criticism, in the very efforts to solve such problems, instead of engaging the rest of the recommended logical methods and their relativity⁴³. However, this allegation cannot be used to refute a thorough philological grounding, for, as R. Jebb, aphoristically observed, «the conjecture does not rise from probability to certainty, or approximate certainty, unless its fitness is exact and perfect. [...] Textual criticism is never safe except in alliance with thorough interpretation» (Jebb 1963, 731).

Furthermore, L. Bieler (1958, 44-45) puts forward the gifted critics, in advancing the view that *nomina clarissima in re critica summa* possessed a certain method, but above all they were tangibly experts in classical languages, so that they could defend their argument even against the method they maintained. Still, as classics became in the Housmannian sense «the rare accomplishment of a dedicated few, not a fruitful province of the talented and the cultivated» (Simmons 2000, 149) and as much as any methodology transforms itself in a scholar device but not a tyrannic persistence –this conforms Bieler’s recommendation–, textual criticism succeeds to

⁴⁰ On Leo’s maxim consult the comments by Kenney 1974, 113-114.

⁴¹ See Asher 1966, 14.

⁴² See Gentili 1981.

⁴³ See Davison 1972.

gain the standard of a valuable art. Especially for conjecture resulting from critical imagination it could also be said that it comprises an intelligent philological hypothesis. In his article about the verification of assumptions in classical V. Martin (1959) entrusts to imagination the substitution for issues of knowledge, regarding imaginary deduction an integral stage of scientific research. Besides, I cite the maxims (mottos) of three German scholars, which are placed by Kenney in the beginning of the sixth chapter of his book: i) «Wer nichts über die Sache versteht, schreibt über die Methode» (G. Hermann), ii) «Principiis obsta» (L. Radermacher), and iii) «Method will never supersede vision [...] in its own place, however, method will often prevent illusion» (L. Bieler)⁴⁴.

Finally, we cannot but invoke great figures in scholarship such as Coray and Housman in searching for counter arguments against the allegation that scientific textual science has entirely become a matter of exact methodology to be followed in course of stemmatic adjustments. A. E. Housman (1969, 44-45) manifested this truth in his own way of expressing a historical debt to unique scholars' mind:

to study the greatest of the scholars of the past is to enjoy intercourse with superior minds. If our conception of scholarship and our methods of procedure are at variance with theirs, it is not indeed a certainty or a necessity that we are wrong, but it is a good working hypothesis; and we had better not abandon it till it proves untenable. Do not let us disregard our contemporaries, but let us regard our predecessors more; let us be most encouraged by their agreement, and most disquieted by their dissent.

If the impending demise of systematic editing depends on neglecting contact with primary evidence so as «to recover, by sifting manuscript evidence, what the author wrote, and to represent the author's words for the modern reader» (Lapidge 1998-99, 219) and forms a justified threat uttered among the labourers of future editing, then we may also establish another threat of the same kind, against those who are incapable of appraising between the fruitful conjectures of ingenious scholars and are thus incapacitated by being voluntarily amputated from the body of classical scholarship advanced to its mature age through such prospective scholars as the aforementioned; current classical philology rests seriously on their

⁴⁴ See Kenney 1974, 130.

ambitions to raise the soundness of texts on their shoulders, i.e. to distinguish what is authentic or plausible from what is not. The act of exercising *divinatio* entails that textual criticism is a method of reading and interpreting texts by constituting an authoritative reading of the text in the fascinating intervention of history and philology.

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