

Laying the Foundation for a New Work on the Pseudo-Virgilian Culex

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**Lisa St. Louis,**

**"Laying the Foundation for a New Work on the Pseudo-Virgilian *Culex*"**

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**Abstract:** In her paper "Laying the Foundation for a New Work on the Pseudo-Virgilian *Culex*," Lisa St. Louis discusses work undertaken on a prolegomenon to a new edition of the pseudo-Virgilian poem *Culex*. Fifty manuscripts are selected according to criteria such as ownership, geographical area or membership in a group defined by previous scholars. The catalogue of manuscripts is carefully structured in order to include all information needed to locate a given manuscript and trace its history. Manuscripts are collated in detail and their variant readings are entered into Adain software which is designed to determine the relationship between manuscripts. The results prove that some manuscripts belong to the *Florilegium Gallicum* or *Iuvenalis Ludi Libellus* groups while others have been copied from printed books. Readings from the manuscripts, *incunabula*, and other rare books form the basis for an *apparatus criticus* which is presented in Classical Text Editor software. Wendell Clausen's *Oxford Classical Text* serves as the starting point for textual criticism, but original conjectures and changes proposed by other scholars have also been considered. St. Louis argues for proper documentation of manuscripts by editors and demonstrates the benefits of software in the preparation and presentation of a scholarly edition. The results of her work are relevant to textual criticism and library science alike.

**Lisa St. LOUIS**

### **Laying the Foundation for a New Work on the Pseudo-Virgilian *Culex***

This article is an overview of my work on a prolegomenon to a new edition of the Pseudo-Virgilian *Culex*. The *Culex* and other spurious poems from the corpus known as the *Appendix Vergiliana* have become attached to the legitimate works of the poet Virgil. The prolegomenon includes a history of the authorship question, the transmission of the text throughout the ages, a catalogue of *Culex* manuscripts, the relationship between late manuscripts and printed books, an *apparatus criticus* showing proposed emendations, and a commentary with detailed explanations of the changes. The *Culex* has long been a favourite puzzle for scholars and anyone wishing to join the debate must show proof that his/her work will either bring solutions to the thorny problems or suggest a new framework for asking the questions. Software programs designed specifically for the comparison of mediaeval manuscripts and for the creation of an *apparatus criticus* play an important role in the prolegomenon along with conjectures from a wide range of ancient and modern editions. Upon first glance, the *Culex* hardly seems to be the sort of poem which would merit a second look, let alone lengthy volumes of scholarship. It is a short work of 414 lines which recounts the story of a goatherd who is nearly attacked by a snake during his afternoon nap but is saved by a mosquito. The philanthropic insect bites the elderly man in order to warn him and is dispatched to the next world by a blow from the goatherd's hand. After this rude awakening, the man notices the snake and crushes it with a tree branch. Once his animals have been cared for, the goatherd returns home and goes to sleep. In a dream, the ghost of the mosquito appears to the goatherd and berates its murderer for his lack of gratitude. It describes the horrors of the Underworld which surround it. When the goatherd wakes up the next morning, he erects a massive and magnificent tomb for the little creature.

The subject matter of the poem is decidedly lowbrow, the bucolic themes well-worn, and the versification clumsy at best. The poem does not seem to have much to recommend it until one examines the literary echoes that run throughout the work. It is hardly surprising to find similarities here and there in works of authors who praised the joys of country life such as Lucretius's *De rerum natura* or Horace's *Odes*, but on every page there are reminders of Virgil. Did the person who wrote this poem know the works of Virgil by heart and "get away with" the ultimate forgery by passing off his work as Virgil's own? I contend that this would be one possibility. The other option is much more romantic, a veritable dream come true for scholars: is it possible that this dreadful but rather charming little poem was, in fact, written by Virgil himself at a young age before he had perfected his craft? Unfortunately, the ancient world did not unlock the mystery for us. After Virgil's death in 19 B.C., no collected edition of the poems appeared and there was silence on the matter until the second half of the first century A.D. when Martial, Statius, and Lucan mentioned the poem. Martial offered a dinner guest a copy of the *Culex* as a present (*Epigrams* 14.185.1-2) and assigned the *Culex* to a time when Virgil was still an inexperienced poet (*Epigrams* 8.56.19-20). Statius used the example of the *Culex* to show that even serious poets were allowed to have a lighter side (*Silvae* 1 *praefatio*). The same author sent a poem to Lucan's widow in honour of Lucan's birthday. He pretended that Lucan was still a baby and prophesied that he would write major works before the age at which Virgil had composed the *Culex* (*Silvae* 2.7.73-74). Suetonius, in his second-century *Vita Lucani*, ascribed a boastful utterance to Lucan which can be dated to the 60s A.D. when Lucan was in his twenties. Lucan's words drip with false modesty as he asks how far his own youthful works fall short of Virgil's *Culex*. After Suetonius, the *Culex* was not mentioned by name until the fourth century when Aelius Donatus and Maurus Servius Honoratus, writers of two of the *Vitae Vergilianae*, "lives of Virgil," listed other works which were also supposedly Virgil's. Questions such as the reliance or non-reliance of Donatus on Suetonius and what Virgil wanted his executors to do with the minor poems (if one takes the view that they were, in fact, his) are beyond the scope of this brief outline of the poem's history (see also Comparetti 138-42). Some *Vitae* such as the *Vita Bernensis* are used by scholars to bolster claims of Virgilian authorship by arguing that Virgil was acquainted with Octavian, the future Emperor Au-

gustus, at a young age. It is a general rule that data from ancient lives must be used with care and this is especially true since Hollis Ritchie Upson has shown that all the *Vitae* are derived from Suetonius, either via St. Jerome or Donatus (see Upson 110).

It is possible, after one has examined *Culex* manuscripts from each century, to make a few generalizations: the text is hopelessly corrupt, lines have fallen out or are in the wrong place, names of mythological people or geographical places are unrecognizable, and once printed books appeared, the quest to determine what was in the original manuscript of the *Culex* no longer hung on the question of which manuscripts descended from which others but also which manuscripts had been entirely or partially copied from books. The advent of printing brought about a flurry of Virgil editions, some consisting simply of text and others enriched with commentary. Of the commentaries, most were very basic compared to the learned treatises of ancient times, but they showed a movement from the passive copying of previous centuries to the active thought required for textual emendation and identification of obscure people and places. A glance at the Ascensius edition of 1529 shows that the list of works attributed to Virgil by Servius, Donatus, and the Murbach catalogue has grown to such an extent that we must wonder how our poet had time for the *Aeneid* when he was consumed by such important subjects as wine, women, and the letter Y. Josse Bade Ascensius (1462-1535) and Domitius Calderinus (1447-1478) dutifully printed dozens of poems and traded comments concerning the authenticity of several of them. *Aetna* and *Elegiae* in *Maecenatem* were rejected outright, but *Ciris* was accepted. *De rosas nascentibus* was ascribed to either Virgil or Ausonius while the *Priapea* and *De se ipso* were ascribed to Ovid. Although the 1529 edition was typical of its time, Virgilian content remained fluid from edition to edition. On this account, one must peruse several editions in order to appreciate the magnitude of the web of apocryphal poetry which surrounded the *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid*. One commentator, Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609), believed that Virgil was the author of the *Culex* but thought that it was the work of a mature man, not a boy. Scholars tend to misquote Scaliger: he never gave Virgil's age as twenty-six and, in fact, said that he did not know how old Virgil was when he wrote the poem. In any case, he was certain that Donatus was wrong to say fifteen (see Scaliger 265-66). In his 1573 edition of the *Culex* and the other minor poems, he called them *Publii Vergilii Maronis Appendix* for the first time and the name stuck. Today we know them as the *Appendix Vergiliana*, but we must be wary of using the term "collection" since their relationship to Virgil and to each other is tenuous at best. Each member of this unusual group has its own manuscript tradition and has been supported or rejected variously over the centuries in its claim of authenticity. Modern scholars agree almost unanimously that Virgil did not write any of the poems which accompany the *Culex*.

The seventeenth century marked the start of the modern era in the study of the *Culex*. Scaliger had raised questions about Virgil's age as transmitted in Donatus but had not questioned Virgilian authorship. New voices not only replayed the age debate but even began to discuss whether the *Culex* which had come down through the centuries was Virgil's unchanged original, the original with some interpolated sections, a forgery which had replaced the lost original, or a forgery with no Virgilian original. Charles de la Rue had Virgil writing the *Culex* at twenty-six. If an Oxford Classical Text of the *Vitae* appears in the future, it should no longer cite Scaliger as the source of that number. According to de la Rue, our *Culex* is a forgery by some inept writer of later times intended to replace Virgil's lost work. I found de la Rue's notes attached to a London 1750 Virgil with no indication of page numbers (they must have been included with his 1675 Paris edition which I was unable to consult). François Oudin agreed with de la Rue, adding that Virgil wrote a *Culex* between the ages of twenty-five and thirty. He thought that a Vandal or African could have composed our *Culex* as a kind of patchwork of Virgil's other works (311-12). In 1775, Christian Gottlob Heyne proposed the second of our five options, namely, that the *Culex* had a true Virgilian core which, over the years, had been surrounded by spurious verses. I used the third edition from 1793 as the *editio princeps* was not accessible to me. Heyne's *Culex probabiliter restitutus* separated (or so he believed) the true verses from the false with the result that only one-quarter of the poem remained (see Heyne 4, 9-14, 76-87). This view was so unpopular that it was even criticized by Karl Julius Sillig who revised Heyne's work in 1832 (Heyne and Sillig 4, 12-13). In modern times and in

the questions which scholars have been raising since the late 1800s and continue to grapple with in the new millennium, there tends to be an "all or nothing" approach to *Culex* authorship and the "Yes" side still enjoys a surprising amount of support, particularly among Italian scholars (see Güntzschel 241-57). The "No" side generally believes that the *Culex* is a forgery and that Virgil never composed a *Culex* at all. Both sides take a keen interest in determining when the poem was written and the "Yes" side has added the number twenty-one as another possible age of Virgil (see Barrett 54). Those who take a negative view assign dates to the poem which range from during Virgil's lifetime to the time of the Vandals in the sixth century A.D. and R. S. Radford even tries to prove that it belongs to Ovid (see Güntzschel 232). The twentieth century saw the birth of different methods for assessing the probability of Virgilian authorship. These methods which are still popular today include studies of language, metre, historical evidence, and the relationship between the *Culex* and the works of Greek and Latin authors. One scholar uses a scientific approach and another relies on subjective criteria such as taste and sustained perfection. Statistics which appear to point to Virgil as the author in one article are shown to prove the exact opposite in another. Even the study of borrowings made by the author of the *Culex* from other authors is fraught with danger as sometimes similarities are not, in fact, borrowings at all. As Glenn Most wittily declares, "The *Culex*'s sheep eat the kinds of vines and shrubs they do, neither only because real sheep do nor necessarily because those in the first Eclogue do, but instead because those are the kinds of vegetation the sheep of pastoral poetry, of the sort found in the first Eclogue, eat" (206). In my view, it seems likely that Virgil did not write the *Culex* which has come down to us, and, in fact, never wrote a *Culex* at all. Most believes that the forger "knew that Virgil had written the *Eclogues*, the *Georgics*, and the *Aeneid*, in that order and nothing else, and was making reference to that fact in the structure of his poem." According to Most, if one defends Virgilian authorship of the *Culex*, then one is making the ludicrous claim that "Virgil ... as a young man unknowingly anticipated his whole future career" (208-09). It is impossible to be certain when the poem was written, but one can safely rule out the lifetimes of Virgil, his executors, and Augustus. That puts us at least in the reign of Tiberius (began A.D. 14) on the early end of the scale. *Culex* 412 may be imitating Ovid's *Tristia* 5.13.29 which can be dated to around A.D. 12 and this would push the *terminus post quem* back slightly (see Courtney 811). Two years will not make much of a difference. On the opposite end, if we accept that Lucan made a statement about the *Culex*, we have to set a date of at least a few years before his death in A.D. 65. Furthermore, if *Calpurnius Siculus* 7.22 is imitating *Culex* 77 *fecunda Pales*, it would seem to move the *terminus ante quem* for the *Culex* to the early years of Nero's reign (began A.D. 54), but alas, we have no definite dates for *Calpurnius Siculus* (see Courtney 812). For the present, I ally myself with Eduard Fraenkel and others who lean towards the time of Tiberius (8).

The outpouring of literature on the authorship question has made the topic unpopular and I did not wish to make it the focal point of my prolegomenon. The same can, unfortunately, be said for the number of editions. The *Culex* has been edited many times over yet little of the work has been in English. Anthony Barrett, Duncan F. Kennedy, and Mark Edward Bailey devoted their dissertations to the topic but gave their attention to literary issues rather than to manuscripts and textual problems. An edition is a Herculean task which involves gathering a vast array of manuscripts and rare books, collating everything in minute detail, preparing a *stemma*, analyzing conjectures of previous scholars and, if possible, offering new ones. It necessitates more travel than ordinary research as the material is not usually close at hand and even the best of photocopies cannot be trusted. Despite initial misgivings I decided that it would be beneficial to scholarship to bring to light as many little-known resources as possible and to correct errors in readings found in previous editions. The ninety-eight *Culex* manuscripts which were uncovered in the course of my research caused a certain feeling of *embarras de richesse*. It was not feasible or even desirable to present them all. Although I was not the first to discover the existence of the *Culex* in any given manuscript, I can take pride in the fact that twelve manuscripts which found their way into my work had, to the best of my knowledge, never been mentioned in an edition. The fifty manuscripts in this prolegomenon were chosen for a variety of reasons. It seemed obvious to begin with those found in the editions of others. Most, I soon realized, had found favour with editors because of

their age and usefulness in a *stemma*. Until recently, the prevailing opinion among scholars was that Renaissance manuscripts were worthless because they had been contaminated by printed books. For that reason, few have been studied in any great detail although they are widely available. I propose that while they add little to the establishment of a *stemma*, they are nonetheless valuable for conjectures. Editors are no longer restricting themselves to a small group of manuscripts which, while appropriate for the purposes of a *stemma*, yield nothing further in terms of textual ameliorations. As palaeographers we must aim for Leonard Boyle's "integral" view of palaeography and use every aid at our disposal (see 317-18). One does not want to be the proverbial "odd man out" when scholars decide to give these manuscripts a second look. Age and fame or their opposites were important factors in the selection process, but there were other criteria to consider as well. In some cases, a pattern of affinity between certain manuscripts was already emerging and new ones were added in the hopes of forming a group. There had to be a representative sample demonstrating reliance or non-reliance of manuscripts on printed books. An attempt was made to show the poem in various states of completeness. Fragments proved to be especially interesting as one could observe from them which parts of the text particularly appealed to scribes and even the smallest samples yielded rewards such as links to the important *Florilegium Gallicum* group of manuscripts. At times, I became fascinated with the life of a historical figure such as Nicolaas Heinsius and tracked down manuscripts and printed books associated with him. The connection of manuscripts to a geographical area such as northern France became apparent and needed to be investigated. Something which began as a simple search for variant readings grew to encompass the formation of private and public libraries, the history of printing and the biographies of the major players of European history. Once the group of fifty manuscripts had been established, I proceeded to visit forty-four of them in person. I did not allow anyone else to assist in the collation and refused to rely upon the published collations of others. I was unable to visit libraries in Germany, Spain, Florence or Milan and, thus, had to resort to other means for six manuscripts. In the case of manuscripts which I could not examine personally or those which were nearly illegible, I often requested several different types of copies (microfilms, microfiches, slides, photos or paper) in the hopes of seeing slight nuances.

As pre-1900 books were not always catalogued in the ordinary databases of the libraries where I carried out my research, I obtained access to ESTC, I-ISTC, the Hand-Press Book Database, RLIN, World Cat, DBI Link, and the Centre for Research Libraries. I ordered photocopies of the most important rare books and even purchased those which could not be copied. At the library of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (University of Toronto), I was graciously permitted to use microfilms of manuscripts as well as the Ferdinand Edward Cranz published and unpublished inventories. From these sources and through the generosity of many people, I managed to find something new among the old. The layout of the prolegomenon to an edition requires more of an explanation than one would expect to find in a full-fledged edition. I considered the possibility of constructing a new *stemma* and producing a new edition of the *Culex* but decided that it was wise to do as other classicists had done and lay the foundations of the future edition in a prolegomenon. I accepted the *stemma* and text of Wendell Clausen's *Oxford Classical Text* (hereafter OCT) of the *Appendix Vergiliana* as starting points and looked for opportunities to make improvements. In order to compensate for the fact that I have begun in *medias res*, I have added some commentary, a feature which one does not always find in editions. It contains a detailed explanation of the changes to the text. Many entries deal with unusual scansion, gender, and word order, and a few cover literary theory, echoes of other authors, and mythological characters. While these issues would be important in their own right in a full and complete literary commentary, they are mentioned here only in so far as they assist in the reconstruction of a given reading. In the future, I plan to visit the libraries which hold the other forty-eight manuscripts on my list and do a *variorum* edition in which Clausen's *stemma* will be examined more critically. In the course of writing the prolegomenon, every effort was made to avoid incomplete manuscript descriptions which lead to a loss of time and money for readers. Scholars need to be able to rely on the accuracy of the shelf-marks and folio numbers when ordering costly reproductions from foreign libraries. Unfortunately, editors of classical texts are not always known for their generosity in supplying the reader with

even the minimum amount of information necessary to find a manuscript or a rare book. To a neophyte, Corsinianus may either be a manuscript or a distant relative of Coriolanus. That title alone will not help anyone to find it in the Accademia dei Lincei. Furthermore, the practice of printing only latinized versions of the names of scholars who contributed conjectures over the ages causes grief to those who must surely imagine that these learned men were contemporaries of Virgil when, in fact, they lived in Renaissance France. It would take little extra time to clarify whether one means scholar x or his son and to situate them in time by the dates of their publications. The aim was to produce a user-friendly reference work and to demystify the *apparatus criticus* as much as possible. Birger Munk Olsen is to be commended for the clarity of the entries in his catalogue of manuscripts. Following in his footsteps, at least with regard to form, I have broken each entry down into multiple parts. First, the reader learns the *siglum* by which the manuscript will be known in the *apparatus criticus*, then the city and library where the manuscript is held and its shelf-mark. The current shelf-marks have been prepared using Wilma Fitzgerald's *Ocelli Nominum* as a guide, but other designations such as familiar names or former shelf-marks have not been neglected. If previous scholars assigned *sigla* to manuscripts, I have provided the scholar's name and reused the *sigla* where possible. Any *sigla* of my own invention have also been duly noted. Other information follows such as the exact date or century in which the manuscript was written, its country of origin, and ownership history if known, the folio numbers where the *Culex* appears and deviations from the standard amount of 414 lines if substantial. A reference from the catalogue of the manuscript's home library rounds off each entry and is often accompanied by suggestions for further reading drawn from general catalogues or scholarly articles.

As I was in the process of gathering the fifty manuscripts chosen for this study, I reviewed some scholarly articles in order to see how successful others were in making their observations on the interconnection of manuscripts clear to readers who did not have the source material in front of them. I omitted intentionally articles which dealt with my subject until after I had collated the manuscripts and jotted down any links which appeared. The authors all produced compelling evidence by quoting readings which proved that x and y came from different branches of the *stemma*. Often measurements and line counts per page were included as well as learned discussions of the life and library of the former owner. I had no fault to find with their results, but I wished that I had been given a diagram other than a *stemma* to help me visualize the argument. There was no problem in cases where the author only described a small number of manuscripts, but I shuddered at the thought of presenting fifty. I searched for suitable software but soon realized that Excel, while useful for the neat appearance of the finished product, would not perform the necessary calculation of affinity. My mathematical and programming skills were not sufficient to create something made to measure and were already being tested to the limit by Stefan Hagel's brilliant but challenging *apparatus criticus* program Classical Text Editor (available for purchase, Hagel <<http://www.oeaw.ac.at/kvk/cte>>). Fortunately, a solution in the form of a freeware program named Adain was available from its creator Pierre-Louis Malosse at <<http://pot-pourri.fltr.ucl.ac.be/files/ADAIN/>> (all documentation for this program is in French, including command prompts). The first page of the help file warns the reader that we must not put too much trust in machines lest we forget that we are dealing with the copying errors of human beings. The user obtains three benefits from Adain. It permits him/her to determine the likelihood of a manuscript belonging to a given family and produces results in an easy-to-read chart. It creates a framework for asking questions about the agreement or opposition of individual manuscripts and allows quick retrieval of results which bolster the scholar's claim. Finally, these results can be downloaded to a .txt file and then printed from Word. I find that this works adequately for small files, but larger ones require Excel as well as some surgery on the margins. It soon became apparent that Malosse did not have my thesis in mind when he wrote the program. He quite correctly notes that editors should only need a small number of slots for manuscripts in the program if they have done their work properly and excluded those which add nothing to the *stemma*. A prolegomenon, unfortunately, reflects the stage before the pruning and, like a sprawling rosebush, my fifty manuscripts were not pleased to be confined to the one hundred allotted slots. After all, what was one to do about correcting hands? However, after I contacted Malosse, he very kindly rede-

signed the program to meet my needs. Before I describe the modifications which I made to the program, I should give a general account of what the user is expected to do in order to produce the desired results. The first task is to assign sigla to all manuscripts. This is necessary for the opening line of the apparatus's text file which the computer will read. One cannot simply cut the apparatus which one has created in Hagel's program and paste it into Adain. There are specific lines of code which must be included and certain rules observed. Right from the start, I noticed a problem with some of the sigla which I had taken such pains to find in the works of other scholars and reuse in my own. The program refused to accept Greek characters and would not differentiate between uppercase and lowercase versions of the same letter. It was undesirable and far too late to select different sigla for my apparatus, so I did the next best thing by changing the offending sigla slightly. The reader will notice numbers on the code page which, clearly, are not manuscripts. It seemed like a good idea to include rare books from the hundred years after the first printed Virgil. The enormous extra work of collation had to be weighed against the possibility of making comparisons between late manuscripts and early printed books. Once the decision was made, the printed books were treated exactly like manuscripts. The program works, essentially, by grouping readings into two categories, those which agree with the *lemma* and those which do not. Thus, I had to choose a set of readings to represent the *lemma*. As in my apparatus I used Clausen's OCT as a starting point, it seemed natural to use it here as well. It is possible to force the program to accept the negative method of textual criticism, but I would not recommend it. The OCT of the *Culex* is the ubiquitous *siglum* H (for Harvard) at the left of each entry. Once all the code is in place, Adain races through it and crashes whenever it discovers a missing forward slash or period. The corrections last for hours until the software is satisfied.

Finally, with great fanfare, Adain announces that it has finished reading the file and offers to create a table demonstrating the relationships between manuscripts. Once the user has selected the manuscripts to be compared, the fifty-four pages of code transform themselves into a chart which fills one screen. One can look at H and discover which manuscripts were the most helpful to Clausen. This needs to be done in conjunction with his *sigla* as there are a few manuscripts on my list which would perhaps have been useful for him but were not in his edition. To the right of H are numbers in descending order which correspond to manuscripts. Adain has arrived at these numbers by a mathematical calculation which gives more weight to incorrect readings than correct ones and more weight to uncommon readings than common ones. It does this on the grounds that manuscripts are usually assumed to present correct readings or to share an error with many others. A higher number means a higher chance that the manuscripts are related. One reads from left to right until the values dip significantly, usually after about five manuscripts. If one wishes to do other sorts of comparisons between manuscripts, one can press the button marked *recherches* and follow the options. The number of times when x agrees with y can be determined or the number of times when x and y are in opposition to z. Not only does a percentage appear but also the list of the readings themselves with their line numbers. There are two possible ways to proceed with the data analysis. One method is to start from atoms and void like Lucretius and pretend that we have no idea how the manuscripts fit together. The other is to assume that the reader is familiar with at least a few editions or articles on the subject and to assess the conclusions of others using the Adain program. As much as one tries to keep an open mind and start with a clean slate, one cannot help but be influenced by the OCT. Its *Codices* and *Stemma Codicum* pages are a reflection of twentieth-century efforts to sort *Culex* manuscripts. In the edition, one finds not only a new *stemma* which is a significant departure from Friedrich Vollmer's effort but also two distinct groups of manuscripts, Vollmer's *Iuvenalis Ludi Libellus* and B.L. Ullman's *Florilegium Gallicum* (for more information on these important groups, see Vollmer's book *Poetae Latini Minores I*, his article from 1908 as well as Ullman's articles from 1928 and 1932). In an earlier time, classification would have been done according to the manuscripts used by a certain editor, such as Sillig's list of the manuscripts used by Heyne or by owner, as in the case of Nicolaas Heinsius's manuscripts (see *Bibliotheca Heinsiana*). While we owe much to Otto Ribbeck for a layout which is not far removed from a modern OCT, his list of *sigla* is simply that, a list. My goal was to test the conclusions of individual scholars and also to determine whether it was likely that the *Iuvenalis Ludi Libellus* and



*Florilegium Gallicum* groups listed in Clausen's OCT of the *Culex* were missing manuscripts. My research proved conclusively that correct groupings had been made but that other manuscripts needed to be added in order to complete the groups. Other interesting findings emerged such as links between LONDON, British Library, Harley 2701, anno 1447 and its potential former owner, Aldus Manutius, and evidence that Pierre Pithou and Joseph Justus Scaliger were aware of the contents of PARIS, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 8207, saec. xiii-xiv. The task of condensing a catalogue of manuscripts in the style of Munk Olsen and a list of printed books along the lines of Giuliano Mambelli into a legend of several pages before the start of the *apparatus criticus* is, to say the least, a daunting prospect. After comparing the styles of various editions, it seemed best to follow R.P.H. Green's Oxford classical text of *Ausonius*. It was interesting and helpful to discover how another scholar dealt with the problem of giving sigla to many books without turning the "Editions Cited" page into a mini-bibliography.

Many recent editions had little to add to the text, but this is hardly surprising given the difficulty of finding previously unseen manuscripts and the slim chance of inventing a conjecture which can be proven to be original. It is my hope that the inclusion of so many pre-1500 editions will pleasantly surprise those who doubt that these works have anything of value to offer. We are doing a great disservice to scholarship by scoffing at material which can assist us not only in determining the earliest date of a certain reading but also whether manuscripts are being copied wholly or in part from printed books. Every attempt has been made to include significant advances in Virgilian textual criticism from all eras up to the modern day. Many post-Renaissance editions have not been studied with the care that they deserve as copies are scarce and often inaccessible to non-Europeans. We must continuously search for new evidence, refuse to simply recopy the mistakes of others and work in a collaborative rather than competitive fashion if we are to have any chance of improving corrupt texts. At the top of each page of the *apparatus criticus*, my revised version of Clausen's text of the *Culex* appears. Below the text, the variant readings of all the manuscripts, early printed books and modern editions are presented in the OCT approved format with Latin notes. I took into account a complaint expressed in Mary Louise Lord's article that "despite their valiant efforts ... editors do not give complete readings of every manuscript in their list of sigla" (139). In my prolegomenon, each manuscript was collated letter by letter. I did not select passages at random or from the two ends of the poem. John Grant wishes that editors would be more clear about the date when a certain reading was first printed and he gives an example of a reading dated 1475 by Clausen which actually occurs in many editions before that date (286 n. 73). I have tried to be as careful as possible with dates, but the reader is always encouraged to examine *incunabula* which are absent from the bibliography. Unlike some Renaissance editors who printed the vulgate version of a text without corrections and then presented their changes in a commentary, my changes were brought to the reader's attention in three ways. They first appeared in *italics* in the text. Next, a note was inserted below the text indicating that Clausen had opted for a different solution to the problem. Finally, my choice of reading was justified in the commentary. Although the Classical Text Editor software would have allowed me to insert the commentary on the same page underneath the text and notes, it seemed that a clear and simple layout with commentary at the end was best. Despite the large number of *sigla*, no symbols were used to signify a group of manuscripts. Some will argue that this notation would have simplified the *apparatus*. I beg to differ, citing James Willis who sees "no disadvantage in indicating the agreement of LQg by LQg" (40).

My work began with a history of the text of the *Culex* and the scholars who chose this poem among so many others as the arena in which to display their considerable talents. Research on that section, while time-consuming and not instantly rewarding, later proved to have been a good investment as it revealed not only possible solutions for textual problems but also revealed much about the development of textual criticism. The catalogue of manuscripts was an opportunity to build on the discoveries of the past and the number of manuscripts will yet reach one hundred. This is an area where there is ample room for exploration. Libraries have not yielded up their last *Culex* manuscripts and fragments will, no doubt, continue to be found in the middle of the most unlikely texts. Along with the manuscripts, one must not forget the *incunabula*. Grant's article on

Pietro Bembo quotes from *incunabula* in the Rylands Library which take our text in new directions through their variant readings. Perhaps these books will help us to determine the parentage of late *Culex* manuscripts which were not discussed in this study or whose descent remains uncertain. More work needs to be done to correct improperly assigned conjectures. The emendations of Nicolaas Heinsius which are available in his published and unpublished correspondence are largely unknown to scholars and some of his thoughts on the *Culex* have been falsely attributed to others. Past wrongs may yet be rectified, but it is a laborious process. The *apparatus criticus* was intended as a retrospective of *Culex* editions with a particular emphasis on rare works and, for that reason, only covered the most important articles from scholarly journals. I have created a database which matches all accessible *Culex* scholarship to the individual lines of the poem. When time permits, I shall incorporate this into the *apparatus criticus* and present a comprehensive bibliography. Technology plays a large role in the study of this text and many others. The learning process involved with the Adain and Classical Text Editor programs is well worth the effort. The *Culex* will be preserved in digitization projects, online manuscript catalogues, electronic text archives, and web pages devoted to Virgil. Scholars of the current generation will be judged not only on our skills as palaeographers and textual critics but also by our ability to share what we have learned with our colleagues throughout the world and by our success in promoting interest in the subject matter among current and prospective students. This will be our contribution to the classical tradition.

Note: This article contains material derived from the author's Ph.D. dissertation, Lisa St. Louis, *Prolegomenon to an Edition of the Pseudo-Virgilian Culex*. Ph.D. Diss. Ottawa: U of Ottawa, 2001.

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