

Apocolocyntosis Notes 1-3

1: nb historical tone: what subject matter will be, claims of verity and impartiality, ref to source BUT surprising twist: “in caelo”

1.1 “anno nouo...” - new year, new beginning: Nero

1.1 “ante diem III idus Octobris”- i.e. the third day before the Ides of Oct [15th].

1.1 teasing - if we want to know sources, won’t tell us. Not like a historian.

Eden: free whether to decide to speak or not: not servile as under a *rex*- as Claudius implied to be.

Seneca free to write now Claudius dead= who gave truth to the proverb that one should be born either a king or fool. Eden links to Greek proverb “for a fool and a king the law is unwritten”. i.e. must be fool or king to behave as you want without being punished. Claudius actually both.

1.2 Drusilla = Gaius Caligula’s sister who he deified after her death; a senator swore he had seen her going to heaven- and got rewarded; nb previous Numerius Atticus had been rewarded by Livia when he said he had seen Augustus going to heaven.

1.2 “non passibus aequis” alludes to Verg. *Aen.* 2.723f of Iulus being unable keep up with Aeneas: here of Claudius’ uneven gait. One of many examples of verse included (nb Menippean satire; shift in registers).

1.3 “uerbis conceptis” “with binding words”: technical phrase.

2 bombastic circumlocutions.

first hour after noon = time Claudius’ death publicly announced. Nb hard to get exact time from clocks (horologia) of the time

disturb noon- ie poetic descriptions of and by recitations through siesta.

3.1 Mercury - who has job of escorting souls.

nb Mercury famously fast (winged sandals etc) and quick-witted: antithesis to limping fool Claudius.

Mercury feigns concern (“miserum” “torqueri”; “tam diu cruciatus”; “anima luctatur”; Clotho is “crudelissima”) but clearly not a fan: nb irony in “ingenio”; “quid huic et reipublicae inuides?”- 2nd part implies that Clotho has something against Rome- Claudius harming it.

3.1 “qui ... delectatus esset”: causal subjunctive. delector, ari- delight.

seducit: seduco, ere – to draw aside.

hominem miserum torqueri pateris?: patior, i (allow); torqueo, ere – (here) torment.

cruciatus: crucior, ari – torment, torture

cesset= deliberative subjunctive: “is he never to have a rest”.

sexagesimus et quartus est: sexagesimus, a, um – sixtieth. Interest in time.

luctatur: from luctor, ari- to struggle.

3.2 mathematicos: mathematicus, i (m)- astrologer.

3.2 noone knows his hour- Eden suggests may refer to concealing of his exact time of death by Agrippina; also birth hour needed for horoscope- Claudius possibly premature.

3.2 efferent: effero, efferre – to bring out; bring out for burial; to bury

3.2 not thought to exist i.e. proverbial for being ignored but nb emptiness/insubstantiality e.g.

4.2; 5.4 Hercules not sure if he’s human; cf problems with him being understood e.g. 7.4 “haec uisus est dicere” (link with gourd?).

3.2 ‘dede neci, melior vacua sine regnet in aula’: nex, necis (f) – death; aula, ae (f) – palace.

Quotation from Verg. *G.* 4.90 on what to do with king-bee who has lost fight for leadership: lang of palace and reigning no longer metaphorical. Bathos in bee association?

3.3. pusillum: pusillus, a, um – very little; pusillum, i (n) – a very little, a trifle.

3.3 Eden points out masculine oath; nb later Hercules appears.

3.3 dum: until (+ subjunctive, *donaret*).

pauculos: pauculus, a, um – very few.

supersunt: from supersum, superesse – to remain

3.3 in semen relinqui “to be left for seed-corn”.

3.4 capsulam capsula, ae (f) – small box, chest; diminutive > undercuts.

3.4 fusos: fusus, i (m) – spindle.

3.4 Augurinus, Baba, Claudius: Eden suggests common way of learning alphabet. Augurinus assoc with augury, Baba with stupidity.

3.4 exiguus: exiguus, a, um – small.

3.4 intervallis: intervallum, i (n) – interval of time.

3.4 oportet – it is proper: + infinitive.