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P. BONON. 4 AND VIRGIL, AEN. 6, YET AGAIN

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P. Bonon 4. 1. 5 (text as given by Lloyd-Jones and Parsons; see below):

5 ὅς δὲ παρέδραθε μητρ[ρὶ] καὶ ἦψατο γὰρ  
 6 ῥιγεδανῆς καὶ ἄρουραν ἐπέδραμεν[  
 7 σπέρματο[c] ἄνθος ἔδυνεν ὅτε πρωτι[  
 8 παρθένῳ ὠμίλησεν ὁ δεβρ[.]ν .. [  
 9 οὐδέ οἱ ἄρτ[ι] φανέντι γενέθλιος . [.] θ[

Virgil, Aen. 6. 623: hic thalamum invasit natae vetitiosque hymenaeos.

After forty years of work and three recent bibliographical summaries (Lloyd-Jones and Parsons, *Kyklos*, Festschr. Keydell (Berlin 1978), 88 = LLJ. *The Academic Papers*, Comedy, etc. (Oxford 1990), 333 with update 342) and A. Setaioli, *Enc. Virg.* 2 (1985) s.v. *Inferi*, 958) one might think that it had all been said. Not so: two recent discussions (G. Ficcadori and E. Medda, *PP* 35 (1980), 389-91 and G. Casadio *SMSR* 52 (1986), 294) express uncertainty, polite or depairing, on the relationship of the two texts where discussed and Setaioli's useful summary only hints nervously ('ma è forse più prudente pensare..') at a common source. But certainty is, I suggest, attainable and what must be the key text has, having been cited only in part, dropped out of the discussion. Setaioli observed in 1970 (*SIFC* 42, 223f.) that P. Bonon . 4.1.5 refers to incest with a mother, while Aen. 6.623 refers to a daughter. They have therefore, he well concludes, taken one motif each from a list (used therefore by both) which influenced Plat. Rep. 5.461C. But Plato continues with a prohibition against incest with the descendants and ancestors of mother and daughter. Compare Leviticus 18.6-18 (a list of prohibited degrees including granddaughters); this is expanded to include grandmothers in the Talmud (rabbis of the scribal period: E. Neufeld, *Ancient Hebrew Marriage Laws* (London 1944), 211f., *Enc. Jud.* (rev.ed.) s.v. *Incest* (H.H. Cohn), *Talmud Yebamoth* 21a, p.124 Epstein, 382 Goldschmidt). Both grandmother and granddaughter are listed in the Table of Kindred and Affinity at the end of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Elsewhere Socrates (*Xen. Mem.* 4.4.20), Pythagoras (*Iambli.* 31.210) and Plato (*Leg.* 838B( limit themselves to censure of incest in the direct line over one generation. The Greeks' condemnation is also expressed in their attribution of such incest to the barbarians (and especially the Persians): *Eur. Andr.* 173-6 (see Stevens' comm.), *Xanthus*, FGH 765F31, *Dissoi Logoi* 15 (DK 2.408). Thus while it is possible that Plato himself expanded the list known to Anon. Bonon. and to Virgil, the prohibition in its fuller and more explicit form is wholly in keeping with the (unvarying) Greek view of the matter (cf. R. Just, *Women in Athenian Law and Life* (London 1989), 76-9) and it seems very likely that our (Orphic) source contained an ample list of prohibited degrees. In that

case, the grandmothers and granddaughters in Plato should be taken as providing a further indication of the existence of a source behind Virgil and the papyrus, along with a hint (cf. Leviticus) of its amplitude and a chronological terminus ante.

Whether this common source actually belongs to the Orphic catabasis held by many, from Norden on, to be a (even the principal) source of Virgil's underworld (cf. P.Boyancé *Réligion de Virgile* (Paris 1963), 156, 163f.) is not yet a question that can be answered rationally (cf. the useful survey in Setaioli, (1985), 957f.).

The text we read in P.Bonon. 4 is not securely datable. L.Castiglioni suspected that it might have been influenced by Virgil (in *Prolegomena* 1 (1952), 106; this rare journal is cited fully by Setaioli 1970, 222) and this notion surfaces again in Lloyd-Jones and Parsons (88 = 333). Castiglioni's notion was brushed aside by Treu (*Herm.* 82 (1954), 31, 51) and Setaioli (1970, 222), but the possibility of Virgil's priority continues to perplex (see Casadio and Ficcadori-Medda, cit.) and intrigue. It is not, as is well-known, at all inherently unlikely (cf. my account in 'Trasmissione del Latino a Costantinopoli', in Messina, forthcoming; for now, against the classic dogma (e.g. P.Maas, *Byz.Zeitschr.* 35 (1935), 385) that no Greek copies a Roman see e.g. G.W.Williams, *Change and Decline* (Berkeley 1978), 125-34). Treu correctly underlined that the most reasonable hypothesis was that Virgil romanised a Greek list of sinners (Treu, cit. 45-7). The reverse, which seems to be implied by the suggestion of Virgil's priority, is indeed droll: that Anon.Bonon. systematically and flawlessly deromanised Virgil's text, a *modus operandi* not known to me elsewhere.

Even supposing that Anon.Bonon., writing under the early empire (so Lloyd-Jones and Parsons (88 = 333), and for very different reasons Setaioli (1970, 213-8, cf. 1985, 968) has used not only Virgil, but also their common source, he manages, at precisely the time when Greek poetry often exhibits a *color Romanus*, to offer us a still virgin Hellenic text. If Anon.Bonon. wrote before Virgil, it is not certain that Virgil used him and not their common source; if he wrote after, then it seems increasingly likely that he did not use Virgil but rather the common source and that alone. The purely chronological question of 'before or after 19 BC' cannot, I think, be solved as our knowledge stands, but at least the suppression of incest across two generations serves (if Plato has not simply invented!) to settle the thematic relationship of our texts.