VEILED OR UNVEILED? (PLUT. *QUAEST. ROM.* 267B–C)

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'sexual wrestling' or 'sexual battle'.[6] Since the idea is such a common one, there is of course no way of positively proving that *Leucippe* 5.3.5 echoes a *tragic* passage. However, as a look at n. 6 will confirm, use of *wrestling*-imagery to refer to the sexual act is rare: it is rather images of fighting or of training and exercising that prevail. Moreover, aside from Paulus Silentiarius, the use of *πάλαισμα, παλαιστής* and the like as euphemisms for sex seems to be limited to Aeschylus. In addition, *πάλην Ἀφροδίσιον* in Achilles Tatius contains an epithet which in tragedy occurs only in Sophocles (fr. 166 Radt *κἀφροδισίαν ἄγραν*). It is not beyond belief, then, that *Leucippe* 5.3.5 may conceal a reminiscence of a tragic trimeter, e.g. × — *παλαίων Ἀφροδίσιον πάλην* (Kovacs *per litteras*), which would preserve Tatius' phraseology practically intact. There may, however, be a difficulty here, in that the only tragic instance of *Ἀφροδίσιος* that is metrically unambiguous, namely S. fr. 277.1 Radt, scans with short first syllable (in S. fr. 166 the word is *in crasi*). This is, of course, no fatal objection *per se*, considering that *Ἀφροδίτη* sometimes has a long first syllable (E. *Ba*. 225, 459; *IA* 1159; fr. 23.2, 26.1, 898,1 Kannicht). However, since Sophocles does not seem to use *πάλη* (fr. 1130.10 Radt is of uncertain authorship), a reconstruction involving *πάλαισμα* might have more to recommend it. The putative Sophoclean original could have been e.g. *Ἀφροδισίοισιν ἐμπλακεὶς παλαίσμασιν* (the three-word trimeter may have attracted attention to a climactic moment), or perhaps *Ἀφροδίσιον πάλαισμα τῇδ' ἐπεμβαλών*. There are, of course, numerous other possibilities.

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[6] Here are the parallels cited by West: Thgn. 1335–6 *ὄλβιος, ὅστις ἐρῶν γυμνάζεται οἴκαδε ἐλθών, / εὕδων σὺν καλῷ παιδὶ πανημέριος*; Eup. fr. 171.2 K.-A. *οὐδ' οἴκαδ' ἐλθὼν τὴν σεαυτοῦ γυμνάσεις δάμαρτα*;; Ov. *Her.* 5.140–1 *ille meae spolium uirginitatis habet, / id quoque luctando*; Suet. *Dom.* 22 *assiduitatem concubitus uelut exercitationis genus clinopalem uocabat*; Apul. *Met*. 2.17 *proeliare…comminus…derige et grassare nauiter et occide moriturus…hodierna pugna*, and 9.5 (*Veneris*) *colluctationibus*; Paul. Sil. *A.P.* 5.259.5–7 *κεἰ μὲν πανυχίῃσιν ὁμιλήσασα παλαίστραις / ταῦτα φέρεις* [i.e., bruises], *ὄλβου παντὸς ὑπερπέταται / ὅς σε περιπλέγδην ἔχε πήχεσιν*. We may add *ἄγχειν*, a technical term from wrestling used with sexual innuendo in Herodas 1.18: see Headlam/Knox ad loc.

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ταῖς δὲ γυναιξὶν οὐδ' ὅλως ἐξῆν ἐπικαλύπτεσθαι τὴν κεφαλήν; ἱστορεῖται γοῦν ὅτι πρῶτος μὲν ἐξέβαλε γυναῖκα Σπόριος Καρβίλιος ἐπ' ἀτεκνίᾳ, δεύτερος δὲ Σουλπίκιος Γάλλος ἐφελκυσαμένην ἰδὼν κατὰ κεφαλῆς τὸ ἱμάτιον, τρίτος δὲ Πόπλιος Σεμπρώνιος ἀγῶνα θεωρήσασαν ἐπιτάφιον. Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 267B–C. (Nachstädt, Sieveking, Titchener 1971).

Were women not at all allowed to veil their heads? At any rate it is recorded that Spurius Carvilius was the first to divorce his wife on account of her barrenness, that Sulpicius Gallus was second to do so, after seeing his wife pulling her *himation* over her head, and that Publius Sempronius was the third – his wife had gone to watch the funeral games.

Plutarch's source for these anecdotes was in all probability Valerius Maximus. Plutarch is known to have made use of the Roman moralist elsewhere in his

work.[1] In the passage quoted above he has grouped together three anecdotes of high-handed behaviour by Roman husbands in the same order in which they appear in the *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*: first, Spurius Carvilius' divorce of his wife for not producing children (*primus autem Sp. Caruilius uxorem sterilitatis causa dimisit*, 'Spurius Carvilius was the first to divorce his wife on account of her barrenness', Val. Max. 2.1.4); second, Sulpicius Galus' repudiation of his spouse for not wearing a veil (*horridum C. quoque Sulpicii Galli maritale supercilium: nam uxorem dimisit, quod eam capite aperto foris uersatam cognouerat*, 'the marital arrogance of C. Sulpicius Gallus was also harsh – he divorced his wife, because he found out that she had gone about outdoors with her head uncovered', Val. Max. 6.3.10); and, finally, the notice of separation served on his wife by Publius Sempronius (*iungendus est his P. Sempronius Sophus, qui coniugem repudii nota adfecit, nihil aliud quam se ignorante ludos ausam spectare*, 'to these must be added Publius Sempronius Sophus, who issued his wife with a notice of divorce, for no other reason than she dared to watch the games without his knowledge', Val. Max. 6.3.12). The first example is found at some remove from the second and third and was clearly selected by Plutarch as a further instance of arrogant behaviour by Roman men to add to the others, rather than being part of a ready-made group taken from a single passage. However, it is also conceivable that both Plutarch and Valerius Maximus encountered these cases in Varro's *De Vita Populi Romani*, since Plutarch cites Varro in the passage immediately preceding the anecdote of Spurius Carvilius' divorce (*Quaest. Rom.* 264D9), and Valerius also cites Varro on one occasion (3.2.24) and evidently made use of his material elsewhere.[2] A further possibility is that information about Sulpicius Galus, if not about all three divorce cases, came from the treatise on dowries of his first-century descendant, the lawyer Publius Sulpicius Rufus, whom Aulus Gellius mentions as the source of his information about the Carvilius case (*Noct. Att.* 4.3, cf. Cic. *Fam.* 4.6.1). This tangled web of related texts is evidence of the strong interest aroused by the Carvilius incident, traditionally the first divorce in the history of Roman law.[3] More importantly for the purposes of the present note, it shows that the relationship between Plutarch and Valerius Maximus may not necessarily be a simple or unmediated one.

[1] For the *Quellenforschung* on Valerius Maximus, see M. Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and the Rhetoric of the New Nobility* (Chapel Hill, 1992) 59–146. Support comes from C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies* (London, 2002), 83; L.A.G. Moreno, 'Paradoxography and political ideas in Plutarch's *Life of Sertorius*', in P.A. Stadter (ed.) *Plutarch and the Historical Tradition* (London, 1992), 150; L. van der Stockt, 'Plutarch's use of literature: sources and citations in the *Quaestiones Romanae*', *AncSoc* 18 (1987), 281–92, at p. 286, citing A. Sickinger, *De linguae latinae apud Plutarchum et reliquiis et vestigiis* (Diss. Friburgi Brisgoviae, 1883), 65–6; J.L. Moles, 'Fate, Apollo and M. Junius Brutus', *AJP* 104 (1983), 249–56, at 252: 'Plutarch certainly knew, and apparently sometimes used, Valerius Maximus', quoting *Brut.* 53.5, where Plutarch cites Valerius as his authority for Porcia's state of mind after the death of her husband, to which may be added *Marc.* 30.5 where Plutarch cites Valerius on Hannibal's treatment of Marcellus' corpse. On the *Roman Questions* in general, see J. Boulogne, 'Les Questions romaines de Plutarque' in H. Temporini and W. Haase (edd.), *ANRW* 2.33.6 (Berlin, 1992), 4682–702; H.J. Rose, *The Roman Questions of Plutarch: A New Translation with Introductory Essays and a Running Commentary* (New York, 1975 [reprint of Oxford, 1924 edition]).

[2] Bloomer (n. 1), 114, suggests the connection between Valerius and Varro here.

[3] The case is also discussed by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (2.25.7), Plutarch (*Rom. et Thes.* 6.4.6, *Lyc. et Num.* 3.6–7), and Aulus Gellius (17.21.44). For the legal significance of the case, see A. Watson, 'The divorce of Carvilius Ruga', *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* (1961) 243–58 = *Studies in Roman Private Law* (London), 23–36.

In addition to the problem of the sources for the tale of Galus' divorce, there is the possibility that the confusion is a result of a textual error in Valerius Maximus. There occurs in the MS tradition of Valerius a variation between *capite aperto* ('with unveiled head') and *capite operto* ('with veiled head'); the latter is the reading given in the Paris MS of the *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*. This error may already have been introduced into the tradition by Maximus or an earlier source. Alternatively, the uncertainty may have arisen when later copyists of his text had one eye on the passage in Plutarch under discussion. Some doubt about Plutarch's meaning has also crept in,[4] although Plutarch clearly wrote *ἐφελκυσαμένην* ('pulling on') rather than *ἀφελκυσαμένην* ('pulling off') despite the subsequent phrase *κατὰ κεφαλῆς* ('from/over her head').

It is nevertheless surprising, given that these cases were so well known, that Valerius Maximus and Plutarch differ so markedly in their accounts of the divorce of Sulpicius Galus. Plutarch states that Galus repudiated his wife because she went about in public with her head covered, while Valerius says the very opposite. The present note attempts to elucidate this problem.

First, it is necessary to establish the facts surrounding the divorce of Sulpicius Galus[5] as far as they can be known. Divorce at this time was highly controversial. The action of Carvilius against his wife was thought to have been the first such action for the five hundred and twenty years since the foundation of Rome (traditionally in 753 B.C.) and his contemporaries found fault with him for placing his desire for heirs before conjugal fidelity.[6] In early Rome, divorce proceedings could only be instituted on specific grounds (such as wine-drinking, substitution of children, poisoning and theft of keys).[7] During the late Republic, however, divorce was much easier.[8] The cases discussed by Plutarch must therefore belong to a transitional period in which at least some explanation needed to be given (in this case the accusation of veiling), when the action fell outside the traditional ambit of the law. In this respect, the divorce of Spurius Carvilius resembles that of a contemporary of the second-century Sulpicius Galus, Cato the Elder, who controversially remarried at the age of eighty after losing his first wife and first-born son.[9] A second son, Salonianus, was born in the following year.

[4] Rose (n. 1), 175 translates this phrase as 'pull her cloak down', but see Van Der Stockt (n. 1), 286, n. 32, who cites LSJ 9 s.v. *ἐφέλκω* III.3.

[5] The Sulpicius Galus concerned is likely to have been the well-known consul of 166, the student of eclipses (Cic. *Sen.* 49, *Rep.* 1.21.3, Liv. 44.37.5), rather than his grandfather, the consul of 243. So O. Münzer, *RE* 66, s.v. 'C. Sulpicius Galus' at p. 810. Münzer cites the authority of the *Fasti Capitolini* for the spelling Galus rather than Gallus for these Sulpicii. For the date of this Gaius Sulpicius Galus see J. Briscoe, 'Eastern Policy and Senatorial Politics', *Historia* 18 (1969), 49–70, at 65–6; Broughton, *MRR* 1.419 (special commission), 1.437 (cos. 166 B.C.); F. Münzer (trans. T. Ridley), *Roman Aristocratic Parties and Families* (Baltimore, 1999) 373–4.

[6] Valerius Maximus (2.1.4) reports this criticism of Carvilius. Cf. H.-F.O. Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus* (London, 2002), 195, n. 54.

[7] On the question of the grounds for divorce in Roman society, see J.F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society* (London and Sydney, 1986), 83, n. 9; S. Treggari, 'Divorce Roman style: ease and frequency' in B. Rawson, *Marriage Divorce and Children in Ancient Rome*, (Oxford, 1991), 38.

[8] Gardner (n. 7), 83–4.

[9] The chronology of the elder Cato's marriage in relation to his son's death is unclear. However, Plutarch (*Cat.* 24.1–2 and Gellius 13.20.7–9) appear to support the interpretation given above. For a slightly different chronology, cf. A. Astin, *Cato the Censor* (Oxford, 1978), 105.

Both factors, the lack of an heir and the rather arbitrary reason for the divorce, combine in the case of this Sulpicius Galus. He was the man whose fortitude at the time of the loss of his son, Cicero uses as an *exemplum* in his reply to the consolatory letter that Sulpicius Rufus had written to him after the death of Tullia (Cic. *Fam.* 4.6.1). Although it is not clear whether this was Galus' only son or whether he died before or after Galus' divorce of his wife, it is quite possible that after this tragedy the father was without an heir and therefore in need of a second marriage.[10] The circumstances surrounding Galus' repudiation of his wife, the loss of his son, and the possible need for a new heir, and consequently a wife capable of producing one, suggests that the charge that Sulpicius' wife had gone about in public with her head uncovered might be construed as a mere pretext for divorce.

There can, however, be no absolute certainty about the identity of the Sulpicius Galus under discussion. If he were the earlier consul of 243 and the contemporary of Spurius Carvilius Ruga and Publish Sempronius Sophus, stricter attitudes to veiling may have applied and the reason for the divorce may have had more substance. In either case, since the original source on which Valerius' account is based has not survived, it is impossible to say whether Sulpicius' grounds for divorce in the original incident were that his wife had covered her head or that she had gone about in public with her head uncovered. The second possibility (that she had gone about with head uncovered) appears to be the more natural alternative, as the covering of the head seems unlikely to have been the cause of Sulpicius' displeasure. Indeed the only circumstance in which this could conceivably have been cause for alarm is if Galus' wife had veiled her head to disguise her identity (perhaps as a cover for adultery?) in which case it would have been a serious matter indeed. However if this had been the case it would surely have attracted further discussion and would then not have fitted the pattern of the other cases in which the divorce was the consequence for minor misdemeanours.

In his treatment of the incident, Valerius Maximus (6.3.10) at first accuses Sulpicius of gross marital arrogance and brusqueness but he then goes on to approve of his actions and purports to quote the very words of the consul to the effect that the law required that his wife confine the display of her beauty to his eyes alone:

horridum C. quoque Sulpicii Galli maritale supercilium: nam uxorem dimisit, quod eam capite aperto foris uersatam cognouerat. abscisa sententia, sed tamen aliqua ratione munita: 'lex enim' inquit 'tibi meos tantum praefinit oculos, quibus formam tuam adprobes. his decoris instrumenta conpara, his esto speciosa, horum te citeriori[11] crede notitiae. ulterior tui conspectus superuacua inritatione arcessitus in suspicione et crimine haereat necesse est'.

The marital arrogance of C. Sulpicius Gallus was also harsh – he divorced his wife, because he found out that she had gone about outdoors with her head uncovered – a curt statement, but supported by a reason of sorts: 'for the law', he said, 'sets my eyes as the limits to which you may prove your beauty. For them prepare your devices of attraction, for them be pretty, trust yourself to their closer acquaintance. You must hold further sight of yourself, enticed by provocative vanity, in suspicion and as wrongdoing.'

These are, however, unlikely to have been the words of the Sulpicius Galus himself. The vocabulary is post-Augustan (*speciosa*, *notitiae*, *superuacua*) and the sentiments are those of the moralist Valerius himself, for whom *pudicitia* was an important

[10] Münzer (n. 5), 811.

[11] We read *citeriori* rather than *certiori*. For *citeriori*, see W.S. Watt, 'Notes on Valerius Maximus', *Euphrosyne* 23 (1995), 240.

feminine virtue.[12] Moreover, if *lex* is to mean an actual statute rather than having the more abstract sense,[13] the law mentioned by Sulpicius can only have been the Augustan *lex de pudicitia* mentioned by Suetonius (*Aug.* 34.1), which accompanied his law on adultery.[14] Valerius frequently adapts his anecdotes to convey his own moral views,[15] and he portrays Augustus in restrained terms as 'defender of legitimacy and the family'.[16] Dress was of some interest for Valerius (cf. 3.6, on the relaxation of earlier standards of dress) and his rhetorical amplification of Sulpicius' dramatic divorce of his wife for going unveiled in public is entirely in keeping with this.

Plutarch's concerns were very different. His discussion of the incident (see the quotation at the head of this article) occurs in response to the question why Roman sons wear veils,[17] but daughters do not, at the funerals of their fathers. He provides two answers:[18] the first, to which he later returns in order to provide supporting evidence, is that the Romans felt that fathers must be honoured as gods by their sons, but mourned as dead by their daughters (*πότερον ὅτι τιμᾶσθαι μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρρένων δεῖ τοὺς πατέρας ὡς θεοὺς πενθεῖσθαι δ' ὑπὸ τῶν θυγατέρων ὡς τεθνηκότας, ἑκατέρῳ τὸ οἰκεῖον ὁ νόμος ἀποδοὺς ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων ἐποίησε τὸ ἁρμόττον;* 'Is it because fathers must be grieved for by the males as though they were gods and by daughters as though they were dead, that the law has imposed what is proper on each, producing from both what is fitting?', Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267); the second is that funerals often invert what is normal practice and that Roman women usually went about veiled in public while their men did not (*συνηθέστερον δὲ ταῖς μὲν γυναιξὶν ἐγκεκαλυμμέναις, τοῖς δ' ἀνδράσιν ἀκαλύπτοις εἶς τὸ δημόσιον προιέναι*, 'it is more usual for women to go out in public with their heads veiled, and for men to go out with their heads uncovered', Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 267).[19]

[12] Cf. R. Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, 2006), 138–41; H.-F.O. Mueller, ' "Vita", "pudicitia", "libertas": Juno, gender, and religious politics in Valerius Maximus', *TAPhA* 128 (1989), 221–63. For general studies of Valerius Maximus see Mueller (n. 6); C. Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen* (Exeter, 1996).

[13] *OLD. s.v. lex*.

[14] So T.A.J. McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (Oxford, 2002), 155. Although he does not argue in favour of a *lex de pudicitia* separate from the *lex de adulteriis*, McGinn does note that dress for Valerius is a way of constructing *pudicitia*. R. Palmer, 'Roman shrines of female chastity from the caste struggle to the Papacy of Innocent I', *Rivista storica dell' antichità*, 4, (1974), 294–309; and E. Badian, 'A phantom marriage law', *Philologus* 129, (1985), 82–98 argue that the *lex de pudicitia* was distinct from the *lex de adulteriis*, and this appears to be the meaning of Suetonius, who refers specifically to this law as a discrete piece of legislation, when he records how Augustus *leges retractavit et quasdam ex integro sanxit, ut sumptuariam et de adulteriis et de pudicitia, de ambitu, de maritandis ordinibus* 'revised the laws and ratified certain ones afresh, such as one relating to extravagance and to adultery and to *pudicitia*, to electoral corruption and to marriage regulations' (*Aug.* 34.1).

[15] Bloomer (n. 1), 68, 239.

[16] Bloomer (n. 1), 227, who notes the restraint of Valerius with regard to Augustus. Mueller (n. 6), 4, notes that Valerius praises conduct that 'corresponds closely to the values promoted by Augustan moral legislation'. For the date of Valerius, see J. Bellemore, 'When did Valerius Maximus write the *Dicta et Facta Memorabilia*?', *Antichthon* 23 (1998), 67–80.

[17] On male veiling at Rome, see H. Freier, *Caput velare* (PhD Diss. Tübingen: Eberhard-Karls-Universität, 1963).

[18] Plutarch frequently provides a number of answers to the questions posed and debates the merits of each dialectically, cf. Boulogne (n. 1), 4696–8.

[19] R. MacMullen, 'Women in public in the Roman empire', *Historia* 29.2 (1980), 208–18, at 208, wrongly assumes that Plutarch is referring to Greek women: 'Plutarch reports "it is more often the custom for women to be veiled," evidently in the Greek half of the Roman world.'

There are a number of points to note in this account. First, Plutarch's assumption that Roman girls did not cover their heads and wore their hair loose at the funerals of their parents conflicts with the testimony of Nonius Marcellinus (869L), who quotes Varro's *De Vita Populi Romani* to the effect that women wear the *ricinium*, a garment that covered the head, in times of mourning.[20] Cicero confirms Nonius' observation in the *De Legibus* (2.23.59) where he notes that the Twelve Tables forbade more than three women to wear *ricinia* at funerals.[21] However, Plutarch is quite definite on this point and we can only assume that the custom of going bare-headed and dishevelled at the funerals of parents was specifically limited to daughters. Second, Plutarch assumes that Roman women regularly wore the veil in public. Most modern scholars, quite possibly mistakenly (the issue of veiling is complex in most societies and Roman society is unlikely to be any different in this respect), believe that this was not generally the case, at any rate in the late Republic or Augustan period, and that Roman women were unlike their Greek sisters in this regard.[22] However, Plutarch must have known how Roman women usually dressed in public and indeed the assumption that women normally wore the veil in his day (a fact that must have been common knowledge at the time) explains his subsequent question concerning the hypothetical general prohibition of female veiling in early Roman society.[23] He asks whether Roman women were previously (ἐξῆν) not allowed to cover their heads at all. The reply (very elliptical and not at all explicit) appears to be that this was indeed the case (γοῦν),[24] and this unusual state of affairs – especially in so far as Greek men are concerned – is explained on the grounds of the three rather extreme instances of marital intolerance by Roman husbands mentioned in the quotation at the head of this note. Here Plutarch appears to assume that most Roman women in earlier times wanted to veil but were prevented from doing so by their husbands. At any rate, he accepts the possibility that Roman women did not regularly cover their heads in public at this time. If Plutarch thought it possible that Roman women did not routinely veil in early Rome, this could explain why he was diffident about his second answer to his initial question and why he returned to his first explanation of Roman funeral practice. Plutarch here ignores the terms of sumptuary legislation mentioned by Cicero (loc. cit.) but he clearly thought that the incident of Sulpicius Galus' divorce of his wife belonged in the context of early Roman conduct, when Roman women

However, Plutarch is clearly referring to Roman women here as he goes on to compare the custom of Greek women to cut their hair in mourning, while Greek men allow it to grow.

[20] *Mulieres in adversis rebus ac luctibus, cum omnem vestitum delicatiorem ac luxuriosum postea institutum ponunt, ricinia sumunt* ('In adversity and mourning, women lay aside all the fine and extravagant clothing that they had subsequently begun to wear and put on *ricinia.*) For a discussion of the *ricinium*, see J. Edmondson and A. Keith, *Roman Dress and the Fabric of Roman Culture* (Toronto, forthcoming).

[21] *Extenuato igitur sumptu 'tribus reciniis et tunicula purpurea et decem tibicinibus'* ('Therefore the expense is limited to 'three *recinia,* a purple tunic, and ten fluteplayers').

[22] This wider problem cannot be fully addressed here. MacMullen (n. 19), 208 states: 'Roman women were not in his [Valerius'] time hidden from men's sight.' Cf. also E. Bartman, *Portraits of Livia* (Cambridge, 1999), 44–5. For the use of the veil by Greek women, cf. L. Llewellyn-Jones, *Aphrodite's Tortoise: The Veiled Woman of Ancient Greece* (Swansea, 2003).

[23] The interrogative punctuation is given by Nachstädt, Sieveking and Titchener (1971). The Loeb punctuates the text as a statement, not a question. However, the words are best taken as a query to which the three anecdotes drawn from Valerius are given as an implied response.

[24] For γοῦν as an expression of qualified assent, see J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford, 1954), 448–59, at 452.

were supposed not to have worn the veil. Consequently he states that Sulpicius Galus divorced his wife for covering her head with her cloak (ἱμάτιον).[25]

We conclude that the disagreement between Valerius Maximus and Plutarch on the issue of whether Sulpicius Galus' wife was divorced for veiling or going unveiled is the result of the very different contexts in which these authors discuss the case. Valerius Maximus, writing at a time of heightened awareness of female modesty and the importance of dress,[26] shapes his discussion in conformance with his own views on the subject, although the issue may have been relatively unimportant in the original case. Plutarch, on the other hand, was attempting to answer the question of female veiling practices in early Rome about which he evidently had little knowledge. The contradiction between Valerius and Plutarch is an indication of the complexity of the issue of the veiling of women in Roman society.

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[25] Rose (n. 1), 18 takes this as a simple error on the part of Plutarch. According to Rose, either Plutarch confused *operire* with *aperire* (i.e. he read *capite operto* in his source not *capite aperto*) or this mistake was already present the account he was using. More was at work than Rose allows.
[26] For the policy of Augustus, see Suet. *Aug.* 40.5.

TWO TRICKY TRANSITIVES

The border between transitive and intransitive in Latin was as permeable as the Rio Grande, in principle. In practice however each verb is a special case. In this note I want to draw attention to two verbs, *erubesco* and *plaudo*, whose transitive usage has caused misunderstanding.

1. Cicero, *Pro Caelio* 8 *illud tamen te esse admonitum uolo … ut ea in alterum ne dicas quae, cum tibi falso responsa sint, erubescas.*

This is how the text is printed in A.C. Clark's 1908 OCT and reprinted in R.G. Austin's well-known edition. In his commentary Austin observed that the accusative (*quae*) after *erubescere* is rare in prose, and he referred to the article in *TLL* V 2.821.59–61. Reviewing the third edition (1960) of that commentary in *JRS* 51 (1961), 267 R.G.M. Nisbet offered an alternative explanation, namely that the construction was like that at *Phil.* 2.9, and he referred to Kühner – Stegmann's Latin grammar, II.316ff. To unpack Nisbet's alternative: the phenomenon, as he saw it, was to be explained as what German Latinists call 'relative Verschränkung', whereby in this example the relative *quae* only serves as subject for the subordinate *cum*-clause, and the main verb of the relative clause, *erubescas*, remains intransitive. This construction is actually quite common in Ciceronian prose, and equally commonly it is often misconstrued by modern students, because our own vernaculars are less flexible than Latin. I drew attention to this problem in a recent essay, 'The impracticability of Latin "Kunstprosa"', in T. Reinhardt, M. Lapidge, and J.N. Adams