

Summary

VALERIUS CATO – FURIUS BIBACULUS – CATULL:
A FATAL CORRUPTION IN THE PARADOSIS OF SUETONIUS,
DE GRAMMATICIS, 11,1

The article proposes an emendation to Suetonius, *De grammaticis*, 11,1, where the paradosis of the life of Valerius Cato reads *licentia Sullani temporis*, based upon the assumption that the adjective *Sullani* stems from an erroneous gloss inspired by the references to Sulla in the following lives of Cornelius Epicadus and Staberius Eros. Additionally, a transposition of these three lives (Suetonius, *De grammaticis*, 11–13) between the chapters 8 (on Pompilius Andronicus) and 9 (on Orbilius) is proposed. Both assumptions suggest that Valerius Cato (as was the case with Cornelius Epicadus and Staberius Eros) might have been more or less the same age as his fellow grammarian Orbilius (born 113 BC). This would provide not only a basis for sticking to St Jerome's dating of the birth of the poet Furius Bibaculus (who wrote about the *summa senectas* of Cato in one of his surviving poems) to 103 BC, but also allows us to interpret both the (fragmentary) Catullus, *Carmina*, 14b (*Si qui forte mearum ineptiarum / lectores eritis*) as a quotation of the opening lines of Furius' poem *frg.* 84 (*Si quis forte mei domum Catonis [...]*) and Catullus, *Carmina*, 26 (on Furius' mortgaged *villula*) as a response to the two poems in which Furius makes a fool of the bankrupt and dispossessed Valerius Cato.

Keywords: textual criticism; chronology; intertextuality; Suetonius; Valerius Cato; Furius Bibaculus; Catullus

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