

Martial 8.6.8

In Martial 8.6, the odious Euctus boasts of possessing a whole list of antiques with implausibly ancient pedigrees, including a mixing-bowl damaged in the Centauromachy (7-8):¹

hoc cratere ferox commisit proelia Rhoecus
cum Lapithis: pugna debile cernis opus.

Rhoecus Q, *Shrijfer* : Roecus B : chrocos *vel sim.* β : Rhoetus Tγ

Whatever the name of the Centaur in 7, I suspect that Martial wrote *pugno*, not *pugna*, in 8: ‘damaged by a fist’ is far more vivid than ‘damaged in a fight’, and *pugno*, as the rarer word, is the *lectio difficilior*. Martial mentions Nestor’s thumb in the next couplet:

hi duo longaevo censentur Nestore fundi:
pollice de Pylio trita columba nitet. 10

Then again, ‘damaged by a hoof’ would be even more vivid in 8, so perhaps I should think again. Of course, centaurs had fists as well as hooves, so even with my conjecture there is no hint as to which side damaged the *crater*.

¹ My text is from Shackleton Bailey’s Teubner Martial (Stuttgartiae, 1990), with additions to the apparatus from Christian Schöffel, *Martial, Buch 8* (Palingenesia – Band 77, 2002).