atomic structure similar in appearance to the things we see[3]) has come into existence from the infinite...'. Palaeographically an angular displacement of M at an early stage could easily have been read as Σ. The occurrence of the phrase ἐν πυκνώμασί τισι ὁμιχλοειδέσι in D. L. X. 115 shows that Epicurus (or conceivably an imitator) was interested to classify πυκνώματα by their appearances, and suggests that τὸ ὁμοειδὲς πύκνωμα was just the kind of technical expression which it would have been natural for him to use in the *Letter to Herodotus*.

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A HUMANIST CONJECTURE IN TIBULLUS,
1, 9, 61

illam saepe ferunt convivia ducere Baccho

Thus the received text. In cod. Laur. 33, 11 *ferant* is read[1]). This humanist conjecture was described as 'evident richtig' by G. Luck, who compared the present subjunctives in lines 54, 56, 57, 58, 59 and 63[2]). He did not, however, explain how a correct *ferant* came to be corrupted to *ferunt* in a context so rich in present subjunctives. And a close look at that context reveals that the couplet 61 f. is not on all fours with what precedes. Although Luck has since returned to *ferunt* in his Artemis edition of Propertius and Tibullus (Zürich 1964), it is perhaps still worth while to trace the movement of Tibullus' thought in this part of the poem and to show how appropriate to his argument is the indicative in line 61.

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3) A possible alternative rendering would be 'similar in appearance to those (i.e. the πυκνώματα) that we see', cf. D. L. X. 50.

1) B. L. Ullman, Achilles Statius' Manuscripts of Tibullus, in Didascaliae, Studies in honor of A. M. Albareda edited by S. Prete, New York 1961, 458.

2) RhMus 105, 1962, 350.

At line 53 the poet begins to curse the rich man who has stolen his boy from him: *at te ... rideat ... uxor*. He continues with three similar optative subjunctives, each referring to the behaviour of the *uxor: languida ... cubet* (56), *semper sint externa tuo vestigia lecto* (57) and *pateat cupidis ... domus* (58). The poet now proceeds to introduce a new topic, the morals of his rival's sister, while at the same time continuing to express the wish that his *uxor* may live scandalously:

> *nec lasciva soror dicatur plura bibisse*
> *pocula vel plures emeruisse viros* (59f.).

As Dissen observed (ad 59ff.), the poet's curse is aimed at the wife's behaviour and not the sister's: "imprecatio ... eo pertinet et pertinere debet ut uxor corrumpatur; quare quod nunc de sorore dicit, non est imprecatio, sed comparatio sarcastica"[3]). It follows that lines 61–64, which are not concerned with the wife, are not part of the curse and that there is no place in them for an optative subjunctive. Lines 61f. are a statement about the sister's bad name which makes clear the significance of the first part of the wish expressed in the previous couplet. *ferunt* is therefore entirely appropriate. The next couplet (63f.) takes up the second part of the wish, but is again concerned with the sister and not the wife:

> *illa nulla queat melius consumere noctem*
> *aut operum varias disposuisse vices.*

And again it is a statement. The subjunctive here is different from those in lines 53–60, being potential ('no woman could ...') and not optative[4]).

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3) Albii Tibulli carmina ... expl. L. Dissenius, Göttingen 1835, II, 187f.

4) K. F. Smith, The Elegies of Albius Tibullus, Darmstadt 1964 (reprint of edition of 1913), 372. Dissen too saw that the subjunctive was not optative: "non est optantis, precantis ... sed suspicantis. illa tua sorore, credo, ait, nulla lascivarum artium peritior" (II, 188).