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TEXTUAL NOTES ON OVID, *METAMORPHOSES* 7–9

The following notes are a by-product of a commentary on the above books of the poem. While writing it I have enjoyed the great advantage of having before me the draft text and apparatus criticus of Professor R. J. Tarrant's eagerly awaited Oxford Classical Text, with which he has been kind enough to furnish me. Where I differ from him I do so with due diffidence, and I shall not be altogether surprised if one or two of my suggestions seem to him and other good judges to be mistaken, or here and there to fall into the category of what Sir Denys Page called 'private poetry'. I am grateful to Dr Philip Hardie and Dr Stephen Harrison for their very helpful comments and criticisms, from which the piece has greatly benefited.

7.11 frustra, Medea, repugnas.

Medea's self-apostrophe, introducing a soliloquy on the outcome of which will depend the fate of many others besides herself and Jason, is strongly affective. At this, the first occurrence of her name in the poem, it also serves as a reminder of a traditional etymological connection with μῆτις and μήδομαι (A.R. 3.825–7 and Hunter, ad loc.). That being so, there is a case for so printing the text as to allow the word *Medea* to be construed both as a vocative and predicatively as nominative: 'For all your cunning you resist (sc. the power of love) in vain.' For an even clearer case for dispensing with editorial commas, see below on 7.742.

7.29–31 at nisi opem tulero, taurorum adflabitur ore
concurretque suae segeti, tellure creatis
hostibus, aut auido dabitur fera praeda draconi.

The words *fera praeda* are usually explained as a case of enallage: 'nicht die *praeda* ist *fera*, sondern der *draco*' (Bömer, ad loc.). No parallels for what even by Ovidian standards seems to be an exceptionally bold use of this figure have been adduced, and it is worth suggesting that he may have written *mera praeda*, 'simply a prey'; cf. *A.A.* 2.274 *idque merae uires et rude corpus erat*, *OLD* s.v. *merus* 3a, *TLL* s.v. *merus* 848, 26–7, 41.5. Such a characterization of Jason as a helpless victim is consistent with Ovid's portrayal of him throughout the episode: at every stage of the proceedings *mera praeda* is precisely what he will become if Medea's protection is not forthcoming. Cf. below on 8.404–13.

7.266–7 adicit extremo lapides Oriente petitos
et quas Oceani refluum mare lauit harenas.

Sand cuts an odd figure among the other exotic ingredients of Medea's brew.[1] Reading *harenis*, 'from the beaches' (*OLD* s.v. 2a), improves both sense and expression. 'She stirs in stones fetched from the furthest East and from the shores washed by the tidal waters of Ocean'; on this type of polar phrase, see Fordyce on Catull. 115.6. That Oceanus here stands for the Western Ocean, the Atlantic (*OLD* s.v. 2a *fin.*), is signalled by *refluum*: the Atlantic tides always impressed, and

[1] The medical use of sand in a poultice or compress (*OLD* s.v. 1 *fin.*) is too prosaic to be relevant.

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sometimes took by surprise (Tac. *Ann*. 1.70) dwellers by the virtually tideless Mediterranean. Ovid was probably thinking primarily of pearls, the two traditional sources of which were the seas generally lumped together under the name *Mare Rubrum* (*A.A*. 3.129–30; cf. Murgatroyd on Tib. 2.2.15–16) and (though these were less esteemed) Britain (Tac. *Agric*. 12.6 *gignit et Oceanus margaritas*; cf. Pastorino on Auson. *Mos*. 68–72). So emended the couplet, with *Oceani . . . harenis* paralleling and varying *extremo . . . Oriente*, exhibits a neater and characteristically Ovidian syntactical structure. The corruption will have been facilitated by the habitual scribal propensity to read from phrase to phrase instead of taking in the sense of the sentence as a whole, and the instinctive impulse to look for a syntactical complement to *quas*; the enclosing *quas . . . harenas* does in fact impart a superficially Ovidian character—sufficient to have imposed on many generations of editors—to the verse.

7.430–1 nullus Erecthidis fertur celebratior illo
illuxisse dies.

The form in which editors clothe these descendants of Erechtheus here and at *Ibis* 291 (conjecturally restored by Ellis; but see La Penna, ad loc.) is both unattested and anomalous. It is a sound rule of thumb that Ovid would have followed the Greek spelling of Greek proper names except in such cases as Achilles and Ulysses and the like. Read *Erectheidis* and cf. next note.

7.504 imperiumque peti totius Achaidos addit.

Here too it is likely that Ovid would have reproduced the Greek spelling: read *Achaeidos* and cf. 5.577 (noun); 3.511, 5.306, 15.293 (adj.). It is characteristic of editorial practice in such matters that at *Her*. 3.71 *Achaeiadas* is printed without remark. *Achaicus*, attested in much older and better MSS than Ovid's, perhaps constitutes a moot point; but, given that Ἀχαιϊκός was familiar to readers of Greek texts from Homer onwards, *Achaeicus* is the spelling one would expect Latin poets to have adopted.

7.533–5 constat et in fontes uitium uenisse lacusque
miliaque incultos serpentum multa per agros
errasse atque suis fluuios temerasse uenenis.

In Ovid's elegiacs *atque* is almost without exception elided; in the *Metamorphoses* his practice is only marginally less strict, with some 92 per cent elided.[2] Here he may have written *aque*, as in several other cases where *atque* is transmitted; for his use of *ab* to signify cause and effect, virtually equivalent to instrumental ablative, see K. Guttmann, *Sogenanntes instrumentales* ab *bei Ovid* (progr. Dortmund 1890), 8–12, 15–20.

7.600–1 exta quoque aegra notas ueri monitusque deorum
perdiderant; tristes penetrant ad uiscera morbi.

Ovid's handling of tenses in narrative can verge at times on the arbitrary (cf. e.g. *A.A*. 1.103–30); here, however, *penetrant* makes the sentence read like a footnote to a clinical history—'in such cases the disease strikes at the vitals'. Did he perhaps write *penetrarant*? It is true that he elsewhere constructs *penetro* with *ad* or *in* or *quo*, but

[2] M. Platnauer, *CQ* 42 (1948), 91; but I cannot swallow *mouet atque* at 11.674.

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penetro + acc. is Lucretian, which would suit this context, and this would be by no means the only syntactical singularity in the corpus (Kenney, *PBA* 93 [1999], 399–400).

7.742 me, perfida, teste teneris.

So the verse has been printed at least since Heinsius *fils*. But how do editors know that *perfida* is vocative? It makes at least as good sense taken as predicative nominative = 'you stand convicted as faithless'. For this sense of *teneo*, cf. *OLD* s.v. 6, and for Ovid's penchant for legal phraseology, Kenney, *YCS* 21 (1969), 241–63. The enclosure of *perfida* by *me . . . teste* drives the point home: she is literally (textually) 'held', trapped, by Cephalus' witness. Compare 8.433, where Meleager's uncles try to bully Atalanta out of the spoils of the chase:

pone age nec titulos intercipe femina nostros,

'don't you, a woman, come between men and their rights'—precisely what the placing of *femina* makes her do. On Ovid's use of enclosing word order to reinforce sense, see D. Lateiner, *AJP* 111 (1990), 217–23. Cf. above on 7.11.

8.56–7 quamuis saepe utile uinci
uictoris placidi fecit clementia multis.

As transmitted the sentence reads anticlimactically; Riese emended *multis* to *uictis*. That creates a triple polyptoton, which in spite of Ovid's well-attested predilection for this figure (J. Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry. Figures of Allusion* [Oxford 1996], *passim*) seems a trifle over the top. A less drastic solution is to transpose *uinci* and *multis*; for such appeals to general experience, cf. *A.A.* 1.159–60 *fuit utile multis / puluinum facili composuisse manu*, 2.642 *utile quae multis dissimulasse fuit*. Line 57 is then effectively framed by *uictoris . . . uinci*. For the virtual juxtaposition of the pleonastic *saepe . . . multis*, cf. *F.* 6.107–8 *nymphe . . . nequiquam multis saepe petita procis*, *Tr.* 2.281 (*theatra*) *peccandi causam multis quam saepe dederunt*.

8.408–13 dixit et aerata torsit graue cuspide cornum;
quo bene librato uotique potente futuro
obstitit aesculea frondosus ab arbore ramus.
misit et Aesonides iaculum, quod casus ab illo
uertit in immeriti fatum latrantis et inter
ilia coniectum tellure per ilia fixum est.

Lines 411–13 exhibit a number of oddities. (1) *illo* must refer to the boar, but he was last mentioned at 403, and with *ramus* immediately preceding this is awkward writing. (2) The expression *in fatum* occurs only here in Ovid. (3) The emphasis in the repeated *ilia . . . ilia* seems to lack point. As to (1) the obvious correction to *apro* does not appear to have been suggested, but it is not easy to account for the corruption. (2) need not give undue concern; as I have argued elsewhere, singularity in expression or usage does not necessarily signal inauthenticity. (3) I can do nothing with.

The lines are detachable and would not have been missed if the MSS did not offer them. Yet it would be a pity to lose them. That Jason should make his final exit from the poem on this ignominious note is of a piece with his performance throughout. He had already been comprehensively upstaged by Medea in Book 7, and his reappearance at the Calydonian Hunt does nothing either to retrieve his reputation or to raise

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the standard of heroic ineptitude that characterises Ovid's hilarious send-up. Having previously made one boss shot at the boar (347–9), he now compounds that failure by committing the ultimate hunting-field crime—killing a hound.[3] Nothing, one might say, becomes his literary life in the *Metamorphoses* like the leaving of it.

This note raises more questions than it answers, but I have thought it worth including as an example of the kind of puzzles that continue to surface in the light of reflective study of the editorial vulgate.

8.724 cura deum di sint et qui coluere colantur.

So nearly all modern editions, following the predominant testimony of the MSS, for what it is worth in this tradition.[4] Heinsius robustly dismissed this majority reading out of hand—'Nihili haec sunt, nec ad rem quicquam faciunt'—and emended to

cura pii dis sunt, et, qui coluere, coluntur,

which seems to have held the field until Ehwald came on the scene and established what is now the editorial vulgate (revision of Otto Korn's edition of Books 8–15, Berlin 1898). Exceptionally and eccentrically, F. J. Miller in the Loeb (1916, 1921) opted for a hybrid version, *sunt . . . colantur*.

Lelex is making a statement, not uttering a wish or a prayer. The story of Baucis and Philemon which he has just related is designed to demonstrate the power of the gods to reward and punish, and the proof is there for all to see: Baucis and Philemon, in return for their own piety, are actually being worshipped in their turn. Reading *sint* imports an inconsistency, *colantur* an irrelevance: Lelex is only by implication counselling piety, it is the reward actually earned by piety that confronts him as he makes his own offering and that he thus briefly and memorably epitomises. These *are* gods, and the votive offerings prove it. Read *sunt . . . coluntur*. Heinsius' correction was, I should guess, inspired by a wish to sharpen the point that he conceived Ovid to be making, but it rather blunts it by making him say the same thing in effect twice. The MS reading enlarges and varies the message: 'Those who are dear to the gods [*OLD* s.v. *cura* 8] are (themselves) gods, and the worshippers are (now) the worshipped.'

8.759–60 et pariter frondes, pariter pallescere glandes
coepere et longi pallorem ducere rami.

A characteristically Ovidian theme and variation expressed in tricolon crescendo form; but by Ovidian standards the polyptoton *pallescere . . . pallorem ducere* seems feeble, though it might be defended by 8.807–8 *auxerat articulos macies, genuumque tumebat / orbis, et immodico prodibant tubere tali*. Although the word is excessively rare, it is tempting to suggest *lurorem* for *pallorem*. Cf. 4.266–7 *membra ferunt haesisse solo, partemque coloris / luridus exsangues pallor conuertit in herbas*. Ovid uses *luridus* freely (eight times, seven in *Met.*) and *luror* is Lucretian, which might well have recommended it to him (for Lucretius as a presence in *Met.*, see e.g. K. Sara Myers, *Ovid's Causes. Cosmogony and Aetiology in the* Metamorphoses [Michigan, 1994], 47–9). It is interesting, and may be significant, that the word next appears in

[3] I reproduce the text of line 412 in the form on which editors have generally and I think rightly settled. In the version recorded by Apollodorus (*Bibl.* 1.8.2) it is one of the hunters, Eurytion, who is the victim of 'friendly fire', but attempts to substitute the name of a hero for *latrantis* dignify what Ovid clearly intended as knockabout.

[4] *sunt* EFLM^{2}N^1 . . . *coluntur* FL (*teste* Anderson).

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Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (four times); Apuleius knew his Ovid as well as his Lucretius. Not all such abstracts in *-or* were felt to be archaic, as witness *ardor* and *fulgor*; and Celsus and Pliny found *leuor* acceptable.

8.866–8 quoque minus dubites, sic has deus aequoris artes
adiuuet, ut nemo iamdudum litore in isto
me tamen excepto nec femina constitit ulla.

By placing commas round *me tamen excepto*, editors sabotage Ovid's wit by giving commentators an opportunity, which they have been regrettably ready to take, to castigate him for making Mnestra tell lies and so spoiling the joke—lies, as Dr Hardie remarks, rendered all the more blatant by the echo in *constitit* of the questioner's reported *steterat . . . stantem* at line 860. If the phrase is read as it should be, *ἀπὸ κοινοῦ*, the sense is 'all this time nobody has been here, and certainly no woman—apart from me', which is of course the literal truth. The play with the genders spices the fun: s/he has been a woman but is for the moment a man.

9.364–5 et quaerunt Dryopen; Dryopen quaerentibus illis
ostendi loton. tepido dant oscula ligno *eqs*.

The lotus, the tree that she had unwittingly violated, is surely the one tree that Dryope could not have been turned into or hoped that her little boy would play under (376–7). However, Iole cannot be identifying the lotus as 'den schuldigen Baum' (Bömer, ad loc.); it is Dryope they are looking for, not the source of her misfortune, and it is she in her transformed shape that they fly to embrace. Commentators by and large appear to be untroubled, and I have not come across any suggestion for emendation. A poplar (Nicander *ap*. Ant. Lib. 32.4) is metrically inadmissible. The best that I have been able to come up with is *truncum*; though the word has occurred as recently as line 361, Ovid is notoriously tolerant of such non-pointed repetitions. Dr Hardie suggests *lignum*, comparing for the polyptoton 1.556 (Apollo and Daphne) *oscula dat ligno, refugit tamen oscula lignum*. However, as he remarks, we really need a word for 'tree'; and more attractive to me than either of these proposals is Dr Harrison's *quercum*. This introduces a characteristically ironical play on Dryope's name, reflecting her metamorphosis: from oak-girl to oak-(nymph), Dryope to Dryad. Although, as noted above, in Nicander's treatment of the story she was changed into a poplar, that was through the agency of the hamadryads, to whom she was especially dear (Ant. Lib. 32.1, 4). Such a *jeu d'esprit* would be typical of the creative manner in which Ovid handles Nicander and his other mythographical sources; for his penchant for bilingual etymological word-play in describing metamorphoses, see e.g. Myers (op. cit. above on 8.759–60), 37–9, and the etymological connection between oak-trees and dryads had already been hinted at in the story of Erysichthon (8.743–6). The triple alliteration of *qu-* underlines the point.

9.394–7 dumque
Eurytidos lacrimas admoto pollice siccat
Alcmene (flet et ipsa tamen), compescuit omnem
res noua tristitiam.

To explain the parenthesis Bömer refers to von Albrecht, who glosses it as follows: 'Alcmena trocknet Ioles Tränen, doch die P[arenthese]—flet et ipsa tamen—verrät,

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daß die Erzählung der Schwiegertochter auch ihr sehr nahe gegangen ist' (*Die Parenthese in Ovids Metamorphosen und ihre dichterische Funktion* [Würzburg 1963], 144). But why 'doch'? Why 'verrät'? What was more natural than that Alcmena should shed sympathetic tears? The adversative is worse than otiose; it intrudes where it is not wanted. *tamen* can, however, be made to pull its weight in the narrative by a simple correction:

Alcmene flens ipsa, tamen *eqs*.,

which gives the word its full adversative force as it ushers in the next unlooked for development. For sympathetic weeping—if indeed a parallel for any such reflection in literature of ordinary human experience is called for—one need look no further than the very passages cited by von Albrecht in support of his interpretation (loc. cit. n. 157): *Met*. 14.305 *flentem flentes amplectimur ipsi*, *Tr*. 1.3.17 *uxor amans flentem flens acrius ipsa tenebat*; and indeed, as Dr Hardie remarks, shared tears are by way of being an Ovidian *topos*; cf. *Met*. 7.863, *Her*. 5.45, *Ex P*. 1.4.53.

9.753–9
nec tamen est potiunda mihi nec, ut omnia fiant,
esse potes felix, ut dique hominesque laborent.
nunc quoque uotorum nulla est pars uana meorum,
dique mihi faciles quidquid ualuere dederunt.
quod uolo uult genitor, uult ipsa socerque futurus,
at non uult natura, potentior omnibus istis,
quae mihi sola nocet.

755–6 *del. Heinsius*

It is certainly difficult, either by way of interpretation or emendation, to save the credit of line 755; but *quidquid ualuere* in 756 is not unworthy of Ovid as dramatic irony. The stumbling-block is *dique*; without line 755 the *-que* cannot be convincingly accounted for as asseverative or epexegetic (*OLD* s.v. 6a, 9a). If we read (*ex. gr.*) *nempe dei* for *dique mihi* we have a not ineffective sequence of thought: 754 Neither gods nor men can help me now, 756 for indeed the gods have already done all they can for me, 757 and though all the human beings concerned are well disposed, 758–9 Nature stands immovably in the way. *nempe* is one of Ovid's favourite words.

9.770–2
at illa
crinalem capiti uittam nataeque sibique
detrahit.

As transmitted, line 771 incorporates an unOvidian inconcinnity, best exposed by a literal translation: Telethusa tears off the headdresses 'from her daughter's head and from herself'. *capitis* (Heinsius ex codd.) is a *pis aller*. Changing *sibique* to *suoque* gives an expression and a construction which is precisely paralleled at 7.763–4 *exitio multi pecorumque suoque* / *rurigenae pauere feram*, where *suoque* has been variously corrupted to *suumque* and *sibique*, and 8.777 *attonitae dryades damno nemorumque suoque*, where *suoque* has been likewise corrupted to *suorum*. Planudes' τῆς οἰκείας probably represents his idea of the required sense rather than what he found in his MS.

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