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TEXTUAL AND INTERPRETATIVE PROBLEMS IN OVID

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Amores 1,13,19-21:

atque eadem sponsum multos ante atria mittis,

unius ut verbi grandia damna ferant.

nec tu consulto, nec tu iucunda diserto.

line 19 multos: Withof: sponsum consulti mss.

line 20 ferant: ferat v.1.

In this passage Ovid addresses Aurora. The critics¹ have been puzzled by the meaning of line 19. Textual alteration is, however, not necessary. We should print the mss reading *consulti* and translate as follows:

"and before the house (*ante atria*) of a lawyer (*consulti*) you despatch $(mittis)^2$ a sponsor (*sponsum*)³, so that he may bear (*ferat*) great losses through a single word."

For the repetition consulti ... consulto cf. Mus. Phil. Lond., X, 1996, page 51.

Amores I,13,29-32:

optavi quotiens, aut ventus frangeret axem, aut caderet spissa nube retentus equus! quid, si Cephalio numquam flagraret amore? an putat ignotam nequitiam esse suam?

Ovid tells Aurora that he has often wished that her horse would meet with an accident. I would like to point out that lines 31-32 provide perfect sense in the context. Ovid argues that Aurora's horse knows that she is guilty of adultery. Translate as follows: "What if the horse never inflamed

^{1.} Cf. E.J. Kenney's apparatus ad loc. (Ovid, Amores, O.C.T. 1994, reprint).

^{2.} Gf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. mitto (1).

^{3.} Cf. Horace, *Ep.* 2,2,67 *hic sponsum vocat.* The sponsor is expected to provide surety: cf. Lewis and Short, *op. cit.*, s.v. *spondeo* I,B.

(*flagraret*)⁴ her with love for Cephalus⁵? Or does the horse think that her wickedness (*nequitiam*)⁶ is unknown?"

Amores 2,13,17-18:

saepe tibi sedit certis operata diebus, qua tangit laurus Gallica turba tuas.

line 18 tangit Mem.: tingit, cingit mss.

In these lines Ovid addresses the goddess Isis, who was worshipped by Corinna. Scholars have been puzzled by the meaning of line 18. I would like to point out that good sense can be restored to this passage if we print the variant reading *cingit*, and translate as follows:

"where Gallie tumult $(turba)^7$ accompanies $(cingit)^8$ your victories (laurus, ... tuas)."

Amores 3,1,53-54;

vel quotiens foribus duris incisa pependi, non verita a populo praetereunte legi.

Personified Elegy explains in this passage that she has suffered many indignities. According to Showerman¹⁰, *incisa*, in line 53, refers to the fact that "the lover carved verses (elegy) on his lady's door." I would like to suggest, however, that *incisa*¹¹ refers to the verses which the lover had inscribed on his writing tablet. The writing tablet was then left hanging on the door of his beloved. We should translate as follows:

"often, having been inscribed (on a writing tablet)¹², I have hung

- Ovid mentions Aurora's love for Cephalus again at line 39. For the scansion Cephalio ...Cephalum (Amores I,13,39) cf. Ovid, Ex Ponto 4,12,10-11, Tuticănum ... Tuticani.
- Gallus was made unhappy by Lycoris' nequitia: cf. G. Griangrande, Corolla Londiniensis 2,1982, page 91 f.
- Cf. Lewis and Short, op. cit., s.v. turba (1):"Tumult, disturbance". The adjective Gallicus refers to the orgiastic nature of the worship of Isis: cf. Lewis And Short, op. cit., s.v. Gallicus (2).
- 8. Cf. Lewis and Short, op. cit., s.v. cingo (5): "To escort, accompany."
- 9. Cf. Lewis and Short, op. cit., s.v. laurus II: "triumph,victory."
- 10. Cf. Ovid, Amores, ed. Loeb, 1971, reprint, page 449.
- Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. incido B,L(γ): "With dat ... verba ceris, Ov. M. 9,529."
- For the employment of wooden tablets for love letters cf. Flower Smith's note on Tibullus 4,7,7.

Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. flagro II,2: "Poet. as a v. a., to inflame with passion: Elisam, Stat. Silv. 5,2,120". In otner words, Ovid and Statius have used the verb flagro transitively.

(pependi) from unyielding doors (foribus duris), not fearing to be read by a passer by."

Amores 3,3,19-20:

non satis est, quod vos habui sine pondere testis, et mecum lusos ridet inulta deos?

line 20 lusos: laesos v.l., Bentley (cf. Kenney's apparatus ad loc.)

Ovid complains that Corinna has broken her oath to the gods. I would like to point out that the variant reading *laesos* makes perfect sense. Corinna is said to mock the offended (*laesos*)¹³ gods: cf. line 4 *numina laesit*. The reader will note that Bentley has taken the variant reading *laesos* from a manuscript. Similarly Guyetus and Heinsius used manuscripts in order to correct the text of Propertius: cf. my *Studies in the Text of Propertius* (Athens 2002), pages 10 and 166.

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Amores 3,5,19-20:
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visus erat, somno vires adimente ferendi, cornigerum terra deposuisse caput.

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line 19 ferendi Bent.: ferenti mss.
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In this passage Ovid describes a bull. The reader will note that Bentley proposed the alteration *ferendi* in line 19.

Textual alteration is,however, not necessary. The bull is said to have placed its head on the yielding (*ferenti*)¹⁴ earth (*terra*). Ovid is referring to the fact that the earth yielded grass, which was eaten by the bull: cf. line 17 *ruminat herbas* and line 27 *carpentes pabula tauros*.

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Amores 3,6,45-46:
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Nec te praetereo, qui per cava saxa volutans,

Tiburis Argei pomifera arva rigas.

line 46 pomifera Bent .: spumifer vulg.

In this passage Ovid describes the river Anio. I would like to suggest that the correct reading in line 46 is *spumifer*¹⁵. Ovid is alluding to the

Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. laedo B,3: "Freq. of an offended divinity: quo numine laeso, Verg. A. I,8."

Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. fero I,B,3: "To bear, produce, yield: plurima tum tellus etiam majora ferebat ... (Lucr. 5,942) ... Absol.: ferendo arbor peribit, Cato, R.R. 6,2."

^{15.} For another case where the correct reading has been preserved by the vulgata cf. G. Giangrande, Veleia 21, 2004, page 339. Cf. also Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. voluto I,A,2: "In mal. part".

semen of the personified¹⁶ river Anio. For the foaming waters of the Anio cf. Statius, *Silv.* 1,3,20-*Anien... saxeus... spumosaque ponit / murmura.* According to Ovid, the personified Anio fell in love with Ilia: cf. line 47-*Ilia cui placuit.* The *semen* of the river god is imagined to wet the fields of Tibur.

Amores 3,8,21-22:

forsitan et, quotiens hominem iugulaverit, ille

indicet! hoc fassas tangis, avara, manus?

Ovid complains that Corinna has taken a rich knight as her new lover. He points out, however, that his rival is cruel, and has killed people. It should be noted that Ovid has employed a pun in line 22. Thus the words *hoc fassas tangis, avara, manus?* mean "do you touch/cheat (*tangis*)¹⁷, greedy girl, hands that confess this?"

Amores 3,11a,5-6;

vicimus et domitum pedibus calcamus amorem; venerunt capiti cornua sera meo.

In this poem Ovid states that he has decided to free himself from the bonds of love. He explains that he has taken this decision because he has seen a rival leaving his lover's house: cf. line 13 f.

I would like to suggest that Ovid states in line 6 that he has been cuckolded. Accordingly, he says that late at night $(sera)^{18}$ horns $(cornua)^{19}$ have come to his head. He is referring to his rival in love, who visits Corinna late at night.

Amores 3,11 a,19-20;

scilicet et populo per me comitata placebas; causa fuit multis noster amoris amor.

line 19 comitata P: cantata Burm. from Francf. MS.

- Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, e.v. tango II,B,1:"To take in, trick, dupe, to cozen or cheat out of any thing."
- 18. Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. serus II,1: "sera, late."
- Cf. LSJ s.v. κέρας VI: "κέρατα ποιεῖν τινι to give him horns, cuckold him. prov. in Artem. 2.11". Cf. also LSJ s.v. κερασφόρος II: "cuckold, Lemm. to AP 11.278 (Lucill.)." Ovid has become an exclusus amator: cf. my Studies in the Text of Propertius, page 69.

^{16.} For the personification of the river Anio cf. my Studies in the Text of Propertius, page 157. River gods were, of course, notoriously amorous: cf. my article entitled "On Catullus And Brixia" (Veleia 22,2005). For another pun concerning semen cf. Ovid, Epistulae Ex Ponto 1,5,34, where the words condere semen mean both "to sow seed" and "to celebrate semen".

Ovid addresses Corinna in these lines. I would like to suggest that the correct reading in line 19 is *cantata*. Ovid states that Corinna has been celebrated in poetry (*cantata*)²⁰ on account of him. It will be noted that the reading *cantata* was taken from a manuscript by Burmannus. Similarly, Burmannus used manuscripts in order to correct the text of Propertius: cf. my *Studies in the Text of Propertius*, page 16 (note 3) and page 71 (note 1).

Tristia I,1,7-8:

nec titulus minio, nec cedro charta notetur, candida nec nigra cornua fronte geras.

Ovid addresses his personified²¹ book in these lines.

Wheeler²² explained that in Ovid's time the Roman book was a roll, and that the ends of the rod (bosses, knobs) were called *cornua* ("horns"). I would like to point out that Ovid has employed a pun²³. The words *candida* ... nigra cornua fronte geras mean either "you will wear no white bosses (*cornua*) on your dark edges" or "you will wear no cheerful horns on your sad (nigra) forehead (fronte)²⁴". To wear horns = "to be cuckolded". Cf. LSJ s.v. $\varkappa e \varrho \alpha \sigma \phi \phi \varrho o \varsigma$ II: "Cuckold²⁵, Lemm. to AP 11.278 (Lucill.)". Ovid means that the Tristia has nothing to do with amatory poetry and cuckolded²⁶ lovers. Moreover, the Tristia was a sad poem, whereas amatory poetry was by nature cheerful.

Tristia 1,10,1-2:

Est mihi sitque, precor, flavae tutela Minervae,

navis et a picta casside nomen habet.

Wheeler^{27²} explained that "the stern of Ovid's ship was apparently adorned with a figure of Minerva clad in armour." I would like to suggest

27. Cf. Tristia (ed. Loeb), page 48.

^{20.} Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. canto II,B.

^{21.} For personification cf. my Studies In The Text Of Propertius, page 157.

^{22.} Cf. A.L. Wheeler, Ovid, Tristia, Loeb edition, London 1965, reprint, note ad loc.

For other puns in Ovid's poetry cf. my "Further Notes On Ovid's Epistulae Ex Ponto" (Veleia, forthcoming).

^{24.} Cf. Ovid, Met. 15,596 cornua fronte gerit.

^{25.} Cf. LSJ s.v. κέρας VI: "κέρατα ποιεῖν τινι to give him horns, cuckold him, prov. in Artem 2.11.

^{26.} Cf. moreover, Ovid, Amores 3,11a,6 where the words venerunt capiti cornua ... meo mean "I have been cuckolded". Ovid states in this poem that he is no longer willing to suffer the indignities of a cuckolded lover.

that Ovid states that his ship is famous $(nomen \ habet)^{28}$. We should translate as follows:

"I have, and I pray that I may always have, the protection of goldenhaired Minerva²⁹, and my ship is famous due to its painted helmet (*a picta casside*)."

Tristia I,11,15-16:

fuscabatque diem custos Atlantidos Ursae, aut Hyadas seris hauserat Auster aquis.

Ovid describes the weather which he had encountered on his journey to Tomi. Scholars have been puzzled by the meaning of line l6: cf. Wheeler's note *ad loc*. I would like to suggest that Ovid means that the Hyades had been drained dry by Auster. Translate as follows:

"the day was darkened by the guardian of the Atlantian bear, or Auster had drained $(hauserat)^{30}$ the Hyades dry with late rain."

Tristia 2,296:

stat Venus ultori iuncta vir ante fores

vir: viro v.l.

Wheeler explained, in his Loeb edition, that Ovid is probably referring here to "the statues of Venus *Genetrix* and Mars by Arcesilaus." The reader will recall that Venus and Mars were lovers³². Consequently I would like to suggest that the correct reading in this passage is *viro*. Venus is said to stand before the door of the temple "joined to her avenging mate (*ultori iuncta viro*)".

Tristia 2,547-550:

ne tamen omne meum credas opus esse remissum, saepe dedi nostrae grandia vela rati.

Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. nomen II,A: "Name, fame ... nomen habere."

^{29.} Cf. line 12 and Tristia I,2,10 for Minerva.

^{30.} Cf. Lewis And Short, op. cit., s.v. haurio I,B,1: "To drain."

^{31.} Cf. Lewis And Short, s.v. Hyades:" (the rainers)".

^{32.} For the fact that Venus and Mars were lovers cf. my Studies in the Text of Propertius, page 73. Cf. also Mus. Phil. Lond., X, 1996, page 50. Note the employment of an obscene pun. The words *iuncta viro* can mean either "joined to her mate" or "joined to his manhood", i.e. copulating. Cf. Lewis and Short, op. cit., s.v. iungo I,B,7:"In mal. part." and s.v. vir II, H:"Manhood, virility." For similar obscene puns cf. my "Further Notes On Ovid's Epistulae Ex Ponto" (Veleia, forthcoming).

sex ego Fastorum scripsi totidemque libellos,

cumque suo finem mense volumen habet.

Scholars³³ have been puzzled by the meaning of this passage. I would like to suggest that perfect sense can be restored to these lines if we place a comma after *saepe* and a full stop after *Fastorum*.

We should translate as follows:

"However, so that you do not think that all my work is often trivial, I have set six large sails on my ship of the *Fasti*. And I have written the same number of books, and my volume has a purpose $(finem)^{34}$ together with its months (*suo ... mense*)³⁵."

Ovid explains that he has written six books of his *Fasti* in order to show that he could produce serious poetry.

Tristia 3,1,11-12:

clauda quod alterno subsidunt carmina versu, vel pedis hoc ratio, vel via longa facit.

In these lines Ovid's personified book of poetry addresses the reader. I would like to point out that Ovid has employed a pun. The noun pes^{36} means both "metrical foot" and "membrum virile". The book states that if her lame (untrustworthy) songs (clauda³⁷... carmina) waylay (subsidunt)³⁸ any one with alternate verse (alterno ... versu), that is due either to the nature of the foot (pedis = metrical foot or membrum virile) or to a tedious (longa)³⁹ journey.

Cf. Tristia 3,1,4 where Ovid states that not one verse of his poem refers to love: nullus in hac charta versus amare docet.

Tristia 4,1,21-22:

sola nec insidias inter nec militis ensem,

^{33.} Cf. Wheeler's note, in his Loeb edition, ad loc.

^{34.} Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. finis II, B, Y: "An end, purpose, aim."

^{35.} Note the use of the poetic singular.

^{36.} Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. pes B,3: "In mal. part.: pedem or pedes tollere, extollere (ad concubitum)." For πούς = "mentula" cf. Orpheus 22, 2001, page 280.

^{37.} The elegiac couplet is said to be, "lame" or "untrustworthy". It is lame because of the unequal length of its verses, and it is untrustworthy because it describes lovers and sexual intrigues. Cf. Lewis and Short, s.v, *claudus* II,G: "Wavering, untrustworthy."

Cf. Lewis and Short, s.v., subsido B,II: "Act. ... to lie in wait for, to waylay any one ... subsedit adulter, Verg. A. 11,268."

^{39.} Cf. Lewis and Short, s.v. longus II: "Transf., of time, long ... tedious."

nec mare nec ventos barbariamque timet. line 21 militis ensem: Thracia tela v.l.

In this passage Ovid states that only his poetry has remained faithful to him. Scholars⁴⁰ have been puzzled by the text of line 21. I would like to point out that perfect sense can be restored to these lines if we print the reading Thracia tela and translate as follows: "she alone (is)⁴¹ not surrounded by plots (*insidias*⁴² *inter*⁴³), and she does not fear Thracian weapons, nor the sea, nor winds, nor a foreign land."

Tristia 5.3,35-36:

fer, bone Liber, opem: sic altera degravet ulmum vitis et incluso plena sit uva mero

line 35 altera: altam v.l.

Ovid is referring here to the fact that vines⁴⁴ were grown on trees. I would like to point out that good sense is also provided by the variant reading *altam*. Ovid hopes that a vine will weigh down a "lofty" $(altam)^{45}$ elm.

Tristia 5,7,21-22:

vivit in his heu nunc, lusorum oblitus amorum, hos videt, hos vates audit, amice, tuus.

line 21 his nullus tenerorum: nunc lusorum Ehwald

Scholars have been puzzled by the text of line 21. I would like to point out that perfect sense can be restored to this passage if we print line 21 as follows:

vivit in his nullus. tenerorum oblitus Amorum

We should translate thus:

"Nobody enjoys life (vivit)⁴⁶ amongst these men. Your poet, having forgotten his tender *Amores*, sees these men, hears these men, my friend."

- 40. Cf. Luck's apparatus ad loc.
- 41. For the ellipse of the verbum substantivum cf. my Studies in the Text of Propertius, page 67 and G. Giangrande, Orpheus 25,2004, page 3.
- Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. insidiae II: "Trop., artifice, crafty device, plot, snare."
- 43. Cf. Lewis and Short, op. cit., s.v. inter I,b: "Referring to more than two places or objects, among, in the midst of." For the position of inter cf. Andre's note in his Budé edition ad loc.
- 44. Cf. G.I.F. LV, 2003, page 262.
- 45. Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. altus A,1, quoting Lucr. 2,50: sub ramis arboris altae.
- 46. Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. vivo C,1:"To live well, live at ease enjoy life."

Tristia 5,8,11-12:

vidi ego naufragium qui risit in aequora mergi, et "numquam" dixi "iustior unda fuit".

line 11 naufragiun qui risit Mencken: naufragiumque viros et aequore mss.

Ovid describes in this passage the changeable nature of Fortune. It should be noted that textual alteration is not necessary.

Line 11 should be printed as follows:

vidi ego naufragiumque viros et aequore⁴⁷ mergi

Translate thus: "I have seen run $(naufragium)^{48}$ and men drowned $(mergi)^{49}$ in the sea $(aequore)^{50}$ ". The poet is speaking metaphorically and is referring here to financial run. In other words, Ovid states that he has seen men drowned in a sea of debts. He adds that rich men become beggars.

Apollo And Daphne

At *Met.* I, 543 ff. Ovid describes how Daphne asked for help from her father when she was being pursued by Apollo:

viribus absumptis expalluit ilia citaeque

victa labore fugae spectans Peneidas undas

"fer, pater," inquit "opem! si flumina numen habetis,

qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram!"

vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus,

mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro,

in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt,

pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret,

ora cacumen habet: remanet nitor unus in illa.

I would like to point out that better sense can be made of line 544 ff., if we understand that Ovid has employed an ellipse of the verbum substantivum. We should translate as follows:

"O father, help!" she said. "If you are a river (*si flumina*)⁵¹, you have power (*numen habetis*)⁵². Change and destroy the form by which I pleased too much."

49. Cf. Lewis and Short, op. cit., s.v. mergo II: "Trop., to plunge into, sink, overwhelm ... Esp. of those whose fortune is swallowed up in debts or debauchery ... mersis fer opem rebus, bring aid to utter distress, Ov. M. 1,380."

50. For the reading aequore cf. Ovide, Tristes, ed. André ad loc.

51. For the poetic plural cf. my Studies in the Text of Propertius, page 14.

 Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. numen II: "In partic., the divine will, the will or power of the gods, divine sway."

^{47.} Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. que IV,1:"Que ...et."

Cf. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. naufragium II; "Trop., shipwreck, ruin, loss, destruction."

Daphne means that her father was a river-god and was therefore able to do whatever he wanted. Thus he could change her form and enable her to escape from Apollo.

Baucis And Philemon

At Met. 8,651 ft. Ovid describes how Baucis and Philemon entertained the gods in their humble home:

interea medias fallunt sermonibus horas **** torus de molli fluminis ulva 655 inpositus lecto sponda pedibusque salignis. vestibus hunc velant, quas non nisi tempore festo sterenere consuerant, sed et haec vilisque vetusque vestis erat, lecto non indignanda saligno.

In the Loeb edition of the *Metamorphoses*, F.J. Miller noted that the following lines were omitted by Ehwald⁵³: sentirique moram prohibent. erat alveus illic fagineus, dura clavo suspensus ab ansa: is tepidis impletur aquis artusque fovendos accipit, in medio torus est de mollibus ulvis.

line 653 dura: curva v.l.: cf. Magnus' edition ad loc.

I would like to point out that the lines which were omitted by Ehwald provide perfect sense. Tarrant accepts the lines in question, although he thinks that they are written *parum eleganter*. I think that they are very elegantly composed, as I shall try to show.

Ovid states that there was a bath-tub (*alveus*)⁵⁴, which, due to its curved handle (*curva* ... *ab ansa*), was suspended from a nail (*clavo*). The bath-tub, which was made of beech-wood,was taken down and filled with water. Ovid then adds that in their midst (*in medio*) there was a couch (*torus*) on very soft sedge (*demollibus ulvis*)⁵⁵. The sedge was used as a carpet. Ovid explains that they covered the couch with a drapery: cf. line 657-vestibus hunc volant.

Conclusion. I have attempted to solve various textual and inter-

^{53.} These lines were rejected by Magnus and Lafaye.

Ovid may be alluding to the foot-washing scene in Hecale's cottage: cf. Mus. Phil. Lond., 9,1992, page 48.

^{55.} De- is strengthening: cf. Lewis and Short, op. cit., s.v. de II,c. Cf. also deridiculus ("very ridiculous"), deproperus ("making great haste") and deparcus ("very sparing"). Cf. moreover, Thes. Ling. Lat., s.v. demollio.

pretative problems, which have puzzled previous editors of Ovid's poems. Moreover, I have pointed out that Bentley and Burmannus appear to have used manuscripts in order to correct Ovid's text: cf. my notes on *Amores* 3,3,19-20 and 3,11a,19-20. Furthermore, I have explained that Ovid used puns in the following passages: *Amores* 3,6,45-46; *Amores* 3,8,22; *Tristia* 1,1,8; *Tristia* 2,296 and *Tristia* 3,1,11-12. Finally I have argued that *Amores* 1,13, lines 31-32 and *Met.* 8,651 ff. make perfect sense in the context.