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Notes on Propertius

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It will be observed that the parallel passage from Theophrastus already quoted (*Classical Review*, xxiv. 5, p. 144) shows the same kind of combination of aorist participles with a present—*παρασείσαντα δὴ δει τοὺς τοιοῦτους τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ διαράμενον ἀπαλλάττεσθαι ὅστις ἀπύρετος βούλεται εἶναι*.

As indicated in my previous article, this passage is suspected. But it shows at least how the writer understood the Aristotelian passage, and that he thought the aorist natural, for he put his own addition in the aorist.

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NOTES ON PROPERTIUS.

I. xv. 33.

multa prius! vasto labentur flumina ponto,
annus et inversas duxerit ante vices,
quam tua sub nostro mutetur pectore cura:
sis quodcumque voles, non aliena tamen.
† quantibi † ne viles isti videantur ocelli
per quos saepe mihi credita perfidia est.

Palmer's *tam mihi* does not seem adequate: if this was what Propertius meant, why should he say *tam mihi ne viles* instead of *ne mihi tam viles*?

The following parallels strongly favour *quare*:

quare quid possit mea Cynthia, desine, Galle,
quaerere.

I. v. 31.

quare, si pudor est, quam primum errata fatere.

I. ix. 33.

quare, dum licet, inter nos laetetur amantes.

I. xix. 25.

quare, si sapis, oblatas ne desere messes.

II. xvi. 7.

quare, ne tibi sit tanti Sidonia vestis.

II. xvi. 55.

quare ne tibi sit mirum me quaerere viles.

II. xxiv. 9.

The stages of corruption may be supposed to have been *quare*: *quate*: *quam te*: *quantibi*. Actually the *i* of *te* in N is not a well-traced *i*.

I. xxi.

The form of epitaph, in which the buried man is represented as addressing the passer-by and charging him with a message to his kinsfolk in another place, is common enough in Greek: e.g. *Anth. Pal.* vii. 499, 500, 502. Usually the message is to tell that he is dead and where he is buried. But there is at least one example (by Agathias) of the dead man forbidding the passer-by to take home any word of his death:

,μηδὲν ἀπαγγείλεις ἐς Ἀντιόχειαν, ὀδῖτα,
μὴ πάλιν οἰμῶξι χεύματα Κασταλῆς
κ.τ.λ.

Anth. Pal. vii. 589.

If vv. 5, 6 of this poem of Propertius are correctly read (as I believe)

sic te servato possint gaudere parentes
ne soror acta tuis sentiat e lacrimis,

it belongs to the second and the less usual type. Vv. 7, 8 explain what are the *acta* which are not to be communicated to the dead man's sister. But a correction is needed in v. 10. Read:

et quaecumque super dispersa invenerit ossa
montibus Etruscis, nesciat esse mea

quaecumque NAF quicumque DV.

Just as he wishes his sister not to hear of his fate, so (if the piece is to be coherent) he must wish her *not* to know that any bones she may find scattered on the hills are his. Mr. Butler reads *nec sciat*, which seems to me slightly less probable: *nec* would be for *ne quidem*.

II. x. 23.

ut caput in magnis ubi non est tangere signis,
ponitur hac imos ante corona pedes,
sic nos nunc inopes laudis conscendere carmen
pauperibus sacris vilia tura damus.

23. carmen O culmen ε.

To support the astonishing metaphor, *laudis conscendere carmen*, one could adduce

candida concessos ascendat Ciris honores
Ciris 205

and such a phrase as

hi qui nuper de numero gentium congregati nec
praevalentes evangelicam perfectionem *con-*
scendere.

Cassian, *de inst. coenob.* VII. xvii. 5.

In the verse

denique stelligeri *consendas culmina* caeli
Sedulius Scottus, III. ii. 9
(*P.L.M.A.E.* iii. p. 233),

we have not a testimonium to the reading *culmen* in Propertius, but to Prudentius *contra Symmachum* 458.

Modern commentators dismiss the couplet with a perfunctory phrase about bold metaphor, but allege nothing which might serve to attest the authenticity of this most questionable piece of Latinity. But the strangeness of the metaphor might pass for Propertian, and the construction of *inopes* with an infinitive clause attached might pass for Horatian, were it not for a more definite objection. Two passages of Valerius Maximus, an author whose prose is thoroughly coloured with the language of Augustan poets, show us *inopes laudis* standing for a compound adjective. Now just as it is inconceivable that any Latin author should juxtapose the words *serus* and *studiorum*, and not mean them to bear the sense of *ὀψιμαθής*, but leave the genitive *studiorum* to be governed by something else in the sentence; so, if *inopes laudis* forms an organic unit, we must make what we can of the *conscendere carmen* by itself. These are the passages in Valerius:

Probentur nunc cuiuslibet gloriae cupidi, qui ex desertis montibus myoparonumque piraticis rostris *laudis inopes* laureae ramulos festinabunda manu decerpserunt (II. viii. 5).

Et maior natus minori, et fortissimus imbelli, et gloria excellens *laudis inopi*, et quod super omnia est, nondum Asiatico iam Africanus (legatum se ire promisit) (V. v. 1).

These appear to fix *laudis inopes* as = *ἄδοξοι*. What, then, are we to do with *conscendere carmen*? I suggest that *cāmen* should be *camena*, and that *conscendere* was expanded metri gratia out of *conscende*, which was itself a corruption of *poscente*.

Sic nos nunc, inopes laudis, poscente Camena,
(So do I now, I the inglorious, since I must obey the Muses' command. . .)

For *poscere* in such contexts, cf.

poscimur. Hor. *Od.* I. xxxii. 1.

non est mora libera nobis:
poscimur.

Ov. *Met.* II. 143.

Palilia poscor:
non poscor frustra si favet alma Ceres.
Fast. iv. 721.

In Propertius, IV. i. 74, *poscis* ab invita verba pigenda lyra, it is the poet who claims or commands a song; here, if I am right, it is the muse who summons the poet, just as Aeneas is he

quem numina poscunt (*Aen.* viii. 512).
Cf. ego poscor Olympo (*Ib.* 533).

II. xxxiv. 31, 2.

tu satius memorem Musis imitere Philetan
memorem Musis N Musis memorem FLDV
meliorem musis s.

Bergk and Schneidewin conjectured *tu Latiis Meropem*, and the word *Meropem* is commended by Meleager's *θερόν Μερόπων ἄστρον* (*A.P.* vii. 418, cf. 419). But it is possible that a couple of Horatian idioms supply what is wanted:

meis contentus honestos
fascibus et sellis nollem *mihī sumere*.
Sat. I. vi. 97.

sume tibi deciens. *Sat.* II. iii. 237.

quis *sibi* res gestas Augusti scribere *sumit*?
Ep. I. iii. 7.

ingenium *sibi* quod vacuas *desumpsit* Athenas.
Ep. II. ii. 81.

and

ad Maecenatem *memori* si *mente* recurras.
Sat. II. vi. 31.

Read:

tu satius *memori* *sumas tibi mente* Philetan.
or *sumes*

III. ix. 43, 4.

inter Callimachi sat erit placuisse libellos
et cecinisse modis dure poeta tuis.

That Philetas is the poet indicated in the pentameter is certain; by what phrase Propertius here expressed his oft-praised model remains doubtful. Only palaeographical probability discredits Beroaldus' bold *Coe poeta*; Sriverius' *Dore poeta* has entered the text of many editions as a makeshift, but I have long lost any little faith that I ever had in it.

The following conjecture has, I think, a good deal of probability on two grounds, but is weak from lack of attestation to the particular form which it introduces.

One of the chief legendary heroes of Cos is Eurypylos (Homer, *Il.* II. 677), whom Propertius names in IV. v. 23:

Eurypylique placet Coae textura Minervae.
(Heinsius conjectured *Eurypyliisque*.)

Now if a patronymic be formed from this racial hero as Horace formed one from Virgil's *Iarbas*

rupit *Iarbitam* Timagenis aemula lingua.

(see Jahn's note cited in Orelli-Baiter-Mewes on Hor. *Ep.* I. xix. 15) as a poetical equivalent for *Cous* we might have *Euryphylites* or *Euryphylita*.

Once granted the possibility of the form, I think it will be allowed that

et cecinisse modis, *Euryphylita*, tuis

satisfies the other conditions of probability: the corruption of *Euripileta* or *Euripilita* into *dure poeta* is easy to suppose in such a context.

III. vi. 9.

si cā
sicut eam } incompitis vidisti flere capillis
siccine eam *vulg.*

The roughness of the elision makes the usual reading suspicious, and palaeographically it does not commend itself as accounting for the MS. tradition.

We ought to restore here an Ovidian idiom:

sic erit: haeserunt tenues in corde sagittae.

Am. I. ii. 7.

sic erit: ingenio prostitit illa meo.

Ib. III. xii. 8.

MS. authority favours *sic erat* in both these places, and Burmann defended it against Heinsius. Whichever tense stands, the meaning differs little from a *hoc illud*, except for the interrogative turn.

sic erat? incompitis, etc.

('Was this so? Did you really see?' etc.)

And so, pretty surely, we must read one or other in I. viii. 27:

sic erat. hic iurata manet! rumpantur iniqui!

III. vii. 49.

non tulit haec Paetus, stridorem audire procellae
et duro teneras laedere fune manus,

sed chio { thalamo } aut { orythia } terebintho
 { calamo } { orytia }
 { chalamo } { oronthea }
 { oryrrhia }

et fultum pluma versicolore caput.

Such is the sum of variants for this line, which, in spite of Rothstein's explanations, still leaves me uneasy about its Latinity. Can one really supply a positive verb for the second couplet out

of the *non tulit* of the first? *Amabat* is to be understood, says Rothstein; I remark that the MSS. offer us something very like *amavit* in the *amout*, or something very like *adamavit* (he 'hankered after'—a still more suitable sense) in the *alamout*.

What other circumstances of luxury did Paetus hanker after besides the feather-stuffed cushions? Inlaid wood in his bedroom, say the commentators. But is not this unexampled? Is there any evidence for inlays and veneers of thya, citrus, etc., employed in a bedroom?

Briefly, I suggest that for *sedchio-thalamout* we should read *sed cyathos adamavit*.

What of the remaining words? *Terebintho* is in no way suspect: both the timber and the perfumed oil were a familiar part of the paraphernalia of luxury. Pliny gives a vast deal of information about the tree and its uses. Amongst which he mentions that a certain Thericles was celebrated for making *calices* out of terebinth wood (xvi. 205), and that wine *e terebintho* (xiv. 112) was one of the innumerable aromatic decoctions, which (like modern liqueurs), originally invented for a medicinal purpose, became mere refinements of gulosity. The terebinth, then, may denote either the material of the *cyathi*, or the flavouring of their contents.

Remains the adjective. The terebinth grows in Macedonia; and, says Rothstein, the epithet, *Oricia*, means that it is shipped from Oricum. Virgil (*Aen.* x. 136) in a simile derived from *intarsia* work has the lines:

vel quale per artem

inclusum buxo aut *Oricia* terebintho
lucet ebur.

One passage has affected the other—that is certain. Not only the phrase *Oricia terebintho* in the clausula, but the medial hiatus as well make it certain. But has Virgil plagiarised? or Propertius? There is a third hypothesis, which is, that the familiar Virgilian verse has debauched the tradition of the Propertian. One *deterior* actually gives *Orontea*. Why not *Orontea*? If Macedonian terebinth shipped from Epirus can be called *Oricia*, why should not

Syrian terebinth shipped from Antioch be called *Orontea*?

Paetus was soft, and could not stand hardships and perils of the sea, but he was also luxurious, and hankered after delicacies and refinements. It was to get money for these that he took to the sea. The early editors aptly entitle the piece, *de Morte Paeti ob avaritiam*.

sed cyathos adamavit Orontea terebintho
et fultum pluma versicolore caput.

IV. v. 21.

si te eoa {dororantum } iuvat aurea ripa
 {dorozantum }
 {derorantum }
et quae sub Tyria concha superbit aqua.

If anything is to be got from inference towards the mending of these rags, it is (1) that a river's name is concealed in the nonsense-word, which should agree with *ripa*; (2) that probably some gem was named in the hexameter, to which the Tyrian shell of the pentameter corresponds; (3) that some Eastern name would be likely.

Suppose a misplacing of three letters in the verse, viz. the *tee*, and the rudiments of an emendation at once begin to appear: For *siteeoadorozatum*, read *si oad orotee*—i.e., *si quid Oronteae . . . ripae*. Here is at least a framework. The adjective is supported by I. ii. 3:

aut quid Orontea crines perfundere murra;

and perhaps by the reading just proposed in III. vii. 48; it pairs neatly enough with Tyria.

What is to be filled in? Now there is nothing *prima facie* suspicious about the words *iuvat aurea*.

si quid Oronteae . . . iuvat aurea ripae.

(*ripa* for *ripe* I take to be a mistaken assimilation to *aurea*.)

If a gem is named, I suggest that it was the *xanthus*.

The *xanthus* (Pliny, *N.H.* xxxvii. 168-9) is a variety of the bloodstone: est et alia eiusdem generis quae vocatur menui ab Indis, xanthos appellata a Graecis, e fulvo candicans. It comes from Arabia, so that Antioch (*Orontea ripa*) would be as natural a place of export for it as for the perfumes of Arabia (*Orontea murra*, I. ii. 3). Theo-

phrast. *Lapid.* § 37 (quoted by Sillig on Pliny, *loc. cit.*): ἄλλη δὲ (αἱματῖτις) ἢ καλουμένη ξανθή. οὐ ξανθὴ μὲν τὴν χροάν ἐκλευκος δὲ μᾶλλον ὁ καλοῦσι χρώμα οἱ Δωριεῖς ξανθόν.

It is not certain that this auburn-whitish gem could be called *aurea*; nor certain whether, if it be the right word here, Propertius Latinised it as *xanthus* feminine, or *xanthe*. In neither case is it a very long step, palaeographically, from *xantū*. The Mentelianus reads *derorantem*, the Groninganus *doroxanthum*, according to Hertzberg. But if Propertius can describe the chrysolith as *flavo lumine*, it seems not unreasonable to think that he might call a *xanthus aurea*.

IV. xi. 29.

Sisyphæ, mole vaces; taceant Ixionis orbes;
fallax tantaleo corripiare liquor.

No emendations hitherto attempted of this passage deserve mention except *tantaleus*, which Heinsius brought in from the codex Groninganus, and Auratus' *corripere ore*, detestable rhythmically and condemned by the mood of *vaces* and *taceant*. It will hardly be disputed that a word for 'throat' or 'lips' seems to be demanded by the context, and that the most obvious word would be some case of the stem *fauc-*. Can the palaeographical probability be brought to meet the contextual probability?

Mr. Housman's restoration of *saucius* for *gallicus* in II. xiii. 48 furnishes another instance of the misreading of *u* into *ll*. Now this is a typical Irish corruption, that is to say, a typically likely corruption to arise in the copying of the text out of an Irish codex. The Irish *ll*, written in one movement of the pen, is hardly distinguishable from a slightly overelongated *u*. Add to this another common confusion of the same script, viz. *ce* or *ci* for *a*, and you have *fauce* converted into *falla*. I take it, then, that *fallax tantaleo* should read *fauce a tantalea* or *fauci tantaleae*: with a preference for the former, since the dative seems to be unexampled in this noun.

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