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Note on Ovid, *Tristia* III. 6. 8 (Augustus et Iuppiter)

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makes hers: *she* is more in love than he is.

ut multo *mihi* maior acriorque
ignis mollibus ardet in medullis.

(To take the comparative as meaning 'more than ever before' is a beastly

suggestion, and, besides, destroys the point of *mollibus*.)

Here the amorous debate is referred to the arbitrament of Heads-or-tails.

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NOTE ON OVID, *TRISTIA* III. 6. 8 (AUGUSTUS ET IUPPITER).

In the January number of the *Classical Quarterly* Professor Housman has a piquant note on this line, which not only amused but greatly interested me. It seemed to have a bearing on the cult of Augustus in his lifetime; and I at once turned out the eight passages which he quotes from the *Tristia*, and examined them carefully in order to find out why after his exile Ovid should refer to Augustus as Iuppiter. So far as I know, he was not in the habit of doing this in his earlier works. Incidentally, too, I was curious to know whether Professor Housman's correction of the last word of the line (*Ioui* for *uiro*) would convince me after I had examined his passages. It did entirely convince me on a first reading of his note.

Ovid is writing to a friend, and tells him that their friendship was a well-known fact at Rome; it was not hidden under a bushel.

Quique est in caris animi tibi candor amicis
Cognita sunt ipsi, quem colis, ista *uiro*.

That is, it was well known also to Augustus. No commentator seems to have doubted this; and Heinsius, thinking that *uiro* might mean anyone in Rome, suggested *deo* instead of *uiro*. Professor Housman goes further, and would read *Ioui*, pointing out that Ovid often refers to Augustus as Iuppiter (though not in the nominative) in this very work. The Apollinism of Augustus is perhaps a little overworn of late, and his relation to Iuppiter undervalued: is any light thrown on the latter by these passages? Let me quote them in full.

I. 1. 81:

Uitaret caelum Phaethon, si uiueret, et quos
Optaret stulte, tangere nollet equos.
Me quoque, quae sensi, fateor Iouis arma timere.
Me reor infesto, cum tonat, igne peti.

Here it is plain that Ovid starts his *Tristia* thinking of himself as Phaethon and of Augustus as Iuppiter. He had been telling the story of Phaethon not long before (*Met.* II.), and to think mythologically of his own catastrophe was probably a relief to him. The 'image' remains in his brain.

I. 4. 26 (written during a storm in the Adriatic, which seems to be driving him towards the forbidden Italian coast):

Parcite, caerulei uos saltem numina ponti,
Infestumque mihi sit satis esse Iouem.

The same image is in his head: he has been the victim of Jove's bolt, is he to be also the victim of Neptune's wrath? (Note that Augustus is vaguely alluded to as *deo* in l. 22.)

I. 5. 77:

Cumque minor Ioue sit tumidis qui regnat in undis,
Illum Neptuni, me Iouis ira premit.

Still the idea of thunderbolt: cf 'me deus oppressit' in l. 75. He is comparing himself with Odysseus, who escaped this but was worried by Neptune.

III. 1. 38. Here for the first time we have a different poetical idea. His poem is imagined finding its way to the house of Augustus and the temple of Apollo with its library. On its way it passes the temple of Iuppiter Stator, and when it gets to the *domus Augusti* it naively asks if this too is not a temple of Iuppiter? Is not that the oak crown of the god over the gate? (really the *corona ciuica* of Augustus):

Non fallimur, inquam,
Et magni uerum est hanc Iouis esse domum.

But this is only a pretty passing

thought: at the end of the poem it is forgotten again:

Caesar ades uoto maxime diue meo!

III. 5. 7. The original image again: writing to a friend who had been good to him in his misfortune, he says:

Ausus es igne Iouis percussus tangere corpus.

III. 11. 62. An exact equivalent of I. 5. 77, quoted above.

IV. 3. 69. The thunderbolt again:

Nec tibi, quod saevis ego sum Iouis ignibus ictus,

Purpureus molli fiat in ore rubor.

V. 2. 46. At first sight this looks like a genuine equation of Augustus and Iuppiter, *i.e.* one without mythological fancy:

Adloquor en absens absentia numina supplex,
Si fas est homini cum Ioue posse loqui.

But reading on for a few lines we find that Ovid is still thinking of Phaethon:

Parce, precor, minimamque tuo de fulmine partem Deme!

So too in *Ex Ponto* I. 7. 49:

At grauiter cecidi. Quid enim mirabile si quis
A Ioue percussus non leue volnus habet?

I may add *Tristia* II. 215, just to show that in this same *Tristia* Ovid can distinguish Augustus from Iuppiter and compare the two:

Utque deos caelumque simul sublime tuenti
Non uacat exiguis rebus adesse Ioui,
Ex te pendentem sic dum circumspicis orbem,
Effugiant curas inferiora tuas?

Lastly, let me quote a passage in which Ovid's real attitude to Iuppiter slips out even in his *Tristia*: II. 289: (cf. *Ars. Am.* I. 631):

Quis locus est templis augustior? Haec quoque
uitet
In culpam si qua est ingeniosa suam.

Cum steterit Iouis aede, Iouis succurret in aede
Quam multas matres fecerit ille deus.

It is by this time quite clear to me, and I hope will be to my readers, that Ovid is very far from seriously identifying Augustus with Iuppiter: it is only his poetical mind and the story of Phaethon that leads him, as Professor Housman cautiously puts it (p. 38), to *denote* Augustus by oblique cases of Iuppiter. (I can imagine why he should avoid the nominative, though I find it hard to express the feeling.) This being so, the substitution of *Ioui* for *uiro* in III. 6. 8 fails to appeal to me: there is nothing in the context to suggest it, no allusion to the catastrophe or the thunderbolt. What is in his head is the society of the city, and the *human* relation of Augustus to that society and its talk. *Ioui* here grates on my sense of the fitting. I should greatly prefer *deo*, as *e.g.* in IV. 4. 45 'Idque deus sentit,' *i.e.* Augustus. At the same time ('horresco referens') I do not feel absolutely certain that Ovid may not have after all written *uiro*, in spite of Professor Housman's remarks about *colere* ('when a subject "colit Caesarem" he "colit deum" and not "uirum"'). The reader of the *Tristia* would have no doubt as to the person meant; and the context suggests the human rather than the divine Augustus. The two are often strangely mixed up, as in *Tristia* II. 53 ff. and *Ex Ponto* III. 8. 15-24¹; but in this passage I do not find the deity.

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¹ Add *Tristia* V. 2. 45 ff., where 'Si fas est homini cum Ioue posse loqui' is closely followed by 'Ouir non ipso quem regis orbe minor.'

NOTES

ΑΣΤΗΡ ΣΕΙΠΙΟΣ IN EUR. *I.A.* 7-8.

MR. HOUSMAN has misapprehended my meaning (*C.R.* 28. 8). Sirius is invisible, for it is below the horizon. Capella is out of the question, for it is out of range: Agamemnon is not gazing in

that direction. The star is well up from the horizon, somewhere within a large circle, with mid-heaven as a centre. Under the circumstances the meridian would be the most unlikely position of all: 'verba ἐν μεσσηνῇ non ita premenda' (Hermann). That