

PROBLEMS IN THE *SILVAE* OF STATIUS

I. I. 15–16

iuvat ora tueri
mixta notis belli placidamque gerentia pacem.

Here is described the expression on the face of the equestrian statue of Domitian, which blends bellicosity with placability. It is possible, I suppose, that Statius expressed this in the confused way presented by his manuscript, which defies precise analysis though the general sense is apparent; but I think it much more likely that he wrote *bellum*, intending us to pause before this word: the face is an amalgam of indications, offering as it does both peace and war. For the asyndetic relationship which I introduce between *mixta* and its explanation with *gerentia* there is a not exact but adequate parallel at 2. 2. 125–27: “voto sublimior omni, / exemptus Fatis indignantemque refellens / Fortunam.”

I. I. 53–55

(hunc) pavet aspiciens Ledaëus ab aede propinqua
Cyllarus; hic domini numquam mutabit habenas:
perpetuus frenis atque uni serviet astro.

The horse of Domitian's statue is so imposing that it makes the neighboring one of the horse of the Dioscuri quake. In an earlier discussion of this passage I concluded that it implied the rare version in which Castor and Pollux are equated with the morning and evening star, on the grounds that alternation of owner for Cyllarus is here implicit and that this is inconsistent with catasterism of the twins (“when Castor and Pollux are stars, they are both stars”).¹ But this last premise is wrong; see Avien(i)us *Aratea* 376–78:

protinus alternae germanos tempore vitae
Iuppiter attollit, caelique in celsa receptans
aeternae flagrare facis iubet ignibus ambo.

In his note on this passage in the Budé edition ([Paris, 1981], p. 198), J. Soubiran also quotes Hyginus *Astronomica* 2. 22 “Pollucem ait Homerus concessisse fratri dimidiam vitam, itaque alternis diebus eorum quemque lucere.”

2. 6. 2–8

miserum est primaeva parenti
pignora surgentesque (nefas!) accendere natos;
durum et deserti praerepta coniuge partem
conclamare tori, maesta et lamenta sororum
et fratrum gemitus; † ad te tamen at † procul intrat
altius in sensus maioraque vulnera vincit
plaga minor.

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The grief of Flavius Ursus at the death of his *puer delicatus* is yet greater than that which others feel at family bereavement. The restoration currently favored for line 6, *alte tamen et* or *ac* (due to Markland, I regret to say), is so unstylish and indeed gross that the mere mention of it sullies my page. In its stead I propose *at te domat ac*.

1. “Criticism and Elucidations of the *Silvae* of Statius,” *TAPA* 114 (1984): 329.

3. 2. 30 sint quibus explorent primos gravis arte molorchos.

Statius is listing the operations to be performed by the nymphs in order to prepare the ship of Maecius Celer for its voyage. At the end of the line the scribe has been distracted by a reminiscence of the name *Molorch* which ended 3. 1. 29, but he had begun to go astray before that. Nowadays most people, following Scaliger and Ruitgersius, wish to see in *arte mo-* the word *artemo*, which means the main block of a tackle (Vitr. 10. 2. 9) or a jib, foresail, or bowsprit.² Vollmer follows Schwartz in claiming that the bowsprit was used as a sort of crane to lift cargo and (presumably) provisions into the ship from barges (though the context seems to indicate a stage in the process of preparing the ship that would be surprisingly late for this operation); he thinks that Statius here envisages this crane scrutinizing the barges, a name for which should then be restored at the end of the line. Others there introduce a word meaning "winds," holding to the function of the *artemo* as a sail.³

All these notions, and variations on them, must be wrong. Statius gives instructions about the halyards (26), the sails (27–28), the *transtra* (28), the rudder (29), whatever is meant in our line, the lifeboat (31) that is towed behind, and the anchor (32). This means that he has followed the precept given to him by rhetors for descriptions of people and statues, to go from top to bottom.⁴ Something lower than anything that can be denoted by *artemo* is required. Now take into account *Thebaid* 6. 19–22 *biremes . . . clavumque levesque / explorent remos*, and by putting two and two together we will follow Krohn in altering *primos* to *remos* and refer the verb *explorare* to the testing of equipment. Objection: a big cargo-ship like this (21–24) would not have oars, or if it did have auxiliary oars it would not have rowers' benches, *transtra*, since the rowers would walk up and down; therefore *transtra* will have to mean "hatch covers,"⁵ though it never does. This is a total misunderstanding of Statian art. The notion "ship" in poetical contexts carries with it certain conventional corollaries, of which "oars" is one; the question whether or not the ship concerned would in fact have oars is a question to be asked of sobersided prose authors, not of poets.

What then about the rest of the line? It no doubt ended with an epithet for the oars, which was, I suggest, *longos*. We now want a subject for *explorent*, one which, since we have no reason to suppose any error in that word (with *artemo* it has to become singular), will be plural, and presumably neuter plural in order to provide the necessary dactyl in the fifth foot. I cannot find the requisite word, but merely as illustration I suggest the stopgap *libramina*, so that the line will now read "sint quibus explorent remos libramina (?) longos": in the case of some of the nymphs, let them test the oars by balancing them.

2. See L. Casson, *Ships and SeamanSHIP in the Ancient World* (Princeton, 1971), pp. 240, 264.

3. E.g., G. Wiman, "Papiniana," *Eranos* 35 (1937): 9.

4. See Vollmer on l. 1. 32; E. J. Kenney on *Moretum* 32–35 (Bristol, 1984), p. 23; S. J. D. Cohen, "The Beauty of Flora and the Beauty of Sarai," *Helios* 8 (1981): 41.

5. L. Casson, "Maecius Celer's Ship," *CR* 18 (1968): 262.

5. 2. 54–57

tu disce patrem, quantusque negantem
 fluctibus occiduis fessusque Hyperione Thylen
 intrarit mandata gerens quantusque potens
 mille urbes Asiae sortito rexerit anno.

Line 55 cannot be construed and is clearly corrupt; it contained some description of Britain, one of the provinces in which Vettius Bolanus served. One line of emendation is to take *nigrantem* from Avantius and *fessoque* from Calderini.⁶ Against this (1) the construction *nego* with dative (“resist”), which is both recherché and favored by Statius (see Vollmer on 3. 1. 124), is likely to be right; and (2) it is hardly natural to say that waves (even “sunset” waves) turn something black: it is true that Statius is fond of associating Britain and the waves around it with “darkness” (see 3. 5. 20, 4. 4. 62), and therefore if *nigrantem* were transmitted we should be inclined somehow to retain it, but that is a far cry from awkwardly introducing it by conjecture. Another line is to adopt Vollmer’s *fesso usque*,⁷ but what kind of ablative is this? Other approaches are even more unsatisfactory; a new one is called for. So I propose *negantem* / *fluctibus occiduo fissis Hyperione*: Britain which resists the waves cleft by the setting sun (see *Theb.* 4. 283 *occiduum Titana*, 5. 477 *occidui . . . cubilia Phoebi*). *Fissis* was easily corrupted to *fessus*; *occiduo* was corrupted either through simple attraction or because of a misplaced correction, *-is*, intended for the termination of the next word; and *que* was added because the apparent metrical lengthening *fessūs* was unpalatable to the scribe, as it was to the scribes of Vergil at *Aeneid* 1. 668 and 6. 254.

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6. Favored, e.g., by L. Håkanson, *Statius’ “Silvae”* (Lund, 1969), p. 128.

7. The persistent attribution of this to Calderini is an error: see L. C. Martinelli, “Le ‘Selve’ di Stazio nella critica testuale del Poliziano,” *SIFC* 47 (1975): 169.

THE THEME OF LITERARY DECLINE IN LATE ROMAN GAUL

The last years of the Roman Empire in the west typically have been characterized in modern times by the words “decline and fall.” In Gaul, as elsewhere, these words are justified, at least in a political sense. On the last day of 406, groups of Burgundians, Suevi, Vandals, and Alans crossed the Rhine unopposed. In 418, the Visigoths were settled in Aquitania. Other peoples soon followed, such as the Franks and Alemanni, not to mention the Huns and their allies. Around 486, Syagrius, the last Roman holdout in Belgica, was defeated by the Frank Clovis.¹

The conclusions of this study at earlier stages were presented at the meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians at Madison in May 1983 and at the meeting of the Classical Association of the Midwest and South at Minneapolis in April 1985. This version has greatly benefited from the many useful suggestions of the Editor.

1. For the historical developments, see O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, vol. 6 (Stuttgart, 1920); J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 1 (London, 1923); E. Stein,