

NOTES ON PLINY *EPISTULAE* AND *PANEGYRICUS*

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Ep. 1.4.1 *quantum copiarum in Ocriculano, in Narniensi, in Carsulano, in Perusino tuo, in Narniensi vero etiam balineum! ex epistulis meis, nam iam tuis opus non est: una illa brevis et vetus sufficit.*

PLINY WRITES TO HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW in appreciation of the provision which has been made for him in her various Umbrian and Etruscan villas. At Narnia the servants even have a bath ready for him; reference to having a hot bath ready for a visitor will be found at 2.17.26, Cicero *Fam.* 9.16.9, *Att.* 2.3.4.

The punctuation given above is that of Mynors,¹ followed by Radice; it is a great improvement on the traditional punctuation (still followed by S.-W.), which construes *ex epistulis meis* with *una illa*, and takes *nam . . . non est* as parenthetic. I think that further improvement is possible: *in Perusino tuo! in Narniensi vero etiam balineum* [sc. *paratum est mihi*] *ex epistulis meis; nam iam tuis opus non est* (*una illa brevis et vetus sufficit*): "at Narnia they even have a bath ready for me whenever I write to tell them I am coming; there is no need nowadays for you to write, because the short letter you sent some time ago is sufficient authorization." The clausula is improved if *ex epistulis meis* rather than *etiam balineum* ends the sentence.

Ep. 4.3.3 f. *ita certe sum adfectus ipse cum Graeca epigrammata tua, cum mimiambos proxime legerem. quantum ibi humanitatis venustatis! quam dulcia illa quam amantia! quam arguta quam recta!*

amantia αϣ: *antiqua* β

S.-W. rightly points out (a) that *amantia* is the *paradosis* and *antiqua* a corruption (the most recent editors agree on this), (b) that nevertheless *amantia*, without an object either expressed or implied, is very doubtful. Although he tentatively proposes *amara*, he really desiderates an epithet which will convincingly pair with *dulcia*. I suggest *iuvantia* (both *am* and *iuv* consist of five minims), comparing Ovid *AA* 2.159 *auremque iuvantia*

¹Reference is made to the editions of A. M. Guillemin (Budé 1927–1928), R. A. B. Mynors (OCT 1963), and B. Radice (Loeb 1969); also to the commentary of A. N. Sherwin-White (Oxford 1966), abbreviated S.-W. I am very grateful to Professor R. G. M. Nisbet for commenting on an earlier version of these notes.

verba and *Am.* 3.14.25 *nec voces nec verba iuvantia*. The common impersonal phrase *quam iuvat* occurs in Pliny at 5.13.8 and 8.6.17, *Pan.* 32.1 and 36.1.

Ep. 8.17.4 *viderunt . . . alibi divitum adparatus et gravem supellectilem, alibi instrumenta ruris . . . atque inter haec arborum truncos aut villarum trabes atque culmina varie lateque fluitantia.*

The passage describes the effects of the Tiber overflowing its banks. The meaning of *varie* in combination with *fluitantia* is not clear: "in confusion" (Radice); "so as to show a varied or diverse appearance" (*OLD* sense 2). Can the word have such a meaning? Perhaps *vaste lateque*, "to a great height and over a large area."

Ep. 8.19.1 *et gaudium mihi et solacium in litteris, nihilque tam laetum quod his laetius, tam triste quod non per has minus triste. itaque et infirmitate uxoris et meorum periculo, quorundam vero etiam morte turbatus, ad unicum doloris levamentum studia confugi, quae praestant ut adversa magis intellegam sed patientius feram.*

(a) I suppose that it is possible to take *quod laetius* as equivalent to *ut id laetius* (sc. *sit*) and *his* as ablative of comparison: "nothing brings such joy that it is more joyful than literature." But that is clearly not what Pliny intended; the following clause shows that the meaning must be "nothing brings such joy that its joy is not enhanced by literature" (*his* instrumental ablative, corresponding to the following *per has*). A negative is essential. Postgate (ap. Guillemin) proposed *quin* for *quod*, but I think it preferable to insert *non* between *quod* and *his*, thus obtaining an exact parallelism with the following *quod non*.

(b) Can *adversa magis intellegam* mean "more conscious of my troubles" (Radice)? Even if it could, in what way could his studies help Pliny to be more conscious of his troubles? Surely the meaning is "my studies (e.g., of philosophy) do not help me to understand why adversities should befall me;" if so, read <non> *magis intellegam*.

Ep. 8.21.3 *sum enim deprecatus ne quis ut irreverentem operis argueret quod recitaturus, quamquam et amicis et paucis, id est iterum amicis, foro et negotiis non abstinissem.*

On the morning on which he had arranged to give a recitation to a few friends Pliny was unexpectedly called upon to give assistance in the lawcourts. "I had not kept myself free from professional duties—that is, the claims of other friends" (Radice). This is excellent sense, whereas if the *id* phrase is taken with the preceding *paucis* the sense is puerile. But one cannot have an explanatory phrase introduced by *id est* standing before

the phrase to which it is in apposition. I can see no solution other than to transpose *id est iterum amicis* to follow *negotiiis*.

Ep. 10.42 potest nos sollicitare lacus iste ut committere illum mari velimus; sed plane explorandum est diligenter, ne si emissus in mare fuerit totus effluat certe, quantum aquarum et unde accipiat.

Trajan's reply to Pliny's query about a project to connect a lake near Nicomedia with the sea. In *PCPS* 27 (1981) 53 D. R. Shackleton Bailey approves of construing *certe* with what precedes rather than with what follows, but makes the point that even so *certe* does not give a natural sense; he suggests replacing it with *forte*. For the separation of *forte* from *ne* he refers to *TLL* VI 1136.6 ff., but none of the pre-Apuleian prose instances there listed involves a separation which is at all comparable. I suggest *tempore*, "in course of time," which gives an equally good clausula.

Ep. 10.118.1 athletae, domine, ea quae pro iselasticis certaminibus constituisti deberi sibi putant statim ex eo die quo sunt coronati; nihil enim referre quando sint patriam invecti sed quando certamine vicerint, ex quo invehi possint. ego contra scribo iselastici nomine; itaque [eorum] vehementer addubitem an sit potius id tempus quo εἰσήλασαν intuendum.

Should the victors in "iselastic" athletic contests draw their rewards from the date of their victory or from the date of their return home, when they "ride into" their native city in triumph?

The conclusion which I draw from S.-W.'s discussion is that neither *scribo* nor any of its compounds which have been proposed (*contrascribo*, *prae-scribo*, *transcribo*) makes tolerable sense. Perhaps the true reading is *fido* (both the *f/s* and the *d/b* interchanges are among the most common): "I put my trust in the name *iselasticum*" as settling the controversy.

For *eorum* nothing remotely convincing has been suggested, and indeed any suggestion must be largely guesswork; my guess would be parenthetic <fat>eor (for which see *TLL* VI 336.82 ff.). Some conjectures include an *ut* which can govern *addubitem*, but that subjunctive can be defended by the analogy of *haud sciam an* (cf. Leumann-Hofmann-Szantyr 335). For the positive sense of *dubito an* ("I am inclined to think"), which is much rarer in Silver Latin than the negative sense ("I doubt whether"), see Kühner-Stegmann 2.524.

Pan. 18.2 instant operibus, adsunt exercitationibus, arma moenia viros aptant.

The duties of a military commander. "He can press on with constructive work, conduct manoeuvres, make all arrangements for fortifications, weapons, and his men" (Radice). But *moenia* is an odd partner for *arma*

and viros. Some of the older scholars (e.g., Lipsius) realized that the context calls for *munia*, "duties," but this is apparently never mentioned nowadays.

Pan. 50.5 *circumfertur sub nomine Caesaris tabula ingens rerum venalium, †quod sit† detestanda avaritia illius qui tam multa concupiscebat, cum haberet super-vacua tam multa.*

The contrast between Trajan and Domitian in regard to the property of the *fiscus*. The favourite emendation of *quod sit* has been Perizonius's *quo fit*, but Domitian's avarice was disgusting in itself and did not merely become so by contrast with Trajan's honest financial management. Radice's version, "which shows up as the more abominable the cupidity of that emperor who . . .," seems to translate *quo fit* <*magis*> *detestanda*.

Much less attention has been paid to Livineius's emendation *quo sit*, presumably because of the objection expressed by W. Baehrens (*Panegyrici Latini* [Lipsiae 1911]), "sed non ea intentione tabula circumfertur." This objection, however, rests on a failure to recognize a "rhetorical pseudo-final" clause such as those discussed by R. G. Nisbet in *AJP* 44 (1923) 27 ff.; cf. Leumann-Hofmann-Szantyr 642; the effect of Trajan's sale of *fiscus* property was to make people regard Domitian's greed as an abomination. This is surely the right reading and interpretation.

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