

Vt erat novator:
Anomaly, Innovation and Genre in
Ovid, *Heroides* 16–21

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Summary. R. S. Conway no doubt overstated the matter when he described Ovid as ‘a chartered libertine in Grammar’, but his poetry is indeed informed from first to last by linguistic innovation and experiment. Critics who have sought to impugn his authorship of *Heroides* 16–21 have tended to concentrate on what they perceive as anomalies of style and language. It is the thesis of this chapter that a positive approach is more rewarding. It is argued that most of the apparent departures in these poems from what is generally accounted normal poetic usage are either characteristic examples of Ovid’s discreetly innovative way with the Latin language, or are generically appropriate to the poems as letters, or are specifically calculated to lend colour or force to the writer’s case. In conclusion the need is underlined for more discriminating and finely nuanced discussion of these problems.

**I. INTRODUCTION: THE NEED TO BEWARE OF
HYPERCRITICISM**

THE CRITIC OF a text whose authenticity is in dispute must always be alert to the danger of hypercriticism. By this I mean the tendency to identify as significant — which for the purpose in hand means negative — anomalies phenomena which in a text not for other reasons under suspicion would pass unremarked, or at least unreprehended.¹ Singularity is not in itself a

¹ Cf. Kenney (1979: 395).

ground for suspicion. It makes no sense to require that a writer shall never do anything unless he does it at least twice. In the *Heroides* one need look no further than the letter of Penelope to discover two unique syntactical usages in an area which will presently concern us in this paper: of the gerundive in *uir . . . mihi dempto fine carendus abest* and of the gerund in *reuertendi liber*.² So, when one turns to the double epistles and finds, to take an example of a phraseological rarity which in 1893 excited the suspicions of a critic still heavily under the influence of Lachmann,³ that the phrase *susurrare de aliquo* meaning 'whisper about somebody' occurs in the entire surviving corpus of Latin poetry only in Hero's letter (19.19);⁴ or, to revert to questions of syntax, that the common idiom *causa* (abl.) + possessive adjective meaning 'for my etc. sake' is found in the entire works of Ovid (who uses the word *causa* some 300 times) only twice, both times in the letter of Acontius (20.108, 198⁵), I do not see why we should suspect the hand of [Ovid] rather than Ovid. The incidence of such phenomena does not seem to differ significantly from that in the poems of unquestioned Ovidian authorship.⁶

I believe that it is more instructive to approach the question positively: to consider, that is, the literary effect in their context of apparent departures, lexical, syntactical and phraseological, from the stylistic register

² *Her.* 1.50, 80; cf. e.g. the use of *potens* + preposition at 5.147 *potens ad opem*, unparalleled until late antiquity (*TLL* s.v. 286.75ff.); *iurare* + *in* at 10.117 = 'conspire against', unique in Latin. On these and other singularities see Knox (1995), ad locc. and Index s.vv. archaisms, diction. (It should be noted that Knox's selection, the *Epistula Sapphus* apart, is confined to epistles which are in his view indisputably Ovid's.) Commentators on *A.A.* 3.2 are seemingly untroubled by the fact that the elision there of the monosyllabic verb *dem* is, we are told, unique not only in Ovid but in the entire corpus of Latin poetry from Cicero to Silius Italicus (Soubiran (1966: 402-3)).

³ Who inaugurated the argument over the authenticity of certain of the *Heroides* (Lachmann (1848)); cf. Knox (1995: 7-8 and n. 14). Some of his criteria of what constituted grounds for suspicion were inconsiderately formulated: a case in point is that of Ovid's metrical treatment of Greek feminine proper names in *-a* (Kenney (1996: 249)).

⁴ Leyhausen (1893: 47).

⁵ Convincingly restored by Housman (Kenney (1996: ad loc.)).

⁶ Other syntactical and phraseological singularities include: 17.203 *cursibus in mediis* for the usual *in medio cursu*; 19.14 *diluitur posito serior hora mero* 'you dissipate (wash away) the evening over your wine', an apparently unique extension of the normal usage of *diluere* with care or the like as object of the verb (*OLD* s.v. 1b); 20.20 *dicta tulisse* 'received your words', paralleled only at Stat. *Theb.* 11.252 *mugitum hostilem summa tulit aure iuuencus* (however, after *uerba* in line 19 *dicta* is otiose, and the text may be corrupt); 20.99 *re careant* 'lack realization', an apparently unparalleled phrase; 20.163 *amborum . . . pericula* = *ambo pericula* = *utrumque periculum*. *ambo* for *uterque* is Virgilian (Norden on *Aen.* 6.540ff., Arusian. *GLK* vii. 455.10), but I have not been able to parallel the precise form of the expression here. For further discussion of passages not mentioned in this paper see Clark (1908) and Tracy (1971), who between them mount a more than adequate case for the defence. See n. 60.

generally accounted 'poetic' or specifically Ovidian. In some cases the presumed anomaly may turn out to be positive rather than negative: that is, it can be shown on careful examination to embellish or lend force to the writer's argument, or to be appropriate to the epistolary genre and (especially in the case of Acontius and Cydippe) the adversarial style of these exchanges.⁷ 'What matters for judging the use of words in Latin is . . . the tone, the context, and the sense of appropriateness.'⁸ Where the effect in its context is adjudged to be neutral or negative, it is still relevant to enquire whether the number of such instances is in itself anomalous and a cause for justified suspicion as to authenticity.

Stylistic registers shade into one another across the whole broad range of the texts that have come down to us. Critics of Latin poetry still tend, I suppose, to operate with Axelsonian criteria, identifying as 'unpoetical', that is inappropriate in the higher genres, words, expressions and usages deemed to be at home in comedy, satire and prose: archaisms, vulgarisms, colloquialisms and prosaisms. Axelson's *Unpoetische Wörter* (Axelson (1945)) will always be a landmark in the history of Latin stylistics — 'seminal, indeed epoch-making', as one authority has described it⁹ — and not all the strictures of his critics are well founded.¹⁰ One point taken by reviewers and others is, however, well taken and is directly relevant to the argument of this paper: Axelson's omission to take into account the context and the effect that a word or phrase may have in its particular setting.¹¹ It is not in principle a defect of his book that, as reviewers have pointed out, his approach is essentially negative; but in applying the results of his enquiry it becomes vital to appraise the texts and contexts positively, and it is this which is attempted in what follows. What is needed is to assess the quality and impact of apparent deviations from normal 'poetic' usage¹² in their argumentative and affective settings. Before embarking on my examples, to illustrate what was said above about hypercriticism I will

⁷ Cf. Kenney (1996: 1–2 and n. 3).

⁸ Williams (1968: 745).

⁹ Lyne (1989: 4 n. 18).

¹⁰ The most influential criticism remains that of Williams (1968: 743–50); *contra*, maintaining Axelson's position on the effect of genre on diction, Watson (1985); cf. Lyne (1989: 8 and n. 30).

¹¹ Watson (1985: 430); Lyne (1989: 5); cf. Axelson's reviewers, e.g. Ernout (1947: 70) 'dans les combinaisons multiples où il intervient, le mot contribue à produire l'impression poétique, mais il ne la crée pas à lui seul; il faut qu'il soit à sa place'; Bömer (1951: 166) 'Jedes Wort, jede Erscheinung bedarf einer speziellen Betrachtung'. For a useful bibliographical conspectus of the modern literature on Latin poetic style see Booth (1981: 3686 n. 2).

¹² Well defined for Ovid by Booth (1981: 3686 n. 11): Ovid's Latin is 'poetic' in the sense that 'it embraces forms, constructions and vocabulary which are found throughout the whole spectrum of Roman poetry and with particular frequency in the elevated genres, but which are not generally used by prose-writers except for special effect'.

discuss a passage which, though it has exercised the critics, turns out on close inspection to be a non-instance, to be classed, if classification is thought to be called for, as a singularity rather than anomaly.

1 uixque manu pigra totiens infusa resurgunt
lumina, uix moto concutit igne faces. (21.159–60)

concutit *Burman*: coripit π: alii alia

We need not be concerned here with the problem of line 160, where *Burman*'s correction may be accepted *faute de mieux*. The sticking-place for the critics has been *infusa* in line 159. This has been assailed and variously emended on the grounds that in the sense required here of 'fill by pouring' *infundo* is attested in classical Latin only in technical writers.¹³ The transmitted text has found a robust champion in Professor James Diggle, but it might be thought that he somewhat overstates his case when he asserts that 'Eur. *Hipp.* 853–4 δάκρυσσι . . . βλέφαρα καταχυθέντα, together with Barrett's elucidation of the linguistic phenomenon in his Addendum, p. 435, should be sufficient to rout the emendators'¹⁴ — though it is true enough that none of the corrections hitherto proposed is remotely persuasive. In the first place, one should not be unduly deterred by the label 'technical': Vitruvius' Latin seems to be generally accounted that of a rude mechanical, but there is nothing uncouth or rustic about Columella's prose. 'Columella writes clearly, neatly, even elegantly'; his style is 'unaffected and resourceful'. From Frank Goodyear that was not faint praise.¹⁵ The usage is in fact so widespread in post-classical and Christian prose that it must have been common parlance (rather than colloquial) already in Ovid's day; that would certainly not exclude it from Augustan elegy. Moreover, analogous usages in both Latin and Greek suggest that it can hardly have been calculated to grate on the ears of his readers. *Infundo* = 'fill (by pouring)' is no more of a strain on the language than the common *perfunndo* = 'drench (by pouring)' or the uncommon but unreprehended use of the simple verb *funndo* = 'drench (with)', attested only in Tibullus and his imitator Lygdamus.¹⁶ And in looking to Greek for an analogy Diggle could have found a much closer one in ἐγγέω, for which 'fill by pouring' is a classical sense attested in Sophocles, Xenophon and Alexis.¹⁷ In short, far from affording grounds for suspicion or emendation, what we have here is a not untypical example of Ovid's discreetly masterful way

¹³ *OLD* s.v. 2, *TLL* s.v. 1509.20ff.; *Phaedr.* 3.13.9 and *Mart.* 5.64.1 are wrongly classified.

¹⁴ Diggle (1972: 38).

¹⁵ *CHCL* (1982: ii. 669) = *The Early Principate* (1982: 173).

¹⁶ *OLD* s.v. 3; *Mart.* 3.82.26 (cit. *TLL* s.v. 1564.19) is doubtful: see Shackleton Bailey ad loc.

¹⁷ *LSJ* s.v. II; cf. Pearson on Soph. fr. 563, noting a further extension at Pind. *Nem.* 9.50 ἐγκιρνάτω τις νιν, sc. the bowl just mentioned.

with his own language.¹⁸ It may be added that the concrete sense of *lumen* required here, the lamp itself rather than ‘a light’, seems to be rare, but it is unimpeachably classical: Cic. *Sen.* 36 nisi . . . *lumini oleum instilles* (*OLD* s.v. 6a).

II. SOME APPARENT ‘ANOMALIES’

I begin with what seems to me a real syntactical curiosity falling within the category of apparently unmotivated archaism.

2 idem qui facimus, factam tenuabimus iram,
copia placandi sit modo parua tui. (20.73–4)

placandi *PG*ω: placandae *ς*

Acontius looks forward to allaying Cydippe’s indignation with him in bed, as recommended in the *Ars Amatoria*. Editors since Heinsius have generally printed *placandi*; the construction is explained as gerundival, *tui* being neuter from *tuum*, so that grammatical gender overrides the sex of the person referred to.¹⁹ I should not venture to dispute the point, but the construction is spectacularly rare; in fact there is only one other example of it with *tui* neuter referring to a woman,²⁰ at Plaut. *Truc.* 370 *tui uidendi copia est*; and at Ter. *Hec.* 372 *eius uidendi cupidus*, where *eius* likewise refers to a woman, the construction is explained by Madvig (1869: 113) as due to false analogy. That being so, the claims of *placandae* seem to demand reconsideration. Though dismissed by Heinsius as a solecism (‘Latine vix dicitur’), it cannot be scouted out of hand. In addition to Ter. *Phorm.* 880 *ait uterque tibi potestatem eius adhibendae dari*²¹ we have in Ovid himself an analogy if not a parallel at *Her.* 11.106 *amissae memores sed tamen este mei*. About a dozen MSS have *amissi*; no editor prints it, but Housman in his lecture notes remarked that the ‘fem. is constructio ad sensum, since *mei* is really genitive of *meum*; with gerundive the neuter

¹⁸ Cf. the passages cited in nn. 2, 4 above. If *infundo* is modelled on ἐγγέω, we may note as analogous Ovid’s use of *nympha* in the *Heroides* (9.50, 103, 16.128; not 1.27, where see Knox (1995): ad loc.; contra Casali (1995) on *Her.* 9.50), always with a Greek proper name, in the sense of νύμφη = ‘young woman’. This was picked up by the poet of the *Ciris* (435). It is relevant to note that *Her.* 9 (Deianira) was one of those condemned by Lachmann (1848: 58–60) and subsequently by Courtney (1965) and Vessey (1969); contra Jacobson (1974: 231–4); Casali (1995: 227–33). Cf. also 21.178 *labra* = λουπρά, an Ovidian innovation.

¹⁹ See e.g. Madvig (1869: 111–13), K–S (1955: i. 746), Risch (1984: 120 n. 160) (not noticing this passage).

²⁰ Referring to a man at Ov. *Tr.* 2.154, 182.

²¹ Bentley emended to *habendi se dare*, citing this passage, but later editors have not followed his lead.

is preserved, as 20.74'. He added a reference to Madvig's classic note mentioned above, on *De Finibus* 1.60, which is indeed worth quoting: 'E contrario nescio, an Ovidius Epist. XI, 106, ut erat novator, dixerit in femina: *Amissae memores*' eqs. Since then *placandi* is supported by a parallel and *placandae* only by an analogy (though in Ovid himself), editors are no doubt right to plump for the former, though in a spirit of gloomy resignation, to echo Housman, rather than confidence. But the construction in this form²² must presumably have sounded unfamiliar in the ears of Ovid's contemporaries? Possibly, however, since most examples of these uses of the gerund and gerundive are with *copia* or words similarly connoting choice or opportunity,²³ even in his day *placandi . . . tui* might have passed current as set phraseology. Though an aura of puzzlement persists, I see nothing here that suggests [Ovid] rather than Ovid — rather, *ut erat novator*, the reverse.

Within the broad spectrum of anomaly, that is ostensibly 'unpoetical' usages defined above, there can be distinguished a narrower band of specifically or characteristically Ciceronian lexis and idiom. These will be treated separately; first I discuss the other instances in the order of their occurrence:

3 hinc ego Dardaniae muros excelsaque tecta
 et freta prospiciens arbore nixus eram. (16.57–8)

prospiciens . . . eram is here no more than a metrically helpful equivalent for *prospiciebam*.²⁴ This usage is generally classified as colloquial, at home in comedy and prose.²⁵ It is in fact sporadically attested in the poets: Catullus, Lucretius, Propertius, Manilius and Ovid himself. In many of

²² The type *lucis tuendi copiam* (Plaut. *Capt.* 1008, on which see Lindsay ad loc., Risch (1984: 104 n. 141) or *navis incohendi exordium* (Enn. *Scaen.* 201 J), in the form with the dependent genitive in the plural, would be relatively familiar from Cicero (Roby (1896: lxxviii); K-S (1955: i. 745)), but that it was by Ovid's time felt as archaic is evident from its disappearance and subsequent re-emergence in the prose of Fronto, Gellius and Apuleius (H-S 1965: 375).

²³ Roby (1896: lxxviii); H-S (1965: 375).

²⁴ Professor Nisbet suggests that *prospiciens* should be taken as participial and *nixus eram* as the main verb: 'I was leaning against a tree as I contemplated from this spot . . .'. This use of the pluperfect is certainly Ovidian: cf. e.g. *A.A.* 2.129 *litore constiterant* 'they were standing on the shore', *al.* However, though this way of taking the couplet is syntactically possible, sense and rhetoric tell against it. The emphasis in Paris' recollection is on his thoughts at the time rather than his posture: it was as he contemplated (unwittingly) his future that it started to happen to him. The words *hinc . . . prospiciens . . . eram* articulate the couplet and frame his as yet uncomprehending survey of the topless towers whose destruction the events of the next half hour were to set in train, and the sea over which the agent of that destruction was to come. The referee draws my attention to Prop. 3.3.13–14 *cum me Castalia specularis ex arbore Phoebus | sic ait aurata nixus ad antra lyra*, which supports the construction argued for here.

²⁵ Blase (1903: 256–7); H-S (1965: 388–9).

these cases, however, including the other Ovidian examples, there is room for disagreement as to whether the function of the participle is adjectival or genuinely predicative.²⁶ Here I think it is clearly the latter, a pure periphrasis for the usual tense, not noticed as such by Eklund in his monograph on the subject; it might have helped to alleviate his doubts as to the existence of 'periphrases with verbal complements . . . in pre-Christian Latin'.²⁷ This instance is instructive as a preliminary reminder of something that will continue to emerge from this discussion, that language is constantly developing and that Ovid can often be found, where Virgil before him is to be found, at the cutting edge of development.

4 aut ego perpetuo famam sine labe tenebo . . . (17.69)

The idiom *famam et sim. tenere* in the sense of 'maintain one's good name' appears to be otherwise exclusively found in prose.²⁸ This is one of those cases that expose the limitations of the Axelsonian prosaic/poetic dichotomy. *A priori* it is difficult to detect anything in either diction or the combination of words that tends to place a phrase such as this in a specific register. In this sense its literary effect can be classified as neutral.

5 sic meus hinc uir abest, ut me custodiat absens. (17.165)

'Though my husband is away, yet he guards me even in his absence.' This limiting or stipulative use of *ut/ne* + subjunctive also occurs twice in Hero's letter (19.87–8, 181–2) and once in Acontius' (20.101–2), also at *Tr.* 3.4.55–6. It appears to be otherwise characteristic of comedy, argumentative prose and satire.²⁹ Given the argumentative quality of these epistles, it is perhaps not out of place; but its anomalous frequency perhaps suggests that it belongs in the class of what might be called authorial 'tics': expressions or constructions which for some reason or other appear to have been haunting the poet's subconscious mind. No single instance is in itself objectionable or even especially remarkable.³⁰

²⁶ Catull. 63.57, 64.317; Lucret. 3.396 and Munro ad loc.; Prop. 3.7.21, 4.6.1; Manil. 1.858, 3.332 and Housman ad loc.; Bömer (1976: 222).

²⁷ Eklund (1970: 47).

²⁸ Caes. *B.C.* 3.55.2; cf. with *dignitatem* Cic. *Fam.* 4.9.3, Livy 39.37.18.

²⁹ Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.123–4, *Ep.* 1.16.5–6, 1.20.25 and Mayer ad loc., *A.P.* 151–2 and Brink ad loc.; Bennett (1910: i. 263–7); H–S (1965: 641–2). Cf. correlative *ut . . . sic* with concessive sense at 17.71–2, 109–10, 241–2, *al.*

³⁰ Examples are: *ut nunc est* (16.50, 17.169, 19.127); *si nescis* (16.246, 17.198, 18.39, 29.150). See Palmer (1898: 436–7); Kenney (1996: ad loc.). In view of the erotic character of the double epistles and their greater emphasis on wooing as compared with the single, the relatively frequent occurrence of *quod amas et sim.* (16.85, 18.179, 19.179, 20.32, 35, 21.57) is unsurprising and does not really belong in this category; cf. the *Ars Amatoria*, with four instances in the first 264 verses of book I.

6 et peream si non inuitant omnia culpam. (17.183)

peream si, rather like English 'I'll be hanged if', is a colloquial expression (*OLD* s.v. *pereo* 3b; Hofmann (1951: 31)). In Ovid it is found only here and in Cydippe's letter (21.29), though *peream nisi* occurs in the *Epistulae ex Ponto* (3.5.45–7, 4.12.43), and Propertius has *dispeream nisi* (2.21.9–10). It is interesting to note that, whereas Cicero's correspondents Caelius and Cassius use this idiom, Cicero himself in his letters prefers the presumably more formal *moriar si*. Colloquialisms are not so rare in Latin elegy that this one should occasion surprise.³¹ Ovid's own epistolary practice here agrees with that of his heroines and that of other educated Romans.

7 tu quoque qui poteris fore me sperare fidelem? (17.213)

This is the only instance in Ovid of *qui?* in the sense of 'how?'. It is frequent in comedy, elsewhere in verse only in Catullus, Lucretius, Horace's hexameters and Phaedrus. As a one-off it can stand beside *quicum* at Virg. *Aen.* 11.822, one of only three examples in 'solemn poetry'.³² It suits Helen's argumentative tone, and Ovid's options for phrasing her question were limited by metre: he never uses *quomodo*, only the disjoined *quo . . . modo*. In its context the phrase is admirably concise and forceful writing.

8 longior infirmum ne lasset epistula corpus
clausaque consueto sit sibi fine, uale. (20.241–2)

In line 242 *ut* must be understood from the preceding *ne*, as at *Met.* 13.271–2. This kind of ellipse is not uncommon in prose;³³ in the form found here its next occurrence seems to be in Juvenal.³⁴ Ovid, like Horace before him, makes frequent and enterprising use of ἀπὸ κοινοῦ constructions, of which this is a type — and somebody had to be first.

³¹ Tränkle (1960); Knox (1986: 31). Cf. Wilkinson (1959: 190), on colloquialisms in Horace's *Odes*: 62 in 3134 lines, 'quite a high proportion'.

³² Skutsch on Enn. *Ann.* 268; the others are Catull. 66.77 and Stat. *Theb.* 8.279, this latter an obvious Virgilian *furtum*. Compare *sane*, only in Ovid at *Her.* 17.13 and (*s.v.l.*) 21.213, and before him only at Virg. *Aen.* 10.48 (Kenney (1996: 248)). On Virgil as setter of linguistic precedents cf. Lyne (1989: 14).

³³ K–S (1955: ii. 563–4). In verse cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.1.1–3 *qui fit, Maecenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem | seu ratio dederit seu fors obiecerit, illa | contentus uiuat, laudet diuversa sequentes?*, where in line 3 *quisque* must be supplied from the preceding *nemo* (Brown ad loc.; and see Courtney (1980) on Juv. 6.18).

³⁴ Juv. 13.35–7, 16.7–10; Courtney (1980) cites no poetic parallels. [Tib.] 3.10 (4.4).5–8, cit. Baehrens (1912: 321), is not a case in point.

III. CICERONIANISMS: AN EPISTOLARY FEATURE?

I now turn to prosaisms apparently characteristic of Cicero in particular, again in the order of their occurrence.

9 nec potui debere mihi spem longius istam . . . (16.105)

‘I could not go on withholding from myself the realization of that hope’, sc. of winning Helen. This special sense of *debeo* = ‘leave unpaid’ seems to be otherwise peculiar to Cicero.³⁵

10 hoc quoque enim dubito, non quo fiducia desit
 aut mea sit facies non bene nota mihi,
 sed quia credulitas damno solet esse puellis
 uerbaque dicuntur uestra carere fide. (17.37–40)

quo s: quod PG ω

Causal *quo* + subjunctive is found in Plautus and Terence,³⁶ but what might be called the full-blown classical construction with *non quo* + subjunctive giving an attributed or rejected reason, followed by *sed quod/quia* + indicative giving the actual reason, apparently occurs in earlier Latin poetry only in Lucretius.³⁷ It seems to be a favourite of Cicero’s.³⁸ This is of course to assume that *quo*, restored to the text by Burman, and not *quod*, is indeed what the poet wrote; but *quo* is frequently corrupted to *quod* in MSS, whereas I should be hard put to it to find instances of the reverse.

11 sed nihil infirmo, faueo quoque laudibus istis. (17.127)

Infirmo in this technical sense of invalidating a statement or disabling an argument is a favourite of Cicero’s in the *De inuentione*, where he uses it some scores of times; in the *De oratore* thrice and in the *Orator* once only, a significant contrast.³⁹ Given the adversarial and rhetorical character of the correspondence it is an appropriate word enough; but it is tempting to suggest that its use here may embody a discreet and highly Ovidian stroke of wit. From Gorgias onwards praise and blame of Helen had been a stock theme of the rhetorical tradition. Her use of this technical term

³⁵ *OLD* s.v. 3b; see Shackleton Bailey (1965: 170) on *Att.* 4.2 (74).2.

³⁶ Bennett (1910: i. 319); Handford (1947: 68 n. 2); Martin on *Ter. Ad.* 270.

³⁷ 2.336–7, 6.71–8 (2.692–4, 723–4 are interpolated: Deufert (1996: 130–3, 152–5)). Like Lucretius, Helen is arguing a case. At *Tr.* 5.11.3–5 the first *quod*-clause is in the indicative and states a fact.

³⁸ K–S (1955: ii. 385–6), H–S (1965: 588).

³⁹ *Infirmo* occurs nowhere else in classical Latin poetry; in its technical sense it is found at *Auson. Epp.* 21.43 Green, *Prudent. Harmart.* 181, non-technically at *CLE* 1869.13. Cf. Knox (1995: 211), on *aequaliter* at *Her.* 7.49, used there in a technical sense otherwise attested only in prose.

perhaps implies an anachronistic awareness of the fact: 'So much will in years to come be said and written about me to my credit and discredit; here is a character of me to which I can give the seal of (technical) approval.'⁴⁰

12 uos modo uenando, modo rus geniale colendo
ponitis in uaria tempora longa mora. (19.9–10)

Pono in this sense (originally financial) of 'lay out', 'dispose of', with *tempus*, *dies* and the like as object is relatively rare, occurring before Ovid apparently only in Cicero.⁴¹ In Ovid it is elsewhere found only in the exile poetry.⁴² That is another reminder that it is a matter of chance whether a usage comes down to us as an apparently isolated departure from the norm or a development in a stylistic continuum. More than one ostensible singularity might turn out to be nothing of the sort if we had more of the work of Ovid's immediate predecessors and contemporaries — not to mention his own lost works.⁴³

13 inque caput nostrum dominae periuria quaeso
eueniant. (20.127–8)

The usual construction with *euenio* in the sense of 'happen to' is with the dative. The only other classical example of *in* + accusative is in Cicero.⁴⁴

Of these Ciceronian usages no. 11 stands on its own as specifically technical; it is possible, as I have suggested, that Ovid was having a little quiet fun with it. Nos. 9, 10 and 12 are attested both in the letters and in other parts of the Ciceronian corpus; no. 13 is found once only in the letters. This is admittedly a somewhat slender basis for the suggestion of Ciceronian influence, and *infirmitas* is in any case a word that Ovid might have heard on the lips of his teachers in the declamation schools; he need not have resorted to Cicero's rhetorical works to encounter it. Nevertheless the possibility that he might have read Cicero's letters, or some of them, must be left open. Though the publication of those *Ad Atticum* is generally

⁴⁰ For self-conscious awareness by Ovid's heroines of the literary tradition of which they are a part see Knox (1995: 18–25).

⁴¹ *Brut.* 87, *Att.* 1.13.1, 6.2.6, *Fam.* 5.21.1, *De or.* 3.17 Cf. however Hor. *Sat.* 2.7.112–13 *otia recte | ponere*.

⁴² *Tr.* 4.8.14, *Ex P.* 1.5.36, 48, 1.8.66.

⁴³ The Gallus fragment has engendered more questions than answers, but it is relevant to note that it at least demonstrates that the collocation *Romana . . . historia* was not introduced into elegy by Propertius (Anderson–Parsons–Nisbet (1979: 141)). This line, by the way, also reminds us that we are not always well served by the lexicographers. Neither *OLD* nor *TLL* distinguishes the sense of *mora* which is required here, 'distraction', 'pursuit', 'pastime', though Planudes evidently grasped it, rendering ἐν ποικίλῃ τριβῇ. Cf. Booth (1991: 148) on *Am.* 2.11.14.

⁴⁴ *Fam.* 2.10 (86).1 and Shackleton Bailey (1977: 409).

thought not to antedate the Neronian period, and though the earliest extant citation from those *Ad familiares* is by the elder Seneca, who outlived Ovid by some twenty years, we know too little about the pre-publication history of Cicero's correspondence to rule out altogether the possibility that Ovid may have had access to it.⁴⁵ We are certainly not entitled to assume that he never opened a prose book.⁴⁶

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

Lastly, some passages which do not seem to fit neatly into the 'unpoetical' category but which seem to deserve remark.

- 14 portubus egredior uentisque ferentibus usus
applicor in terras, Oebali nympha, tuas. (16.127–8)

Applico in the sense of 'put in at' is generally constructed with *ad* (e.g. *Met.* 3.598) or dative (e.g. *Her.* 7.117, *Tr.* 3.9.10). The only other instance with *in* is at Livy 37.12.10 *Romani et Eumenes rex in Erythraeam primum classem applicuerunt*. The passive in this sense is, however, specifically Ovidian (*Her.* 7.117, *Met.* 3.598).⁴⁷

- 15 digna quidem es caelo, sed adhuc tellure morare. (18.169)

All the other instances of *adhuc* referring to the future in the sense demanded here of 'awhile' which are recorded in the dictionaries are post-Ovidian,⁴⁸ and the construction with the imperative is apparently otherwise unexampled. But the expression, to my ear at least, reads naturally; and, as has already been said, somebody has to take the lead in any extension of usage. In this case Ovid had before him analogies in the usage of Virgil, who introduced into high poetry both *olim* and *quondam* with reference to future time.⁴⁹

- 16 (a) cur totiens a me, lente morator, abes? (19.70)
morator PW: natator pω: uiator rec. unus: de G incert.
(b) otiosis locus hic non est, discede morator.

(CIL iv. 813 = CLE 333 = 704 Diehl)

⁴⁵ See Nagle (1980: 33–4), for possible 'reminiscences of Ciceronian thought and expression' in the exile poetry.

⁴⁶ See below on the *De officiis*, n. 56.

⁴⁷ Otherwise only at Justin. 11.10.12 *exercitu insulae applicito*; see *TLL* s.v. 296.65ff.

⁴⁸ *OLD* s.v. 6a (four examples, all from the younger Pliny; this one not noticed), *TLL* s.v. 661.39ff.

⁴⁹ See Harrison (1991: 61), on *Aen.* 10.12, Austin (1977: 271), on *Aen.* 6.876; and cf. above, n. 32.

In the intransitive sense of 'loiterer' required here⁵⁰ the word *morator* is otherwise attested only in this Pompeian graffito, an elegantly euphemistic prohibition against committing a nuisance. The word in this sense was evidently colloquial. It must be what Ovid wrote; the alternatives offered by the tradition are clearly inferior.⁵¹ His use of verbal nouns in *-tor* may be described as relatively restrained but not unenterprising.⁵²

Finally under this heading we have an instance, which turns out if carefully examined to be exceptionally revealing, of what was described above as Ovid's 'discreetly masterful' way with the Latin tongue. In three passages of her letter *Cydidpe* dwells on her oath and on what was — or rather was not — in her mind when she read it out.

- 17 (a) *quae iurat, mens est: nil coniurauimus illa;
illa fidem dictis addere sola potest.* (21.135–6)
- nil tum iurauimus rec. unus: nil nos i. Heinsius: sed nil i. Palmer*
- (b) *non ego iuravi, legi iurantia uerba:
uir mihi non isto more legendus eras.* (21.143–4)
- (c) *nil ego peccaui, nisi quod periuria legi
inque parum fausto carmine docta fui.* (21.181–2)

Critics have taken exception in the first and third of these passages to what they see as an unOvidian straining of language; and the first has been variously and unconvincingly emended. So far, however, from doing violence to the language, Ovid is here making his heroine make her point by drawing a distinction founded on insistence on linguistic accuracy and exact meaning. In (a) *Cydidpe* is saying 'iuravi, sed non *coniuravi*', 'I uttered (the words of) an oath, but I did not join in it (with my mind)', emphasizing the prefix which distinguishes the compound and its special senses. This is a specifically declamatory ploy noticed (and deplored: not that this would have put Ovid off) by the elder Seneca as a kind of affectation, *cacozeliae genus, quod detractu aut adiectione syllabae facit sensum* (*Suas.* 7.11).⁵³ The implied opposition between *mens* and

⁵⁰ *TLL* s.v. 1475.60–5 fails to remark the distinction between the transitive and intransitive senses.

⁵¹ *natator* recurs at line 90 *magnus ubi est spretis ille natator aquis?*, where it is pointed; *uiator* is purely inept.

⁵² Cf. Linse (1891: 27–8).

⁵³ The example he gives is closely analogous to that under discussion: *peribit ergo quod Cicero scripsit, manebit quod Antonius proscriptit?* Cf. Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 100.1–2, insisting on the difference between *effundere* and *fundere*; and see Summers (1910: lxxxvi), Bonner (1949: 69–70).

*uerba*⁵⁴ is then made explicit, as so often in Ovid, in the following pentameter, so epitomizing the issue (*status* = *στάσις*) on which Cydippe's case turns, that of *scriptum* vs *uoluntas*. This crucial distinction is then picked up, repeated and varied in (b): merely to read the words of an oath is not to swear, a point ingeniously developed and expanded in the word-play of line 144, 'I ought to have been allowed to *choose* a husband, not forced to "read" one.'⁵⁵ In (c) she pursues the distinction: 'peccauī, sed non peierauī'. She has indeed offended Diana by breaking her oath, but this was not a real perjury. Without what has preceded the words *periuria legi*, which some have found difficult to swallow, might indeed be puzzling: as a summary of Cydippe's case the phrase is brilliantly effective — 'point, all point'. Ovid had read the *De officiis*,⁵⁶ in which Cicero had drawn precisely the distinction which is in question here: *non enim falsum iurare periurare est, sed quod ex animi tui sententia iuraris, sicut uerbis concipitur more nostro, id non facere periurium est* (3.108). There is indeed an echo of those very words elsewhere in Cydippe's pleading: *consilium prudensque animi sententia iurat* (137). In Ovid's formulation the distinction is implied rather than stated, but it is none the less clear: 'non feci periuria, legi tantum'. Critics who have boggled at these lines have done so because they have failed to read them with the attention and respect for linguistic nuance that they require and deserve. Like his own Ulysses Ovid rings all the possible changes on the one point of substance that poor Cydippe can muster against her unscrupulous suitor: *illa referre aliter saepe solebat idem*. One lays down the double epistles to the echo of E. K. Rand's unanswerable challenge: 'if they are not from Ovid's pen, an *ignotus* has beaten him at his own game'.⁵⁷

V. CONCLUSION

Of the ostensible or putative anomalies reviewed in the preceding discussion no. 17 and perhaps also no. 7 can be shown to have an identifiable and designed literary effect in their contexts, and in that sense may be classed as positive (non-damnatory). Leaving nos. 9-13 aside for the moment, of the remainder nos. 3, 8 and 15 can be classed as constructive

⁵⁴ Cf. e.g. Scip. min. *orat.* 11 *uerbis conceptis iurauī sciens*. For the idea of intention implied in *coniuro* cf. *Met.* 5.149-51 *namque omnibus unum | opprimere est animus, coniurata undique pugnant | agmina eqs.*, where no actual oath is in question. For a unique use of *iuro* elsewhere in *Her.* see above, n. 2.

⁵⁵ Schawaller (1987: 206).

⁵⁶ Kenney (1958: 207 and n. 2); D'Elia (1961); Labate (1984: 121-74).

⁵⁷ Rand (1925: 27).

linguistic innovations, extending the range of Latin usage; in the last instance the Virgilian analogies again remind us that this sort of thing was part and parcel of the continuous process of development of the literary registers of the language from Ennius onwards. Nos. 4, 5 and 6 may be classed as neutral. This leaves the instances, nos. 9–13, of specifically Ciceronian diction and usage. The most plausible explanation of this very light, and some might say statistically insignificant, Ciceronian coloration is that it reflects the more adversarial tone of these epistles as compared with the single *Heroides*.⁵⁸ It is an oversimplification, as Jacobson has pointed out, to characterize the single letters *tout court* as *suasoriae* or *ethopoiae* in verse and the double as *controuersiae*.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, *Heroides* 16–21 clearly do have a good deal in common with the *controuersia*. This is most marked in the two outer pairs, in which the correspondents are vigorously maintaining, or in Helen's case purporting to maintain, diametrically opposed sides of a question, than in the epistles of Hero and Leander. It is therefore perhaps not entirely accidental that most of my examples of prosaisms and Ciceronianisms come from 16–17 and 20–21, the pseudo-forensic tone of the *controuersia* being of course especially prominent in the letters of Acontius and Cydippe — who, as we have seen, all but quotes Cicero in her defence. At lines 145ff. of her letter, immediately following on passage 17 (b), she resorts in desperation to a sarcastic *reductio ad absurdum* of Acontius' tactics: why stick at entrapping girls? Why not use this device to trick millionaires out of their wealth or kings out of their kingdoms? This is in effect an exaggerated version of the pleading actually recommended by Cicero in the *De inuentione* to the speaker who is pleading for *aequitas* against the strict letter of the law: *deinde nullam rem neque legibus neque scriptura ulla, denique ne in sermone quidem cotidiano atque imperiis domesticis recte posse administrari, si unus quisque uelit uerba spectare et non ad uoluntatem eius qui ea uerba habuerit accedere* (2.140). There is nothing to my mind inherently improbable in the idea that Ovid turned over a few Ciceronian texts while he was incubating these poems.

This leaves a residue of one non-starter (no. 1) and one puzzle (no. 2). I am left wondering how *placandi*, if that is what Ovid wrote, sounded in contemporary ears. Is it the sort of thing that, had the poems been given a preliminary airing in private to a circle of critical friends, would have provoked objections? If so, would the objection have been that the lan-

⁵⁸ Dr Horsfall points to an analogy in the case of the Council in *Aeneid* 11, where 'in his portrait of Drances, and in his exchange with Turnus, Virgil drew on the language of demagogy and polemic' (Gransden (1991: 14–15)).

⁵⁹ Jacobson (1974: 325–30).

guage was old-fashioned, or that it was correct but pedantic? Would the point have been taken that *placandae* was, strictly speaking, a solecism? But then, what of *amissae* at 11.106? Had that raised eyebrows, or was *constructio ad sensum* accepted in such cases? So far as the present instance is concerned, if I am right in my surmise that *Heroides* 16–21 never received the poet's final revision and were given to the world only after his death by some anonymous benefactor of mankind as they were found in his desk, there was no opportunity for any such discussion; and posterity is left to wonder.

It will, I think, have become clear that these so-called anomalies do not seem to me to add materially to the case for ascribing these epistles to an otherwise unknown poet of genius, which is what those who disbelieve in Ovid's authorship must necessarily postulate. That, however, is not really the point of this paper. What I hope to have shown is the need for finer discrimination in discussions of poetic style in such investigations. The Axelsonian dichotomy 'poetic/unpoetic' has its uses: it is certainly remarkable that in these poems Ovid should use four times a construction otherwise exemplified only in comedy, prose and satire and once in his exile poetry (no. 5); but when it comes to gauging its effect, and the effect of the repetition, on the ear of the contemporary reader we are again left guessing. To label every such case 'unpoetic', however, is unhelpful. The idea that even a great poet is bound to maintain a uniform quality and 'level' (to introduce another question-begging term) of style is an assumption which a nodding acquaintance with Shakespeare or Wordsworth should quickly dispose of. As regards the bearing of such departures from a postulated poetic norm on the *Echtheitsfrage*, the incidence of colloquialisms and prosaisms deserving to be noted as such does not appear to differ materially, as has already been implied, from that in the undoubted *Heroides*.⁶⁰ All that is of secondary importance; what matters is what these phenomena have to tell us about the literary art of *Ovidius nouator*.

Note. This paper has profited materially from the constructive comments of the Academy's referees. I am also grateful to Dr Robert Maltby for his help with the bibliography of the Axelsonian question.

⁶⁰ Above, n. 2. For the latest contribution to the debate on authenticity see Beck (1996) and my review in *CR* 48 (1998), 311–13.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ANRW* H. Temporini and W. Haase (edd.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. Berlin and New York 1972– .
- CHCL* E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature. II Latin Literature*. Cambridge 1982.
- CIL* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Berlin 1863– .
- CLE* F. Bücheler and E. Lommatzsch (edd.), *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*. 3 vols. Leipzig 1894–1926.
- GLK* H. Keil (ed.), *Grammatici Latini*. 8 vols. Leipzig 1857–70, repr. 1961.
- H-S* J. B. Hofmann and A. Szantyr, *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik*. Munich 1965.
- K-S* R. Kühner and C. Stegmann, *Ausführliche Grammatik der lateinischen Sprache*. 3rd ed. A. Thierfelder. 2 vols. Leverkusen 1955.
- LSJ* H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. New ed. by H. S. Jones. 2 vols. Oxford 1940 and repr.
- OLD* P. G. W. Glare (ed.), *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Oxford 1982.
- TLL* *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. Leipzig 1900– .

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