

Ten Notes on Statius' *Silvae*

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The following editions are referred to: J. Markland (1728); E. Baehrens (1876); F. Vollmer (1898); A. Klotz (2nd ed., 1911); J. H. Mozley (Loeb ed., 1928); H. Frère and H. J. Izaac (Budé ed., 1944); E. Courtney (OCT, 1990); H. J. van Dam (Book 2, 1984); K. M. Coleman (Book 4, 1988).

1. 4. 22-25

ipse ueni uiresque nouas animumque ministra
qui caneris; *docto* nec enim sine numine *tantus*
Ausoniae decora ampla togae centumque dedisti
iudicium mentemque uiris.

Statius asks Rutilius Gallicus, the subject of his poem, to be his inspiration, for he brings distinction to the Roman courts.

Both *docto* and *tantus* have aroused suspicion. The former was emended by Markland to *dextro* (he compared, among other passages, 66 below, *dextro sine numine cretam*), an emendation which does not deserve the oblivion which has recently befallen it. *Tantus* ("als ein so gewaltiger Redner," Vollmer), is difficult to accept, but the conjectures listed by Klotz and by Courtney are scarcely more convincing. I suggest *natus*, which would correspond closely to *cretam* in 66.

2. 6. 10-12

sed famulum gemis, Vrse, pium, sed amore fideque
has meritum lacrimas, cui maior stemmate *iuncto*
libertas ex mente fuit.

Flavius Ursus mourns the death of a favourite slave "whose spirit knew a freedom that no line of ancestry could give" (Mozley).

If *iuncto* refers to the lines joining the *imagines* of the family-tree, then, as van Dam says, "a *stemma non iunctum* does not exist." Hence Courtney adopts the old conjecture *cuncto*. For the singular *cunctus* in the sense of *quisque*, *ThLL* IV 1398. 7 ff. quotes only three instances from pre-Apuleian literature, all three from Statius, but in our passage *cuncto* would have to mean not "every single one" but "any," presumably on the analogy

of the singular of *omnis*. How possible this is I do not know, but I should consider changing one letter to produce *iusto* (*OLD* sense 8); I note that *cunctis* and *iustis* are variants at *Theb.* 9. 633.

2. 6. 93–95

quid terga dolori,
Vrse, damus? quid damna foues et pectore iniquo
uulnus amas? ubi nota reis facundia *raptis*?

Status urges Ursus to cease mourning for his slave. I have discussed this passage in *WJA* 14 (1988) 165. Since *raptis* is not convincing either in the sense of “dragged into court” or in that of “rescued from court” (i.e. acquitted), I suggested <f>*ractis*, “crushed,” i.e. either “condemned” or “dejected.” Another possibility might be <g>*ratis*, “grateful” for their acquittal. The opposite corruption may have occurred at Silius 13. 335, where Heinsius’ *rapta* (for *grata*) is very attractive.

3. 5. 48–49

questa est Aegiale, questa est Meliboea relinqui,
et *quam quam* saeui fecerunt maenada planctus.

Wives who complained about being left behind by their husbands, Aegiale, Meliboea and Laodamia.

It has been usual to read *quam saeui* as a parenthetic exclamation, but the double *quam* remains objectionable. Courtney adopts the old emendation *tam saeui*, but the demonstrative is no great improvement. I suggest *atque ea quam saeui*.

4. 1. 27–32

quid tale, precor, *prior annus* habebat?
dic age, Roma potens, et mecum, longa Vetustas,
dinumera fastos, nec parua exempla recense
sed quae sola meus dignetur uincere Caesar. 30
ter Latio deciesque tulit labentibus annis
Augustus fasces . . .

This poem celebrates the seventeenth consulship of Domitian in A.D. 95.

“*Prior annus* . . . is usually understood ‘the year just passed’ but the question then has no point. It must mean ‘any former year.’ No one . . . had been consul XVII before” (D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *HSCP* 91 [1987] 278). By searching Rome’s annals the speaker (Janus) confirms that no previous year, not even that in which Augustus had been consul XIII, could show anything like (*quid tale*) a seventeenth consulship. Although *quid* makes good sense, I suspect that Statius wrote *quis*, which has been assimilated to the gender of *tale*.

4. 2. 5-11

ast ego, cui sacrae Caesar noua gaudia cenae	5
nunc primum dominaque dedit <i>consurgere</i> mensa,	
qua celebrem mea uota lyra, quas soluere grates	
sufficiam? . . .	8
. . . mediis uideor <i>discumbere</i> in astris	10
cum Ioue.	

Statius celebrates a banquet given by Domitian to which he had been invited.

Consurgere mensa can only mean "rise from table" at the end of the banquet, whereas what is required at this point in the poem is a word meaning "sit down at table" for the beginning of the banquet. Baehrens emended *consurgere* to *concumbere*, but it is more than doubtful whether that verb could have the required sense; see *ThLL* IV 102. 23 ff. The obvious word is *discumbere*, which is not ruled out by its occurrence in line 10; rather, I think, the repetition emphasizes the parallelism between *domina discumbere mensa* and *mediis discumbere in astris*, between the table of the emperor and the table of the gods. The corruption of *discumbere* to *consurgere* is not inconceivable in view of the ending of line 4, *consumpsit Vlixem*.

Markland's emendation of *consurgere* to *non surgere*, adopted by Courtney, is rightly ruled out by Coleman as anticipating the climax in line 17, *non adsurgere fas est?*

4. 9. 48-50

quid si, cum bene mane semicrudus
 †inlatam† tibi dixero salutem,
 et tu me uicibus domi salutes?

Inlatam salutem presumably means "the greeting which I have brought to your home." Despite Vollmer's claim that *inlatam* is confirmed by the following *domi*, the word is quite otiose. I suspect that editors tolerate it merely because they are not satisfied with the available conjectures (of which five are listed by Klotz and by Coleman). Better than any of these, I suggest, would be *in<g>ratam*.

5. 1. 4-6

namque egregia pietate meretur
 ut uel Apelleo uultus signata colore
 Phidiaca uel †uata† manu reddare dolenti.

Abascantus deserves to have a first-class likeness of his late wife, either a portrait painted by Apelles or a statue executed by Phidias.

For *uata* editors read *nata* (a correction already found in M), but this cannot mean "given life" or "given fresh birth," as it is usually translated. One looks for a word which can correspond to *signata colore* (= *picta*), and the obvious partner for *picta* is *ficta*; for the confusion of *f* and *u* cf. 1. 1. 65, *uincit* > *figit*.

5. 2. 164–67

sed uenies *melior* (uatum non inrita currunt
omina), quique aquilas tibi nunc et castra recludet
idem omnes perferre gradus cingique superbis
fascibus et patrias dabit insedis curules.

165 *recludet* Courtney: *recludit* M

Stattius prophesies that, on his return from military service, Crispinus will be promoted by the emperor to the highest offices of state.

"Mais tu reviendra plus grand" (Frère-Izaac). But "plus grand" is *maior* rather than *melior*; the two words are frequently confused.

5. 3. 262–64

quos ego tunc gemitus (comitum manus anxia uidit,
uidit et exemplum genetrix *gauisaeque nouit*),
quae lamenta tuli!

Stattius wept so much for his father that his friends were afraid of his committing suicide; his mother marked the precedent he was setting (an indication of what he would do for her when the time came).

Although line 263 can be construed (*uidit manus anxia et uidit genetrix*), it would be improved by the omission of the *-que* which follows *gauisa*. I suggest *gauisa notauit*. Stattius is fond of *notare*; I would in particular compare 2. 6. 21, *uidi ipse habitusque notauit*, where it reinforces *uidere* in the same way as in our passage.

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