



Ovids Heroides als Elegien

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In ch. 4 it is something of a relief to find F. turning to a consideration of individual poems and passages. There is still some more general discussion here. By and large though this is the most sharply focused discussion in the book, and the analysis is often very perceptive indeed — something which makes one regret so many chances wasted earlier.

There are a few misprints and some cases where a discussion is not indexed. These are rarely important and do not determine the book's quality. Altogether the book, which as I have said is really two books, is something of a mixed bag. But it is never less than stimulating, and sometimes gives us criticism of a very high order indeed.

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F. SPOTH, *OVIDS HEROIDES ALS ELEGIEN* (Zetemata LXXXIX). Munich: Beck, 1992. Pp. 258. ISBN 3-406-35495-5. DM 98.

Through ten closely subdivided chapters Spoth systematically examines the relation of the *Heroides* (mainly the single ones) to Latin elegy as literary genre. The epistles are viewed against the background of passionate subjective elegy and of the detached, ironical attitude of the *Amores*; the return to 'serious' elegiac poetry is shown to be constantly undermined by playful Ovidian relativism and further pointing out of the generic conventions. With respect to the genre, to which S. decisively assigns the *Heroides*, the mingling of elegy and myth is considered as continuity and development.

S. is especially good (chs B, D and *passim*) on the heroines' subjective interpretation and rhetorical manipulation of their myth through elegiac categories (see 125) and, conversely, on the 'feed-back' effect ironically stressing elegiac conventions (e.g. 120; 177ff.). In this he will be seen to agree with two Italian scholars, Barchiesi and Rosati; many contacts with the former (see his newly issued commentary) appear in the rich sections on the letters of Penelope and Briseis (B), the best among the little 'monographs' included in each chapter; see, for instance, the actualization of the elegiac metaphors of *servitium amoris* and *militia amoris* in Briseis' epistle and the heroine's instrumental reversal of elegiac antimilitarism, perverted in the encounter with the mythical world. A good point at 59–62 on the 'literary psychology' of the heroines: their alleged womanly characteristic is shown to be basically the same as the conventional 'feminine' psychology of the Latin elegiac poet (cf. now Rosati, *MD* 29, with further investigation). The 'elegiac role' played by the heroines (D) is laid bare by the mythical background implied by literary models, alluded to by Ovid and present to the reader's mind. Ovid's 'zeugmatische Poetik' (123–4) is fond of such tensions; a 'synthetische Rhetorik' (E, 125) attempts to bring together the divergent worlds of myth and elegy in a precarious conciliation; this poetic promotes verbal equivocation and ambiguity; in the mythical context elegiac metaphors are actualized.

The weaknesses of the work chiefly result from the all-pervasive, one-sided application of the main thesis, sometimes carried too far. Questionable is S.'s explanation of *Ars* III.346, 'ignotum hoc allis ille novavit opus', ultimately answering his wish to lessen the generic novelty of the *Heroides* and to trace them back exclusively to elegy (22ff.; 212). The reductive reading of the passage (together with an awkward textual proposal, 212 n. 35) fails to convince; the novelty of the epistles cannot be restricted to their employment for 'weibliche Werbung' (which S. takes perhaps too seriously), and is best illustrated by the difficulties of any 'genetic' criticism of them. The rejection of 'Dramatik' in favour of the elegiac element (I) rests on a too restricted view of the former aspect. It is difficult to deny the dramatic movement of Hypermestra's reported monologue (191ff.), so close to 'dramatic' monologues of the *Metamorphoses* equally rich in elegiac colouring. The valuable section on Medea (some of whose points have also recently been stated by Hinds and Barchiesi) occasionally misses the pointed foreshadowings of her tragic future, cloaked under the elegiac surface. Not every elegiac parallel is suitable; rather strained is that between *Her.* I.15ff. and *Prop.* II.1 (39f.). The sections on individual epistles are differently inspired: for some of them S.'s point of view is less fruitful. Thus the discussion of 'Kommunikationsproblematik' is not always relevant (C). More attention might have been given to what S. calls 'dramatische Ironie' (G), a prominent feature of the epistles. It is doubtful that the *Heroides* may be intended as criticism of contemporary rhetoric (H, 181).

The origin of the work in a dissertation accounts for slight faults: the rigid subdividing framework is sometimes uneasy; here and there the treatment shows a certain schematism; too much room is taken up by surveys of what is already known; the bibliographical update makes the footnotes rather bulky.

The merits of the book largely predominate. The study is remarkably rich in minute observations; the comparison with elegiac *recusationes* is stimulating, as is the attention to the employ-

ment of elegiac programmatic language and the connection with the mythological *exempla* of Propertius (F; *passim*). Noteworthy are the acknowledgement of intertextuality as a central characteristic of the *Heroides* (228f.) and the literary theory framing (J). The volume is complete with useful indexes and extensive bibliography.

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HENK SCHOONHOVEN (ED.), *THE PSEUDO-OVIDIAN AD LIVIAM DE MORTE DRUSI* (CONSOLATIO AD LIVIAM, EPICEDIIUM DRUSI). *A CRITICAL TEXT WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY*. Groningen: Forsten, 1992. Pp. xiv + 244 + 12 (loose insert). ISBN 90-6980-050-0.

This is a very pleasantly produced book with a spare copy of the text (unfortunately without apparatus) thoughtfully supplied in an end-pocket, so that the reader can more easily refer to it from the notes. In the complex text using many languages misprints are comparatively few (but in l. 51 both copies of the text have the obvious slip, *iniuriae*).

The introduction discusses firstly the structure of the poem. This section (1-21) relies largely on the comparative work in J. Esteve-Forriol's *Die Trauer- und Trostgedichte in der römischen Literatur* (1962) and on the prescriptions of Menander Rhetor. If the structure detected by Schoonhoven was deliberately adopted by the author, it did not achieve a clarity that could easily be grasped by the audience. A second portion of the introduction (22-39) discusses the dating. It is argued that the purpose of the poem was to support the political claims of Britannicus against Nero in A.D. 54-55: (i) by implicitly criticizing the deification of Claudius, Nero's adoptive father (Nero styled himself *Divi Filius*, and was styled *deus* by others); (ii) by praising Drusus (grandfather of Britannicus, great-grandfather of Nero), while ignoring Germanicus (Nero's grandfather) and Claudius. It is suggested that immunity from this subversive presentation of history was secured by passing the poem off as written by Ovid in 9 B.C. Perhaps I miss some important nuance, if I object that Nero, admittedly at one remove further, could also claim descent from Drusus, and, in addition, through Agrippina the Younger, natural descent from Augustus. (S., however, argues that the poem exalts the Claudians at the expense of the Julians.) Ovid, so singularly lacking in *auctoritas* and *gravitas*, seems rather an inept selection for the author of a poem intended to influence the succession to the principate. The suggestion is an interesting proposal to solve a very thorny problem, but I doubt whether it will gain general acceptance. A careful examination of the tradition is provided in the third section (40-69): we have nothing better than manuscripts of the second half of the fifteenth century and early printings of the same period. The author's debt here to M. D. Reeve's work ('The tradition of *consolatio ad Liviam*', *RHT* 6 (1976), 79-98) is handsomely acknowledged.

Some conjectures of the author have been printed in an attempt to provide a more readable text: 43, *instituissse bonarum*; 95, *pressit*; 103, *irrisaque Fatis*; 219, *ter*; 319, *Andromachen*; 321, *Evadnen*; 403, *natae*; 404, *numinis*; 445, *nebulosum in litus*; 451, *tui*; 455, *illa iuvant* [illustrant. As the manuscripts are all so late, the corrupt passages still awaiting correction present very difficult problems, and corruption may often have gone through several stages. Accordingly, most of the proposed corrections have a diagnostic value, but do not impose themselves on the reader.

The commentary is very full and painstaking. It abounds in parallels and carefully assembles the views of earlier scholars, which often are given in direct quotation. S.'s own reading has been impressively wide, and his discussions are fair, thorough, and ingenious (at times, perhaps, to a fault). There are seven appendices (on the possible use of Livy's last four books as a *terminus post quem*; descriptions of manuscripts; the meaning of *sceleratus* at l. 135; Ovidian and other parallels) and four indexes, which will facilitate access to a work essential for further attempts to advance the study of this puzzling poem.

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J. A. RICHMOND

LUCAN, *DE BELLO CIVILI: BOOK II*. Ed. E. Fantham. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Pp. xi + 244, 2 maps. ISBN 0-5214-1010-X (bound); 0-5214-2241-8 (paper). £35.00 (bound); £13.95 (paper).

V. HUNINK, *M. ANNAEUS LUCANUS, BELLUM CIVILE BOOK III: A COMMENTARY*. Amsterdam: Gieben, 1992. Pp. xxiii + 305. ISBN 90-5063-078-2. Fl. 75.

Both these publications are enormously welcome. Hitherto, useful and detailed commentaries on Lucan have been a rarity and in English there was not much beyond Getty on Book I and Mayer on Book VIII. Now we have two fine studies of Books II and III, both of which will prove excellent resources for scholarship and form the basis for undergraduate teaching of these books.

The many strengths and few weaknesses of the works are in part the product of their origins, in part that of the presumptions as to the nature of Lucan's poem which the authors bring to its