

THE VERSE OF MARTIANUS CAPELLA: NOTES AND EMENDATIONS

39.9-10.

Kopp,¹ following his avowed critical practice, retained *Maiugenam pignoris incliti* on the ground that it was *constans omnium librorum lectio*; he classified the genitive as one of quality, analogous, for example, to *virum magni ingenii*. Having thus explained it, he concluded that the meaning was not at all clear. F. May²) defended the genitive by making it depend on *merito*, to which he assigned the force of the preposition *gratia*³); what this is supposed to mean May does not elaborate. The transmitted words could only mean: "... the son of Maia, he of the reknowned child." Now Mercury is said to have fathered Hermaphroditus, a fact alluded to earlier by Martianus at 22.15f., but that Jupiter should so qualify his son at the beginning of his eulogy is both pointless and absurd. Dick's preference, which he states in his apparatus, for the variant reading *Maiugeneae*, found only in the *Leidensis* 36, and his simple change of *merito* to *meritum* gives excellent sense, particularly in view of the details given about Mercury's service from 39.12f. The only alternative that presents itself from the context would be to emend *Maiugenam* to a word meaning love or affection, but as this is a favoured word of Martianus it would be unwise to excise it. How did the corruption arise? *Maiugeneae* was probably altered to *Maiugenam* as it followed immediately after a verb that governed an accusative; *nostis* became *nostris* through inadvertence or through anticipating the *nostris* of the following

1) All page and line references are to the edition of A. Dick, *Martianus Capella*: addenda adiecit J. Préaux (Stuttgart 1969). Other standard works, to which references are made in this article, are U. Kopp's edition of 1836 and the dissertation of F.O. Stange, *De re metrica Martiani Capellae* (Diss. Leipzig 1882).

2) *De sermone Martiani Capellae* (Diss. Marburg 1936) 27.

3) Bulhart cites examples of similar uses in *Thes. L. L.* 8. 817. 26f., though he does not include this passage.

line⁴); finally, *meritum* became *merito* as it no longer fitted the syntax⁵).

39.11.

Two considerations seem to have prompted Stange's⁶) excellent conjecture of *frustra animis* for the *frustra mihi insita* of the codices; firstly the trochaic scansion of *frustra* and the presence of hiatus at the caesura. But neither is cogent enough to warrant a change in the text at this point. Certainly, the shortened final syllable of *frustra* is no evidence for change; for such correction occurs not only in Prudentius *Peri.* 1.13, as Stange himself notes on p. 8 of his dissertation, but is also found in Ausonius 21.2.15⁷). As for the caesural hiatus, it is again found in Martianus' lesser Asclepiads at 52.16: *et candore sacro aetheris utere*. Here Stange does not emend; nor does any plausible correction offer itself. The probable answer lies in accepting that Martianus, just as he allows caesural hiatus in his pentameters and iambic senarii, so he permits it here.

40.10.

Dick's adoption of *praepositum* lacks conviction. It is Philology's resolution to reach the stars and immortality which is the point here. At 40.20f. Martianus notes that among the factors that lead to mortals being enrolled among the gods is *propositum sidereae cupiditatis*; it is relevant to note that here the *Leidensis* 36 corrupts to *praepositum*.

55.13.

In the composition of Iambic Dimeters Catalectic, spondees were normally excluded from the third foot. Accordingly, Grotius, followed by Stange and Dick, rejected the *perrexit* of some of the manuscripts and adopted the variant *perexit*, the present tense of *perexire*; in support of this, Cassiodorus *Var.*

4) Seneca *Ep.* 83. 6 also confuses *nosti* and *nostris*.

5) The abbreviated form *meritū* could easily become *merito*; the letters *o* and *u* are confused at 40.9, the Trier, *Bibliothek des Priesterseminars* 100 reading *cum par* for *compar* and at 40.18 *comulent* for *cumulent*.

6) *De re metrica* 32; both Grotius and Kopp follow the makeshift device found in Vulcanus' edition of adding *est* after *mibi*.

7) C. Schenkl, *D. Magni Ausonii Opuscula M. G. H. A. A.* 5.1 (Berlin 1883).

11.6.6. was invoked. Such a solution has its attractions in view of a similar corruption in Theodos. *De situ terrae sanctae* 16 where the attested *perrexit* was corrected to *perexit* by Geyer⁸). The verb *perexire* is, in fact, attested before Cassiodorus (e.g. *Itinerarium Egeriae* 4.5; 11.3; 16.2; 23.2); such formations seem, however, to be characteristic of later *Volkslatein*⁹) and *perexit* would appear to be as much out of place in this poem as the vulgar *habes* of 3.16. More decisive than this, however, is the practice of Martianus elsewhere in this metre. Apart from 55.13, there are four other lines, two of which occur in this poem, where a spondaic third foot is found: 56.14 *reserent caducis astra*; 56.21 *vos disciplinas omnes*; 364.9 *cessator intricatus*; 487.11 *roseo ligans ramali*. In all three examples from this poem, the sense is perfectly good; the only objection is the metre. In all three, the metrical anomaly is identical; further, 56.14 and 56.21, the phrasing of which is Martianic, defy emendation. Therefore, all should be accepted into the text, rather than accepting some as metrical blunders and tampering with others as corrupt. The *perexit* in some of the codices is a case of simple miscopying.

54.22.

“... totum versiculum ut glossema a librario quodam ad vocem antecedentem, quae est *caducis*, adscriptam moxque explendi metri gratia *que* particula auctam omnino delebimus.”¹⁰)

This is a difficult question to decide. The *a* is long in the whole class of such adjectives; Martianus scans it correctly at 15.21 but not here. On the other hand, the same coupling occurs in Martianus at 61.17 *caducae mortalisque substantiae*. The balance is against Martianus having shortened the second syllable; in various metres Martianus does make individual mistakes but not systematic ones where the quantity of vowels is subject to a general rule. Stange was, therefore, probably right in deleting *mortalibusque* from the text.

54.17–20.

Kopp¹¹) interprets thus: “Quaeque dedisti (docuisti) Pla-

8) Noted by E. Löfstedt, *Philologischer Kommentar zur Peregrinatio Aetheriae* (Uppsala 1911) 93.

9) E. Löfstedt, *op. cit.* 92f.

10) Stange, *De re metrica* 33.

11) Kopp, p. 176–177; this interpretation is also upheld by *Thes. L. L.* 8. 715. 39.

tonis Pythagoraeque mentes esse sidera"; id est fulgere nunc in caelo. According to this view, the allusion is to the process which Cumont¹²⁾ has called "catasterism", whereby the spirits of heroes and eminent men were at the end of their lives translated into stars as a reward for their virtuous actions here on earth. It is an apposite interpretation, especially as the Pythagoreans seem to have held that the stars were the souls of dead men¹³⁾. Yet within the context of the poem such a reference seems irrelevant; the general purport of Euterpe's eulogy centres on the knowledge that Philology has imparted to the *casti* (54.8) by means of which mortals have come to perceive the divinities in the sky. Lines 54.17-20 gain in force if the *Platonis* of all the manuscripts is altered to *Platoni*; *Platonis* probably arose due to the influence of the *vultus* in the preceding line. The sense of the emended line would then be: "You, Philologia, communicated to Plato and Pythagoras the knowledge that stars are entities endowed with *mens*."

This idea, which reflects Platonic teaching¹⁴⁾ (cf. *Timaeus* 38e; 40a) is set out in Macrobius *Comm.* 1.14.8 anima ergo creans sibi condensque corpora ... ex illo mero ac purissimo fonte mentis, quem nascendo de originis suae hauserat copia, corpora illa divina vel supera, caeli dico et siderum, quae prima condebat, animavit, divinaeque mentes omnibus corporibus quae in formam teretem, id est in sphaerae modum, formabantur infusae sunt, et hoc est quod cum de stellis loqueretur ait, quae *divinis animatae mentibus*. Whether Martianus is referring to the planets or the fixed stars or both is not clear. The metonymic use of *mens* can be paralleled in Martianus with the *venenum* (56.6) and *virus* (56.7) for *serpens*. With this simple change to *Platoni*, Philology is credited with having revealed this knowledge to the two philosophers and through them to have enabled mankind to see (*cernere* 54.24) the heavenly kinds of gods, the visible stars (the *numina caeli* of 54.25), just as earlier at 17.5 f. she is said to have been responsible for the attributes that Mantice, Sophia and Psyche possess. At 422.8f. (*Pythagoras cum sectatoribus cunctis Platoque Timaei sui caligosa discriminans*) the

12) F. Cumont, *After Life in Roman Paganism* (New York 1959) 104f.

13) See W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* (Cambridge 1962) 350.

14) See the remarks in A.E. Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* (Oxford 1928) 202; 225; W.K.C. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, 210.

names of the two philosophers are linked as among those who venerate *Astronomia*.

52.25.

It is difficult to see why Dick preferred *fulgōra*¹⁵); it is both against the metre and the wrong gender, *fulgor* being masculine. *Fulgura* should be reinstated into the text.

51.6.

Stange¹⁶) realized that the final syllable of the accusative plural *fructus* must be shortened if spondees in the fourth foot were to be eliminated from the iambic senarii of Martianus; he accordingly suggested *fructum ad*. The corrupt state of the entire poem and the tendency of scribes to omit short words most frequently in their transcriptions seem at first sight to support the case for emendation. It is indeed unlikely that Martianus scanned *fructus* as a trochee, for this is not characteristic of the kinds of mistakes he makes. It is far more probable that while he knew the quantities of most syllables, in certain kinds of verse he made errors about the rules that governed the verse¹⁷). In this connection, the *ignotum* of 208.16 must be considered. Elsewhere in his verse, the initial syllable is always scanned as long (15.20; 73.10; 210.9; 427.5). Stange adduces no evidence that the first syllable could be regarded as a short; indeed there is no clear evidence that it was so shortened in classical times¹⁸). In the final poem of the *De Nuptiis* (533.11–535.5), there is further evidence that he did admit spondees into the fourth foot; even if 534.4 and 10 are set aside as beyond repair, there still remain five cases where changes do not readily occur (533.16; 534.6, 8, 12; 535.3)¹⁹).

209.1.

Stange's view of Martianus as a metrician led him to make

15) See *Thes. L. L.* 6. 1517. 76f.

16) *De re metrica* 21.

17) See W. R. Hardie, *Res Metrica* (Oxford 1920) 82 n. 1 for such lapses in Greek trimeters.

18) A. E. Housman, "Prosody and Method 2: The metrical properties of GN," *CQ* 22 (1928) 1f.; C. D. Buck, "Hidden quantities again," *CR* 27 (1913) 124.

19) Phaedrus certainly admitted fourth foot spondees, cf. F. Crusius, *Römische Metrik*² (Munich 1955) 67. Ausonius has two examples, *Ep.* 21. 2. 23; 21. 2. 39; Porphyrianus has four, cf. *Carm.* 26. 12, 20, 21, 22.

an even more ingenious proposal in order to delete the sole second foot spondee in his iambic senarii. Martianus had in fact written the Latin equivalent of the Greek word *acervos* which had later been altered by some *scholasticus*; so argued Stange, cleverly but improbably. In view of his treatment of Greek words elsewhere in his verse, it is far more plausible to argue that just as he seems to have been unaware of the omega in *axiōma* (151.2), *trigōnus* (51.12) and *Canōpos* (427.5), so here he did not know that it was an omega in the first syllable of *σωφίτης*²⁰). This is far more likely than that some clever copyist glossed it as *soritas*, which then displaced the original word.

209.17.

The metre is Ionicus a minore tetrameter with the schema $\cup\cup\text{---}\cup\cup\text{---}\cup\cup\text{---}\cup\cup\text{---}$ with the last syllable anceps. The following problems present themselves; in 209.17 *palliātārūm*; in 210.2 the metre of *Iovialibus sub orsis* goes $\cup\cup\text{---}\cup\cup\text{---}$ instead of $\cup\cup\text{---}\cup\cup\text{---}$; in 210.3 *virgo* has to be scanned as a spondee if the metre is not to be violated, though at 51.23 and 54.4 Martianus scans it as a trochee, as it normally is in post Augustan poetry. In all three lines the sense is perfect and the vocabulary and phrasing is typical of our author; with 209.17 one may compare 78.20 *multusque ... palliatorum populus*; 154.11 *palliatorum populus*; 213.7 *Athenarum populus ac palliata agmina*; with 210.2 there is the *his orsis Iovialibus* of 477.7. Again it appears that the solution to all these difficulties lies in accepting that Martianus was not wholly competent in composing the more rarely used metres and he made metrical errors. As in the case of *fructus* at 51.6, he knew the lengths of syllables but did not always remember where the metre demanded longs or shorts²¹). All three anomalies should be allowed to remain in the text. Stange's supplement *mibi* at 209.15 is in a different category, as both the sense and metre demand it.

210.2.

Dick prints *loca*, the reading of all the manuscripts in pref-

20) Stange, *De re metrica* 10 n. 2. Note the similar correction of the original omega in Ausonius 35. 40; 26. 2. 50; 35. 21. 42; Prudentius, *Harmartigenia* 404.

21) L. Mueller, *De re metrica*² (Leipzig 1894) 455 and Stange, *De re metrica* 34 argue that Martianus shortened the antepenult of *palliatarum*.

erence to the simple and apt conjectures of Grotius, *ioca*. The chagrin expressed by Dialectica in this poem can be explained by referring to an incident described at the start of book four (153.5f.). When the serpents on Mercury's staff try to lick Dialectica and the snakes on Medusa's head, fixed on the shield of Minerva, hiss joyfully when they see the snake in Dialectica's left hand (152.3), Bromius (*qui facetior est deorum* 153.11) concludes that she must be some kind of snake charmer. At this remark, several of the gods laugh, until *Pallas ... iocum emergentis inhibuit* (153.19). It is this insult that Dialectica would have wished to rebut had she not been cut off by Pallas (208.6); she ends the poem by alluding to Bacchus' tendency to sleep, drink (cf. 36.10f.) and crack stupid jokes. In view of this Grotius' correction seems self evident; the same error is found at 153.20 where the *Reichenauensis* 73 records *locum* for *iocum*; similar confusion is found in other traditions cf. Ovid *Tristia* 1. 8.34; *Fasti* 1.299, 396; 2.304; 4.868.

81.3.

Frigente ought to be retained despite the initial long syllable which gives a second foot spondee; in his iambic dimeters acatalectic, they occur at 350.14 and 351.12. Boettger's suggestion of *rigente*, though involving only a minor change, is therefore unnecessary. The sense of *frigente*, as Kopp noted, suits the context admirably.

80.1.

Halitu is Boettger's correction for the universally transmitted *habitu*, which is metrically impossible. The two words are similarly confused in Seneca *N.Q.* 5.15.4. Birt's prosaic suggestion of *ambitu* need not be entertained²²).

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22) "Marginalien zu lateinischen Prosaikern," *Philologus* 83 (1928) 179.