

places in Ovid,⁹ will not have helped. The same error has occurred elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*: *speciosam* has been corrupted to *spatiosam* in one MS. (Vat. lat. 5179) at *Met.* 3.20, and *speciosoque* altered (perhaps deliberately) to *spatiosoque* in another (Anderson's N, as corrected by N²) at *Met.* 11.133.¹⁰

Unfortunately, reading *specie* in line 244 provides no guidance on the meaning of *omnia*, which may still refer either to the whole world or to the four elements. No certainty is possible on this point, and the decision will depend, I imagine, on whether one is more distressed by unnatural interpretations or grammatical exceptions. Not being a lexicographer, I prefer the elements, with *ex ipsis* and *in ipsa* reciprocal, but doubt persists.¹¹

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⁹ These are listed by Bömer *ad loc.*: there is another in *Nux* 75, which, though inauthentic, may still be pertinent to the habits of Ovid's scribes.

¹⁰ Since Anderson reports the reading as 'sp (ati N²) osoque N', it may well be that N² was emending *suo Marte*. However, collation with a lost source cannot be excluded.

¹¹ It may be significant that one of the editors and the anonymous referee split on this point. I wish to thank both of them, and David Kovacs, for their help with this paper, which was not confined to the points on which they are specifically mentioned.

THE NAUTICAL IMAGERY IN *ANTHOLOGIA GRAECA* 10.23

Νικήτης ὀλίγος μὲν ἐπὶ προτόνοισιν ἀήτης
οἷά τε πρηγίης ἄρχεται ἐκ μελέτης,
ἀλλ' ὅταν ἐμπνεύσῃ, κατὰ δ' ἰστία πάντα φέρηται,
λαίφεα πακτώσας μέσσα θέει πελάγῃ
ναῦς ἄτε μυριόφορτος, ἕως ἐπὶ τέρματα μύθων
ἔλθῃ ἀκυμάντους †ἐμπροσθεν† εἰς λιμένας.

In this poem, ascribed to Automedon, Nicetes¹ way of orating is compared first to a light breeze that strikes upon the rigging of a sailing vessel and then, when the breeze has increased to a wind, to the vessel itself as it runs over open water under full sail.

Comparing oratory to a ship under way is a commonplace, as has frequently been pointed out.² But the very special quality of Automedon's nautical imagery, its preciseness and boldness, has escaped all commentators and translators.

Nicetes, says the poet, opens an address as gently as 'a light wind on the forestays'. The forestays are the lines that run from the top of the mast to the prow; ancient ships usually had two. Their function is to hold the mast firmly and so they are fixed permanently in place, are part of the 'standing rigging', to use the sailors' term.³ As the words 'all sail is lowered' in line 3 indicate, Automedon conceives of the ship at

¹ Two eminent rhetors by this name are known, one who lived under Augustus and another, more famous, who lived under Nero or Nerva; see *RE* s.v. Niketes, Nos. 5, 6 (1937). There is no consensus as to which is meant here. E.g. F. Jacobs (*Animadversiones in Epigrammata Anthologiae Graecae*, ii.2 [Leipzig, 1800], p. 137) opts for the later, P. Waltz (*REG* 59–60 [1946–7], 189) for the earlier, L. Radermacher (*RE*, no. 6 [1937]) inclines toward the later, L. Robert (*REG* 94 [1981], 338–9, esp. 339, n. 6) leaves it open between the two, as does E. Borthwick (*CQ* 21 [1971], 434), and Gow–Page (A. Gow and D. Page, *The Greek Anthology: The Garland of Philip and Some Contemporary Epigrams* [Cambridge, 1968], ii.187) throws the field wide open ('the name is common and any particular identification will remain speculative').

² E.g. Jacobs (n. 1, above), p. 137, Gow–Page (n. 1, above), ii.187.

³ L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*² (Princeton, 1986), pp. 230, 260.

the outset as being at anchor with its canvas furled up on the yard. Vessels at anchor, when a breeze springs up, automatically turn into its direction; thus the very first part of the rigging that the breeze will touch will be the forestays; the poet's image is nautically precise and accurate.

A century and a half ago Hecker emended *δλίγος* to *δλίγους* so that the line would mean '[Niketes] incipit ope paucorum funium quibus vela alligata sunt, navigare' and thereby accord better with the mention of 'all sail' that follows.⁴ It was an egregious armchair emendation. Forestays are not ropes by which sails are tied or untied; as just pointed out, they are permanently fixed and never get hauled in, or let out, like halyards and sheets or other elements of what sailors call the 'running rigging'. The emendation was approved by Dübner in the Didot edition (1872)⁵ and retained by Paton in the Loeb edition (1918). Later editors returned to the manuscript reading but the only ones to explain why, Gow and Page, reveal that they did so for a totally wrong reason: in their note to the line they cite Hecker's emendation and add 'but the nom. runs better'.⁶ It is not that the nominative 'runs better'; it is that the dative produces nonsense. Some translators who accepted the emended text were aware that something was amiss, for they felt the need to include in their rendition words that were not in the Greek. Thus the translation in the Didot edition runs 'Nictes paucorum quidem ope funium-ex-velis venti instar', and Paton's in the Loeb 'Nictes, like the breeze, when a ship has little sail up'.⁷ Even those who followed the MS. reading made no effort to reproduce Automedon's precision: 'veluti primos tremebunda rudentes aura movens', Grotius (reprinted in the Didot edition); 'comme une brise légère dans les cordages', Waltz;⁸ 'come per vento che lieve increspi le vele di prua', Presta;⁹ 'Leis und lind wie das Wehen des Lüftchens an Tauen und Stagen', Beckby;¹⁰ "σὰν τέτοιο λίγο φύσημα σὰ ξάρτια κι'", Stamoules;¹¹ 'come una brezza che investe leggera le sàrtie', Pontani.¹² One translator who did attempt to be precise used the wrong nautical term.¹³

When the breeze strengthens into a viable wind, to get the ship under way, 'all sail is lowered', i.e. the deckhands untie the fastenings that hold the sail furled to the yard so that it may drop down and, at the same time, the vessel is swung around so that the wind comes from behind. The next move will be to haul in on the sheets – the lines made fast to the lower corners of the sail – so that the canvas will be spread and form a rectangle spanning the ship, and the wind, pressing upon it, will drive the vessel forward. But Automedon eschews language that prosaically depicts this action. He says, instead, *λαίφεα πακτώσας μέσσα θέει πελάγη*. The expression *λαίφεα πακτώσας* has never been properly understood. It was thought to refer to binding the

⁴ A. Hecker, *Commentatio critica de Anthologia Graeca* (Leiden, 1843), pp. 344–5.

⁵ See note *ad loc.* He takes *πρότοναι* to be 'funes a malo et velis in puppem et proram tensi'; they are 'a malo in proram tensi' only.

⁶ Gow–Page (n. 1, above), ii.187.

⁷ One translator produced downright gibberish: 'forestays in sail, a light breeze going' (F. Garber in P. Jay, ed., *The Greek Anthology* [New York, 1973], p. 228).

⁸ Waltz (n. 1, above), 188.

⁹ A. Presta, *Antologia Palatina* (Rome, 1957), p. 339.

¹⁰ H. Beckby, *Anthologia Graeca* (Munich, 1958), ii.489.

¹¹ D. Stamoules, *ΑΝΘΟΛΟΓΙΑ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ἢ ΠΑΛΑΤΙΝΑ ΑΝΘΟΛΟΓΙΑ, ΒΙΒΛΙΟ Χ, ΒΙΒΛΙΟ ΧΙΙΙ* (Athens, 1968), p. 17.

¹² F. Pontani, *Antologia Palatina* (Turin, 1980), iii.419.

¹³ D. Ebener, *Die griechische Anthologie* (Berlin, 1981), ii.23: 'die Brise auf See leicht nur die Wanten umstreicht.' *Wanten* are shrouds, the lines that run from the top of a mast to the sides of the ship, not forestays.

yard firmly to the mast,¹⁴ or to binding the sail firmly,¹⁵ and such misconceptions led LSJ to include 'bind fast' as a meaning for *πακτώω*, citing this passage. Others took it to refer somehow to securing the sail.

But *πακτώω* does not mean 'bind' or 'secure'. Either by itself or in compounds, it means 'shut' or 'close' as of a door or a gate or a whole house.¹⁶ It can also mean 'close up', as of holes or cracks by stuffing them.¹⁷ When the breeze strengthens into a wind, Nicetes picks up speed, as Automedon puts it, by 'shutting the canvas' of his ship of oratory. At the outset, with the sail furled to the yard, the mast was bare, and the breeze, after striking upon the forestays, swept past them and continued right on past the mast. However, when the sail was unfurled and the vessel was swung about so that the wind blew from some point aft, the canvas, once it dropped down from the yard and its lower corners were made fast, shut off, as it were, the passage of the wind, as the dropping of a curtain shuts off entry into what is behind; the wind no longer blows on past the mast, it blows upon the canvas that has been 'shut' against it.

The image occurs nowhere else. Gow–Page credit Automedon for 'more originality [in style] than is usual in the *Garland*',¹⁸ and this bold figure is a good case in point. Paton's rendition 'stiffens the canvas' indicates his awareness that Automedon is using no ordinary language. Paton is alone; no other rendition reveals even awareness: 'la toile bien fixée par ses écoutes', Waltz; 'le vele legate saldamente', Presta; 'mit sicherem Tuch', Beckby; 'τὰ ἱστία πανὰ τευτόνωντας', Stamoules; 'makes the canvas fast', Gow–Page; 'and canvas fastened', Garber; 'le [vele] dispiega', Pontani; 'das Leinen gespannt', Ebener.¹⁹ These all report what actually happened but do not translate what Automedon says: 'Nicetes..., having shut the canvas, races over the middle of the sea'.

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¹⁴ Jacobs (n. 1, above), p. 137: 'πακτώσας. antennis malo firmiter alligatis'.

¹⁵ Grotius rendered it 'stricta carbasia', and the translation in the Didot edition 'carbassis firmiter alligatis'.

¹⁶ See Pollux 10.27: τῷ δὲ κλείσαι ἴσον καὶ τὸ πακτοῦν καὶ τὸ ἐπιπακτοῦν τὰς θύρας ἐστὶν...ὡς... Ἀριστοφάνης (*Lys.* 265) "προπύλαια πακτοῦν" ἢ πάλιν (*Fr. Kock* 721 = *PCG* iii.2.737) "καὶ ἐπιπακτοῦν τὰς θύρας" ἢ ὡς Ἀρχύλοχος (ed. M. West, *Iambi et elegi graeci*, i [Oxford, 1971], no. 279) πακτώσαι τὸ κλείσαι. Cf. Hipponax, West i, no. 104.19 (= *P. Oxy.* 2175, fr. 3.19): [τὴν] θύρην ἐπάκτωσα; Sophocles, *Ajax* 579: δῶμα πάκτου.

¹⁷ Aristophanes, *Wasps* 128: (of the cracks or other openings in a house) ἐνεβύσαμεν ῥακίοισι κάπακτώσαμεν; Herod. 2.96: (of Egyptian boats) τὰς ἀρμονίας ἐν ᾧ ἐπάκτωσαν τῇ βύβλῳ. C. Haldane and C. Shelmerdine, in an attempt to bring Herodotus' words in line with the archaeological evidence that on some Egyptian craft the planks were bound together with cords (*CQ* 40 [1990], 535–9), assert, with no proof other than the passages listed in note 16 above, that *πακτώω* in all its appearances 'is best taken as "fasten", "make fast", "bind fast"'. They then conclude that Herodotus must be using *ἐμπακτώω* in the sense of 'bind with cord' and not 'stop up', i.e. caulk. Of the passage in the *Wasps* they say: 'The stuffing with rags is expressed by *ἐνεβύσαμεν ῥακίοισι* and *κάπακτώσαμεν* is more likely to complement than to repeat this precise thought'. Whatever complementary sense *κάπακτώσαμεν* may have, it cannot be 'bind with cord', for that is no way to plug holes in a wall. The scholia offer *ἐφράξαμεν*, *ἐπληρώσαμεν*, *ἐσφηνώσαμεν*. For an unequivocal use of *πακτώω* in the sense of 'caulk', see W. Westermann and E. Hasenoehtl, edd., *Zenon Papyri* (New York, 1934), no. 43 (253 B.C.), lines 9–10: the captain of a Nile boat lists the purchase of θρύα ὥστε πακτώσαι τὸ πλοῖον; rushes could only have been used as stuff for caulking seams, not as cording for binding planks together.

¹⁸ Gow–Page (n. 1, above), ii.186.

¹⁹ Cf. nn. 7–13, above.