

VIII. Notes on Statius

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I

Silv. 1.2.7-10:

quas inter uultu petulans Elegia propinquat
 celsior adsueto, diuasque hortatur et ambit
 alternum furata pedem, decimamque uideri
 se cupit et medias fallit permixta sorores.¹

furata Sandstroem: futura M (? et A); factura m: fultura s

The Muses come to attend the wedding of Stella and Violentilla. Stella is a poet (Mart. 6.21.1 *Stellae . . . uati*), and Statius his friend would have us believe that he has written elegiac verse of an exceptionally exalted character. Hence the skittish Elegia is present with the Nine Muses, though normally we should not expect to find her in such dignified company.

The textual problem concerns the unmetrical and nonsensical *futura* in line 9, but it is worth while to look first at line 10, which has not, I think, been interpreted rightly. Vollmer, who has a long note on this passage, interprets as *λανθάνει ἀντοκασιγνήτας μιγεῖσα*, "she escapes the notice of the sisters with whom she mingles." If *fallit* means "escapes the notice of," this interpretation is correct, for *fallit* must govern *medias . . . sorores*. We cannot, if we would, extract from the Latin the sense "she mingles with the sisters without being noticed (by a hypothetical observer)." This would of course require

mediis fallit permixta sororibus.

(Compare *Silv.* 5.3.170-1:

qua mediis alte permixtus (permissus *M*) anhelat
 ignis aquis.)

Mozley and Slater in their translations are conveniently ambiguous on this point, the former rendering the phrase by "and

¹ Quotations and *apparatus criticus* are from the Oxford texts of J. S. Phillimore and H. W. Garrod.

mingles with the sisters unperceived," the latter by "and goes undetected in their midst." This ambiguity is no doubt a sign that they are half-consciously aware of the difficulty. For it is manifest that in the context the generally received sense of *medias fallit . . . sorores* is objectionable, irrespective of the precise method we employ to mend *futura* in line 9. The Muses are not unaware of Elegia's presence or of who she is. We can at least gather from lines 7-9 that she is in the midst of the Muses and talking to them and that she desires not to be mistaken for one of them but to be regarded as a tenth. It is in fact quite impossible, on the traditional interpretation of *medias fallit . . . sorores*, to give any proper sense to *diuas . . . hortatur et ambit*, which implies that the parties concerned are not mistaken about one another's identity.

There is, however, another sense which can be given to *fallit* here, namely, "imitates deceptively," "assumes a plausible resemblance to"; and as this is the only sense of which the context admits, it must be the right one. I know of only one other passage of Latin in which this sense definitely occurs (for Stat. *Theb.* 5.157-8: *fallit ubique/mixta Venus* admits of either interpretation), viz. Verg. *Aen.* 1.683-84 (and there it has been unjustly suspected by those commentators who are scared of unusual senses of words):

tu faciem illius noctem non amplius unam
falle dolo.

The only difference is that in the above passages the sense is helped by *dolo*.

We are now in a position to consider lines 8-9. Having disposed of the notion that *fallit* means "escapes the notice of," we are no longer puzzled by *diuas . . . hortatur et ambit*. Elegia is soliciting a favor from the Muses, and the nature of it is immediately apparent and provides the solution to the textual problem of line 9. Elegia is asking the Muses to give her support and thus prevent her limp from being too apparent.² The right solution is to read *fulcire* in line 9, as Slater proposed in the *Journal of Philology* 1907 (155). *Hortatur* and *ambit* manifestly need an infinitive after them in this particular context. Otherwise the phrase is so imprecise as to be almost meaningless. The construction is com-

² For the "limp" of elegiac verse compare, for example, Ov. *Tr.* 3.1.11: *clauda quod alterno subsidunt carmina uersu*.

mon enough with *hortor* (there are instances in Statius at *Theb.* 4.231–32:

gaudent natorum fata parentes
hortanturque mori;

Ach. 1.370–71:

dehinc sociare choros castisque accedere sacris
hortantur.)

With *ambio* it is rare, but occurs—though in a somewhat different sense—later in this very poem (252–54:

hunc ipse . . . Philetas
Callimachusque senex Umbroque Propertius antro
ambissent laudare diem)

and is assisted in the present case by the usage with *hortor*.³

One final problem remains to be considered, that of the meaning of *medias* in line 10. The interpreters and translators of Statius either neglect the question altogether or by implication would have us believe that it means “in whose midst she is.” So far as I am aware, *medius* only approaches this sense when (as in Stat. *Theb.* 5.344–45: *mediis intersonat Orpheus/remigiis*) it receives suitable assistance from the context, which it lacks in the present instance. Nor is this sense necessary in view of the presence of *permixta* in the sentence. There is, however, another meaning of *medius* which I submit for consideration, namely “of medium height.” The whole passage under discussion refers to the stature and gait of Elegia relative to that of the Muses (for similar conceptions compare lines 112–16 of the poem and *Ach.* 1.293–96). In normal circumstances Elegia would be of such humble stature that she could not be seen amongst the Muses without appearing ridiculously dwarfish, but on this occasion she is *celsior adsueto* (cf. *praeaelso* . . . *Fortuna* at *Silv.* 3.3.85–86) and looks at least as tall as some of the Muses. These latter are the *medias sorores*, “the sisters of medium height.” It is not to be supposed that all the Muses are of equal height, for some are more dignified than others. (Compare what Ovid says about Tragedy in contrasting her with Elegia in *Amor.* 3.1.)

³ Another instance is Tac. *Ann.* 2.43.3: . . . donec ultro ambiretur (Piso) delatum ab Augusto consulatum accipere.

Medius has a recognized use with reference to moderate or medium quantity and quality. So Livy 7.10.7 applies it specifically to stature: *media in altero militaris statura*. The extended application to things which are characterized by such a quantity or quality is also found; but indisputable examples of the specific sense "of medium height" are rare. Arnobius applies it to people: *nan(n)os, longos, medios* (*Adv. Nat.* 3.14). The *ThLL* also quotes Ov. *Met.* 7.779: *collis apex medii subiectis imminet aruis*; *ib.* 8.621: *medio circumdata muro*; Col. *R.R.* 1.4.10: *petatur . . . aer . . . , qui fere medios obtinet colles*; Plin. *N.H.* 18.261: *quippe medias caedunt herbas breuiioresque praetereunt*. These quotations are not quite as impressive as they might appear at first sight. In Ov. *Met.* 8.621 there is in some good manuscripts the admittedly facile variant *modico*; Col. *R.R.* 1.4.10 is not an example of this sense at all, as any one may discover for himself by reading the whole section; and in Plin. *N.H.* 18.261 either "of medium height" or "in the middle" will suit the context. However this may be, the sense does exist and suits the present passage of Statius admirably, which cannot be said of any other sense of *medius*. If any one chooses to interpret Verg. *Aen.* 11.682–83 along similar lines, I cannot see why he should not do so.

II

Silv. 1.3.39–42

te (sc. dicam), quae uada fluminis infra
cernis, an ad siluas quae respicis, aula, tacentis,
qua tibi tuta quies offensaque turbine nullo
nox silet et nigros inuitant murmura somnos?

tuta *A*: tota *M*; pigros *Peyrared*: teneros *Markland*; inuitant *ω*: potius imitantia quam mutantia *M*

These lines form part of the description of the villa of Manilius Vopiscus.

It is unnecessary to depart as far from the readings of *M* as Phillimore and other editors do. Statius mentions two *aulae*. One of these faces the *uada fluminis*, which are described as *citata* in line 17, and we may presume therefore that it is not completely free from noise. The other looks towards the *siluas tacentis* and affords absolute quiet, for which *tota quies* is a perfectly reasonable expression. Compare Stat. *Theb.* 8.257 *necdum tota fides*; and Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana* 93. *Tota* would be more likely to

be altered into *tuta* than vice versa. So I see no good reason for departing from *M* here. But the main problem in this passage is line 42, and here there seems even less justification for accepting the facile correction *inuitant*. A present participle with *murmura* is perfectly possible, *silent* being understood from *silet*. For this familiar device compare, for example, Stat. *Theb.* 8.216–17; 8.346–47; and 10.631 (the last being complicated by the ellipsis of *sunt*). The correction *inuitant* could easily have arisen from a failure to appreciate the construction of *murmura*. Probably the meaning of *murmura* was also misunderstood. A *murmur* may be a sound which disturbs as well as one which induces sleep. Compare 2.1.62: *quis matutinos abrumpet murmure somnos?* Nor is it necessarily a gentle sound, for it is used with reference to a parrot's chatter (*Silv.* 2.4.3: *quis tua tam subito praecluserit murmura fato?*) or the noise of war trumpets (*Theb.* 11.528–29) or the rumbling of storm-clouds (*Lucr.* 6.197). If we accept *murmura* in this sense here, we can then understand the purport of *mutantia*, which is either the reading of *M* or the basis of it. *Mutare* can perfectly well mean “to change for the worse” and so “to mar, spoil or impair.” So, for example, Horace *Sat.* 2.2.58: *ac nisi mutatum parcit defundere uinum*; and in Statius, *Theb.* 2.672–73: *clipeum nec sustinet umbo/mutatam spoliis*; or 7.70–71: *diraque asparagine latos/mutat agros* (11.521 is a good example, which has been unnecessarily emended).

We have therefore a perfectly satisfactory interpretation for *et . . . mutantia murmura somnos*. It means “and the noisy sounds that impair sleep (are silenced).” Nor need we be troubled by the very slight zeugma in the use of *silere*. For the use of the verb with *murmura* as subject compare *Lucr.* 2.505–6: *et cycnea mele . . . silerent*. The only question that remains is whether *nigros* can stand as an attribute of *somnos*. *Pigros* is an easy and not unattractive suggestion. We have *pigra Quies inersque Somnus* at 1.6.91, where the qualities are, however, personified (similarly *desidis . . . Somni* in *Theb.* 10.87); *pigro torpebant aequora somno*, as a figurative expression, at 3.2.73; also, *insidiosa quies et pigra obliuio uitae*, of a lethargic disease, at 1.4.57. On the other hand, the use of *somnos* at 3.2.82 to mean “nights” might perhaps make the application of *nigros* to *somnos* slightly easier in the present passage. *Nigra* is used as an epithet of *mors* in *Theb.* 9.851. The claim of *pigros* to have a place in the text therefore seems to me to

be strong but not quite overwhelming. *Piger* and *niger* are of course aptly applied to the same substantive in different contexts; compare, for example, Ov. *Am.* 3.9.27 with Stat. *Theb.* 11.588.

III

Silv. 3.5.102:

caraque non soli iuga Surrentina Lyaeo.

soli *Heinsius*: molli *M*

The manuscript reading is perfectly sound. *Non mollis* refers to the harshness of the wine produced from the type of vine grown at Surrentum. Compare Columella *R.R.* 3.2.10: uerum et aliae duae geminae ab eo quod duplices uuas exigunt, cognomen trahunt austerioris uini, sed aeque perennis. duarum minor uulgo notissima quippe Campaniae celeberrimos Vesuuii Surrentinosque uestit. For the litotes in *non molli* compare Stat. *Theb.* 4.346: maesta ducis furiis nec molli territa fama.

IV

Silv. 5.2.41–44:

Bolanus iter praenosse timendum,
Bolanus tutis iuga quaerere commoda castris,
metiri Bolanus agros, aperire malignas
torrentum nemorumque moras, etc.

torrentum *Heinsius*: tot rerum *M*: tot ueprum *Dom.*

Statius is celebrating the services of Bolanus to Corbulo during the latter's Armenian campaign (*Tac. Ann.* 15.3.1).

The reading of *M* is manifestly impossible, and Heinsius was right in seeking to generate a single noun in the genitive plural out of it. I suggest, however, as a more probable alternative, *tescorum*. This, as a rarer word, would be more liable to corruption. Its sense (e.g. as given by the commentators on Horace *Ep.* 1.14.19: "loca aspera et siluestria," "loca deserta ac difficilia") suits the present reference to the inhospitable terrain of Armenia. There is also a close parallel for it in a very similar context in Lucan (6.39–42):

turritaque summis
disponit castella iugis magnoque recessu
amplexus fines saltus nemorosaque tesqua
et siluas uastaque feras indagine claudit.

The word may well have been written in manuscripts as *testorum*, which would have assisted the corruption. *Testa* is the form in which the word appears in the two oldest manuscripts of Lucan, *loc. cit.*

Heinsius himself restored the word *tesca* to the text of Lucan 2.426 (where the manuscripts have *tecta* or *dexta*); and Markland to that of Statius *Silv.* 2.3.14 (where the manuscript reading is *tecta*).

V

Theb. 2.205–11:

socias it Fama per urbis,
finitimisque agitur agris procul usque Lycaeos
Partheniosque super saltus Ephyraeaeque rura.
nec minus Ogygias, equidem dea turbida, Thebas
insilit et totis perfundit moenia pennis,
Labdaciumque ducem praemissae consona nocti
territat . . .

208 equidem *A*¹: eadem *cett.*: itidem *Lachmann*: tandem *Phillimore* 209 et
DNA edd.: haec *PBKQS*.

Rumor carries all over Greece the news of the weddings of Polynices and Tydeus.

Eadem, the original reading of all the manuscripts in line 208, is weak and has been rejected by many editors. Its only function would be to emphasize that we have the same goddess descending on Thebes as had made her way through the *socias urbis*, etc. *Equidem*, adopted by Garrod, does not improve matters; in fact *eadem* seems preferable to *equidem*, which has no natural idiomatic significance here. If any alteration is to be made in the text, I would suggest *Ogygiam sedem* and possibly the substitution of *Thebes* for *Thebas*. *Ogygiā sedem* would easily become *Ogygias edem*, and *edem* would then be altered to *eadem* to mend both meter and sense. *Thebas* could stand in apposition to *Ogygiam sedem*; but if *Thebes* had originally stood in the text, it would readily have been altered to *Thebas*, once *Ogygias* had made its appearance. The singular form is as common as the plural in Statius: compare *Theb.* 4.610, 676; 5.681, 745; 6.515; 9.255, 294; 10.594. The expression I have proposed for line 208 would be somewhat similar to Vergil's

Corythi Tyrrhena ab sede (*Aen.* 7.209), if *Corythus* is there the name of a place and not of a person.

The other problem in this passage is the reading in line 209. The manuscripts slightly favor *haec*, but in a matter of this kind manuscript authority does not count for much. Those who read *haec* (e.g. Mozley) apparently take it as a feminine singular pronoun. As such it seems otiose; we do not require any reemphasis of the subject. It could however be interpreted as a neuter plural pronominal adjective, in which case it would serve to emphasize that Rumor takes a really thorough hold of Thebes (*totis perfundit . . . pennis*), as contrasted with the other places she visits or traverses. This is appropriate to the context, and I incline therefore to prefer the reading *haec*, understood as a neuter plural. This would of course require a punctuation mark after *insilit*.

VI

Theb. 4.419–22:

silua capax aeui ualidaque incurua senecta
aeternum intonsae frondis, stat peruia nullis
solibus; haud illam brumae minuere, Notusue
ius habet aut Getica Boreas impactus ab Ursa.

421 minuere uix ferri potest: minuisse Peyraredus. Sed minuere glossa est, fort. libare

This is the beginning of the description of the wood in which Tiresias practises necromancy.

Some editors accept *minuere*, but the rest of the sentence cannot be satisfactorily construed if it is retained. An infinitive is obviously required, and Garrod's suggestion that *minuere* is a gloss which has found its way into the text is plausible. He proposes *libare*, but it seems to me that this would hardly need explanation. I suggest *mutare*, in the sense of "damage." This, though not a very unusual meaning of the word (compare the passages quoted in my note on *Silv.* 1.3.39–42), would be more likely to occasion comment; and the fact that *mutare* and *minuere* begin with the same letter would make the intrusion of the latter word all the easier. I have not noted a parallel for *ius habeo* + the infinitive, but the phrase seems possible as an equivalent for *ius est mihi* + the infinitive, which is not uncommon (e.g. Verg. *Aen.* 12.315; Ov. *Met.* 8.730).

VII

Theb. 6.209–12:

nec non Assyriis pinguescunt robora sucis,
pallentique croco strident ardentia mella,
spumantesque mero paterae uerguntur et atri
sanguinis et rapti gratissima cymbia lactis.

This passage forms part of the account of the funeral rites for Opheltes.

I should propose to alter the punctuation of lines 209–10, removing the comma after *sucis* and placing a semi-colon at *croco*. The reason for this is that the ablative with *strident* in 210 is somewhat strange, whereas *Assyriis sucis* and *pallenti croco* form a natural pair. Compare *Silv.* 5.1.213–14

simul Hebraeique liquores
Coryciaeque comae Cinyreaque germina;

ibid. 3.3.211–12

semper odoratis spirabunt floribus arae
semper et Assyrios felix bibet urna liquores.

Presumably the saffron mentioned here is in liquid form. This accords best with *pinguescunt*, if the punctuation I suggest be adopted. References to the liquid or quasi-liquid form of saffron are of course numerous. Propertius speaks of its use as an unguent for the hair (4.6.74); and there are numerous passages in which its employment as a spray, especially in the theater, is mentioned (Lucr. 2.414–17; Prop. 4.1.15–16; Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.79–80; Ov. *A.A.* 1.103–4; Sen. *Ep.* 90.15; Mart. 5.25.7–8). Ovid speaks of saffron more than once (*Fast.* 1.75–76; 339–42) in connection with sacrifices, though not with specific allusion to its liquid form.

VIII

Theb. 7.303–4:

et nunc sic fratres mentito nomine gaudent,
plus pater; hunc olim iuuat et uentura senectus.

The *pater* and *hunc* of line 304 refer to Lapithaon, and we have been given his story in lines 294 ff. The nymph Dercetis seduced him while he was still a lad and gave birth to Alatreus. When Alatreus grew up, he and Lapithaon were so near to one another in age and appearance that they were generally regarded as brothers.

Hunc . . . senectus has been unjustifiably suspected as corrupt. The editors of the Delphin edition of Statius, for example, propose no less than three emendations, none of which can claim any plausibility (“*iuuat una in utroque senectus*”; “*hunc olim iuuat unitura senectus*”; “*una olim iuuat euentura senectus*”). More recently it has been strangely misunderstood and mistranslated by Mozley. His rendering is as follows: “. . . for the past has brought him pleasure as well as the years to come.” In his footnote he adds: “*olim* has the Silver Latin meaning ‘all this time’ (= *iam-dudum*): *iuuat* seems to be used first impersonally and then with *senectus* as subject.” This is neither good sense in the context nor possible from the point of view of Latinity.

The meaning of the sentence is as follows: “He has for a long while delighted in old age, though actually it is yet to come.” This is simply a paradoxical way of saying that, though Lapithaon is in reality still quite young, he has long enjoyed the delights appropriate to old age, i.e. those of having a grown-up son. *Et* here means “actually,” as it does not infrequently in poetry and in the prose of the Silver Age. When it has this meaning, it can of course modify one word in particular or a clause. A good example where it goes closely with a verb is Sen. *Ep.* 39.6: *seruiunt itaque voluptatibus, non fruuntur, et mala sua, quod malorum ultimum est, et amant.* When it is so used with a participle it naturally acquires concessive force, as in Lucr. 6.7–8:

cuius et extincti propter diuina reperta
diuulgata uetus iam ad caelum gloria fertur;

and Verg. *Aen.* 2.49: *timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.* Compare also Ov. *Her.* 20.181–82:

non boue mactato caelestia numina gaudent,
sed, quae praestanda est et sine teste, fide.

IX

Theb. 11.627–30:

talìa dequestus paulatim insumpserat iras
mortis et occulte telum, nì nata uetaret,
quaerebat; sed casta manu subtraxerat ensis
Antigone.

627 insumpserat *P*: sumpserat ωS 628 telum nita /// (*imperfecto uers.*) *P*
629 cauta *Bentley*, sed cf. xi. 355, xii. 194

Oedipus, after the death of his two sons, laments that his curse has been fulfilled and desires to commit suicide but is restrained by Antigone.

I consider first the textual problems indicated in the *apparatus criticus* to lines 627 and 629.

Garrod seems to me to be right in accepting *insumpserat* from *P.* Statius uses this word elsewhere, once (*Theb.* 2.39) in a different sense from the present, but twice in a sense which is closely analogous, viz. *Theb.* 5.110–11: *modo par insumite robur/luctibus*; and 12.643–44: *dignas insumite mentes/coeptibus*. In 12.643 it is *P* which is corrupt (*consumite amantes*) and the other MSS. which have preserved the correct reading. In the present passage it is the other way round. Either *sumo* or *insumo* would be perfectly appropriate here, but it is more likely that the commoner word replaced the rarer one than vice versa. The change might indeed have occurred here through normal palaeographical error, the final letters of *paulatim* absorbing the initial ones of *insumpserat*.

Insumo in the sense of “adopt,” “assume” (an attitude, etc.) is not, I think, very common; but it is commoner than one might suppose, for two perfectly good examples of it have been wantonly removed from the text of Tacitus. At *Ann.* 6.32.4 the reading of *M* is: *et Phraates apud Syriam dum omisso cultu Romano . . . instituta Parthorum insumit*, etc. Lipsius emended to *sumit*, which is accepted by many modern editors, e.g. Fisher and Furneaux. At *Ann.* 14.44.1 the reading of *M* is: *creditisme seruum interficiendi domini animum insumpsisse . . .*? Here again Fisher, Furneaux and others accept *sumpsisse* from one of the 15th century MSS., the *Budensis*. Everyone knows that Tacitus sometimes preferred a simple verb to the more familiar compound one; but in this instance it so happens that the compound verb is the less familiar one. In any event there seems no satisfactory case for expelling a perfectly good word from the text.

The second problem is that of *casta* in line 629. There seem to be three possibilities here. One is of course that *casta* is a corruption, as Bentley and Markland supposed. If *casta* is what Statius wrote, however, it might be interpreted either as “chaste” or as “holy,” “pious.” Modern editors who accept *casta* seem to interpret it in the former sense. Hence Garrod, for example, in

defence of it compares *Theb.* 11.355 and 12.194. The second of these passages is not particularly relevant, but the first at any rate refers to the *casta uirginitas* of Antigone. The objection to this interpretation is that an allusion to Antigone's chastity is not appropriate to the present context, and one would therefore have to regard the epithet as a generally descriptive one. Such a use of a stock epithet is not in Statius's manner. If on the other hand *casta* could mean "holy" or "pious" in a broad religious and moral sense, the necessary relevance to the context would be secured. The objection to this is that Statius does not seem to use the word in this way elsewhere. He uses it frequently with reference to chastity and also with reference to maiden deities or to religious rites that have some connection with chastity (e.g. those of Diana or Juno). But I cannot find an instance where he applies it to a person in a completely general moral or religious significance, which is what the present context would require. I incline therefore to accept the emendation *cauta* (= "acting through caution," "being cautious"), which gives a very apt sense and involves only a very slight change in the text. I myself proposed *cautus* in precisely this sense as an emendation of *certus* in Val. Flac. 1.59 (see *Classical Quarterly*, N.S., Vol. 6, Nos. 3, 4, "Some Passages in Valerius Flaccus").

I come now to the third problem in this passage, which concerns the construction of *mortis*. Garrod prints no comma either before or after it, so it is impossible to tell how he intends it to be construed. Where editions (the Delphin or the Loeb) do punctuate, they do so after *mortis*. It would, however, be possible (and, I think, preferable) to place a comma after *iras* and construe *mortis* with *telum*. The postponement of *et* does not create any problem.

In either event the genitive *mortis* is of some grammatical interest. If *iras mortis* is taken together, there are, I suppose, four conceivable interpretations of the expression:

- (1) deadly Wraths (i.e. deadly deities of wrath)
- (2) deadly wrath (i.e. an attitude of deadly wrath)
- (3) wrath at the death (of Eteocles and Polynices)
- (4) a wrathful desire for death.

In (1) and (2) the genitive would be one of quality, in (3) it would be one of cause, in (4) it would be one for which I do not

know of any regular grammatical term. It would be a genitive which expressed the outcome or object of an attitude. Of these possibilities No. (3) is the commonest type of genitive, but the sense which it gives is the one which is least appropriate to the context. Though Oedipus's wrath is connected with the death of his sons, it is clear that in the immediate context we are concerned with his own suicidal frenzy (cf. 622–23: *subeam sic Tartara digna/morte*). No. (1)—which would of course require *Irās*—can, I think, be dismissed. The word *ira* is sometimes personified in the plural (e.g. Verg. *Aen.* 12.336; Val. Flac. 2.205; Sil. 4.437), but always in cases where the surrounding context makes the personification indubitably clear. No. (4) would give the sense most appropriate to the context, but it involves a more unusual genitive and a greater straining of the language than any of the other possibilities. No. (2) is also feasible, but I would suggest that, if the genitive is of this type, it goes even more naturally with *telum* than with *iras*.

I turn therefore to the basic alternative of construing *mortis* with *telum*. Here also there would be two possibilities from the grammatical point of view. The genitive might be one of quality or it might be one akin to the objective genitive. The sense would be much the same either way, “a deadly weapon” or “a weapon which produces death.” One could not adduce in favor of this interpretation *Theb.* 9.763–64: *nulli tela aspera mortis/dant ueniam*, for it can hardly be doubted that there *mortis* goes with *ueniam*. One might, however, compare for the quasi-objective genitive Ov. *Met.* 3.697–98: *crudelia iussae/instrumenta necis*. For the genitive of quality, on the other hand, one might compare the familiar Greek expressions τῷ θεοστυγεῖ “Αἰδου μαγείρῳ (Eur. *Cycl.* 396–97); ξίφεσιν σιδαρέοισιν “Αἰδα (*Or.* 1398–99); θύουσας “Αἰδου μητέρα (Aesch. *Ag.* 1235). Such genitives of quality tend to blend with a genitive which expresses the purpose or consequence of something and are especially to be found in phrases which describe modes of death. Examples would be: Cic. *Clu.* 31: *exhausto illo poculo mortis* (where Gruter deletes *mortis*); Verg. *Aen.* 12.603: *et nodum informis leti trabe nectit ab alta*; Eur. *Hipp.* 802: βρόχον κρεμαστόν ἀγχόνῃς ἀνήψατο. The connection of such genitives with this particular type of phrase leads me to think that *mortis* . . . *telum* would have been a possible expression for Statius to use, and that it is slightly better to interpret the

passage in this way than to connect *mortis* with *iras*. (I have used in this discussion some of the familiar grammatical terms, but with the consciousness that it is a mistake to try and accommodate the linguistic usage of Greek and Latin authors within the Procrustean bed of grammarians' categories.)