AUGUSTAN ELEGY AND MIME

The purpose of this article is to evaluate the influence of contemporary Roman mime on Augustan elegy. I shall present evidence and arguments for believing that the elegists exploited that genre directly and deliberately, to provide themes and situations in their poetry. Before, however, considering the influence of specific mime-subjects on specific elegies, I shall show that contemporary mime is precisely the sort of literary production which we should expect to find exploited in elegy. This apologia for mime is a necessary preliminary, because of the entrenched prejudice against the genre as a trivial sub-literary form of entertainment, far beneath the notice of such highly sophisticated poets as the elegists. This prejudice arises from a simple semantic flaw: the term *mimus*, μῖμος, has always been used to cover a multitude of different types of production. Under this general title, works of a high literary quality have been categorised without discrimination alongside strip-tease and even less intellectual displays. In consequence of this, the higher forms of mime have suffered unfairly from the attacks directed by moralists against the corrupting effects of the lower forms.[2]

Mime should not be dismissed as an unsophisticated form of entertainment which could appeal only to unsophisticated minds. It appealed to precisely the same audience as elegy did, and was very popular at even the highest social levels. Sulla had cultivated mime-actors, though admittedly that had caused some adverse comment at the time (Plutarch, *Sulla* 2.4, 36.1). The mime-actress Cytheris was the mistress of M. Iunius Brutus, then of M. Antonius and then, perhaps very significantly, of Cornelius Gallus, who wrote about her in his *Amores*. Servius reports, moreover, that Cytheris performed in an early stage-version of Vigil's *Eclogues*.[3] The pantomime-artist Bathyllus was one of Maecenas' hangers-on, and we know from Horace, *Satires* 1.5, that the taste for entertainment of the mime type in Maecenas' circle was very catholic: the audience for the farcical contest between the *scurrae* Messius and Sarmentus included Maecenas, Horace, Virgil, Varius and Plotius Tucca.[4] Propertius describes Cynthia dancing the part of Ariadne in a mime or, more probably, a pantomime.[5] Adaptations of works by Ovid, probably the *Heroides*, were performed on the stage (Ovid, *Tr.* 2.519-20, 5.7.25-30). Mimographs could themselves be of high birth or high social standing: Laberius was a knight; Cn. Matius was a friend of Caesar and Cicero (cf. Cic. *Ad Fam.* 11.27 and 28); Cicero complained that Antony had appointed a certain Nucula to a land-tribunal as a reward for his skill in writing mimes (*Phil.* 11.13).

Interest in mime among Rome's intellectual élite did not arise simply from

nostalgie de la boue. Mimes could be highly sophisticated, remarkable for their *doctrina*. Aulus Gellius refers to Matius as *homo impense doctus, vir eruditus*, and he quotes with approval some of his neologisms (10.24.10; 15.25.1-2; 16.7.1; 20.9.1-3). Seneca refers to the leader of a troupe of mime-actors as a *doctus archimimus* (fr. 36 Haase), and he displays the moralists' ambivalent attitude to the genre when he says *quam multi poetae dicunt quae philosophis aut dicta sunt aut dicenda! non attingam tragicos nec togatas nostras ... quantum disertissimorum versuum inter mimos iacet! quam multa Publilii non excalceatis sed coturnatis dicenda sunt!* (*Epp. Mor* 8.8). Statius praises his father's skill in expounding the mimes of Sophron, as well as the works of Callimachus, Lycophron and Corinna (*Silvae* 5.3.156-8). Statius himself wrote libretti for pantomimes, as did Lucan (Juv. 7.87; Suet. *Rel.* 78.16 Reif.). Pliny commends his friend Arrius Antoninus for his skill in writing epigrams and mimiambs in Greek; they could be mistaken for the works of Callimachus and Herodas (*Epp.*4.3.4). Suetonius mentions a stage-manager for mimes, L. Crassitius Pasicles, who made a name for himself by writing a commentary on Cinna's *Smyrna*, that most sophisticated of Hellenistic poems (*De Gramm. 18*).

Since, therefore, contemporary mime appealed to the same audience as elegy did, and since it was often of high literary quality, we might reasonably expect that the elegists exploited it in some way, as we know they exploited various elements of other contemporary literary genres and types of performance: for example, the language of epic and didactic poetry, the subject-matter and techniques of rhetorical exercises. Exploitation of Roman mime is, of course, difficult to prove in detail, because our knowledge of the genre is so pathetically limited,[6] but the influence of one type of mime, the so-called Adultery-Mime,[7] seems clear enough. No fragments which can definitely be attributed to mimes on this subject have survived, but it was evidently a favourite type, since Ovid is able to single it out as representative of the genre:[8]

> quid, si scripsissem mimos obscena iocantes,
> qui semper vetiti crimen amoris habent,
> in quibus assidue cultus procedit adulter,
> verbaque dat stulto callida nupta viro?...
> ...cumque fefellit amans aliqua novitate maritum,
> plauditur et magno palma favore datur (*Tristia*, 2.497-500, 505-6).

Ovid's synopsis shows that the Adultery-Mime consisted basically of a love-triangle: a suave lover, a crafty wife and a stupid husband. This sort of love-triangle provides love-elegy with its most common and most fundamental scenario.[9] *Amores* 3.4 is one of the many elegies which exploit it. There Ovid is advising the *durus vir* that it is pointless to try to keep his girl faithful to him against her will. By guarding her closely, he is merely making her a more attractive prize for adulterers:

> non proba fit, quam vir servat, sed adultera cara:
> ipse timor pretium corpore maius habet.
> indignere licet, iuvat inconcessa voluptas:
> sola placet, 'timeo' dicere si qua potest (29-32).

Ovid is inverting Propertius' argument at 2.23.19-20, that it is better to resort to prostitutes than to have affairs with married women:

> nec dicet 'timeo, propera iam surgere, quaeso:
> infelix, hodie vir mihi rure venit.'

Propertius, in his turn, is adapting Horace's very similar argument at *Satires* 1.2.127-34:

> nec vereor, ne, dum futuo, vir rure recurrat,
> ianua frangatur, latret canis, undique magno
> pulsa domus strepitu resonet, vepallida lecto
> desiliat mulier, miseram se conscia clamet,
> cruribus haec metuat, doti deprensa, egomet mi.
> discincta tunica fugiendum est et pede nudo,
> ne nummi pereant aut puga aut denique fama.
> deprendi miserum est: Fabio vel iudice vincam.

The scene which Horace imagines is distinctly farcical, and the similar scene depicted by Juvenal at *Satire* 6.41-4 proves that the situation is associated particularly with mime:[10]

> quid fieri non posse putes, si iungitur ulla
> Ursidio? si moechorum notissimus olim
> stulta maritali iam porrigit ora capistro,
> quem totiens texit perituri cista Latini?

The scholiast comments on this passage: *superveniente marito sub cista celatus est, ut in mimo*, and, in any case, Latinus is well known from other references to him by Juvenal and Martial as a successful *archimimus* and dreaded informer under Domitian.

The similarity between Ovid's poem and the Adultery-Mime is, on this evidence, fairly clear in its general outline. Ovid naturally exploits the earlier literary treatments of the love-triangle theme by his fellow poets, Propertius and Horace,[11] but that in no way reduces the possibility of direct influence of the Adultery-Mime on his poem. Not only does Ovid cast himself in precisely the role of the *cultus ... adulter* who *fefellit ... aliqua novitate maritum*, but the frequency with which he uses the word *adulter(a)* could not fail to remind his audience of the popular and familiar Adultery-Mime: *ut iam servaris bene corpus, adultera mens est* (5); *omnibus occlusis intus adulter erit* (8); *non proba fit, quam vir servat, sed adultera cara* (29). Ovid uses the word *adulter(a)* in the

context of his own love-affairs nowhere else in the *Amores*.[12] A theme which involves adultery is unlikely to have been derived from either Hellenistic erotic epigram or Comedy, the two genres which are normally considered to have provided most of the material for Augustan elegy. Adultery is not at all a common feature of either of these genres, the women in Hellenistic erotic epigram being mostly prostitutes, while those in Comedy tend to be either prostitutes or unmarried girls. It seems likely, therefore, that Ovid drew directly on the Adultery-Mime.[13] Ovid's immediate elegiac model, Propertius 2.23, lends further weight to this possibility: at line 10, Propertius argues that one of the adulterer's occupational hazards is that, when surprised with a married woman, he often has to lie low in filthy sheds, *captus et inmunda saepe latere casa*; that is precisely the farcical situation which Juvenal associates specifically with mime and, since Horace does not mention this particular detail in the passage which Propertius is echoing at lines 19-20, we may reasonably infer that Propertius was influenced directly by the Adultery-Mime.

Propertius 4.8, perhaps the most broadly humorous of all Augustan elegies, has even more fundamental links with the Adultery-Mime.[14] In the absence of Cynthia, who is attending the country festival of Juno at Lanuvium, Propertius attempts to console himself by spending the night at home with two prostitutes. Cynthia returns unexpectedly, chases the prostitutes out of the house and is only satisfied when she has beaten up both Propertius and his conniving slave, Lygdamus. The whole poem is humorous: the grandiose opening couplet;[15] the sly hint at Cynthia's real reason for attending the festival (this is not to be an aetiological poem!); *causa fuit Iuno, sed mage causa Venus* (16); the less than flattering description of the two prostitutes: *Phyllis Aventinae quaedam est vicina Dianae, / sobria grata parum: cum bibit, omne decet. / altera Tarpeios est inter Teia lucos, / candida, sed potae non satis unus erit* (29-32). With Cynthia's sudden return (line 49), the humour becomes farcical. When the doors are flung open and Propertius sees Cynthia, dishevelled and furious, but still beautiful, the cup falls from his fingers and his drunken lips turn pale. Cynthia scratches Phyllis' face and Teia wakes the whole neighbourhood shouting 'Fire!' The prostitutes escape to the nearest tavern, half-dressed and with their hair pulled. Cynthia returns in triumph, sets about Propertius and, finally, drags Lygdamus out from his hiding-place behind the couch to take his share of the punishment. Comparison of lines 49 to 70 with the scene which Horace imagines at *Satires* 1.2.127-34 shows the influence of the Adultery-Mime on Propertius very clearly. Propertius, however, varies the usual situation: it is Cynthia who, returning unexpectedly from the countryside, plays the role normally reserved for the deceived husband; Propertius plays the role of the unfaithful wife; the prostitutes are to be compared to Horace, the lover in *Satires* 1.2, who escapes half-dressed and badly scared. Lygdamus' role seems to involve a conflation: he hides in much the same way as the lover at Horace, *Satires* 2.7.59-61, Propertius 2.23.10, Ovid, *A.A.*3.608, Juvenal 6.44 and 237-8, but in the poem in general he plays the role

of the unfaithful wife's maid, referred to by Horace at *Satires* 2.7.60 *peccati conscia erilis* and by Ovid at *A.A.*3.607 *callida prosiliat dicatque ancilla 'perimus'*; compare also the role of the mother-in-law at Juvenal 6.231-41.

The inversion of male and female roles occurs in embryonic form at 1.11.23-4, where Propertius' address to Cynthia is an adaptation of Andromache's words to Hector at *Iliad* 6.429-30.[16] A more striking parallel is to be found in the preceding elegy, 4.7, where Cynthia plays the part of Patroclus.[17] The inversion of roles in 4.8 has already been noted by S. Evans[18] and H.McL. Currie,[19] in their discovery of the poem's close links with the *Odyssey*: Cynthia plays the role of Odysseus, Propertius that of Penelope, the prostitutes that of the suitors, and Lygdamus that of the serving-maids. Although these two interpretations, linking the poem with, on the one hand, the Adultery-Mime, and, on the other, with the *Odyssey*, can coexist independently of each other and need not be considered mutually exclusive, it would suit the present argument to assume the existence of an amatory mime which portrayed Odysseus dealing with the suitors. Mythological burlesque, however, seems not to have been a common feature in mime.[20] A more likely explanation for such a conflation of Odyssean and mime elements is that Propertius is influenced by mimes in which the actions of low characters mirror those of mythological figures. This technique can be seen most clearly in *POxy.* 413 recto and verso col.4 (= D.L. Page, *Greek literary papyri* (1942) no.76), where the escape from the barbarian king is effected in much the same way as Odysseus and his men escaped from the Cyclops. Note also *POxy.* 413 verso cols.1-3 (= Page, no.77), with Page's comment: 'it may not be fanciful to detect the influence of Euripides' Medea on the character of the Archimima'.[21]

Propertius seems to have exploited the Adultery-Mime also in 2.29B.[22] Again, this is a very humorous poem and, again, the humour is at his own expense. Propertius comes to visit Cynthia in the early morning, unannounced. He finds her alone in bed. Cynthia interprets the surprise visit as an attempt to catch her making love with another man, and she rages against him for his lack of trust in her. Her final words before she repels Propertius' advances and leaps indignantly from the bed are significant: *aspice ut in toto nullus mihi corpore surgat/spiritus admisso notus adulterio* (37-8). Propertius uses the word *adulterium* in the context of his own love-affairs only here, and *adulter(a)* never. As argued above for Ovid, *Amores* 3.4, this helps to confirm the influence of the Adultery-Mime.

Ovid may have exploited some form of the Adultery-Mime for his story of Anna Perenna in Latium at *Fasti* 3.625-54. Aeneas gives Anna hospitality; Lavinia suspects that they are lovers and plots to kill Anna; Dido appears to Anna in a dream and warns her to escape; in a panic and only half-dressed, Anna jumps from the window and runs away. Although the story is not told in an overtly humorous manner, the context in which it is told, the drunken festival

of Anna Perenna, and the incongruous actions of these Virgilian characters prevent us from taking it very seriously. Some details are reminiscent of the Adultery-Mime, especially the (imagined) love-triangle and the sudden panicked flight from the bed half-dressed.[23] Entrances and exits through windows were probably a standard feature of amatory mimes, for Ovid seems to reflect such mimes at *A.A.* 3.605-8 *cum melius foribus possis, admitte fenestra/inque tuo vultu signa timentis habe;/callida prosiliat dicatque ancilla 'perimus';/tu iuvenem trepidum quolibet abde loco.* Laberius did in fact write a mime entitled *Anna Peranna* and its content may have been amatory.[24] Moreover, for at least one story in the *Fasti*, that of Quinta Claudia at 4.293-348, Ovid certainly drew inspiration from a stage-version; cf. line 326 *mira, sed et scaena testificata loquar.* Other episodes in the *Fasti* for which the influence of mime, or of some other, closely related, Comic genre, may be suspected are the story of Lotis and Priapus (1.391-440) and the closely parallel story of Vesta and Priapus (6.319-48), the story of Lyra, Faunus and Hercules (2.303-58) and that of Anna Perenna and Mars (3.675-96). These episodes are all amatory and very farcical.

The broader consequences of such exploitation of the Adultery-Mime are of fundamental importance to an understanding of the conceptual framework of the whole world of the love-elegist. It is generally agreed that this world is not drawn true to real life. If that were the case, there would not be any confusion about the social and marital status of the elegiac *puella*. In fact, however, the *vir* is sometimes portrayed as her husband, with legal rights over her, but, at other times, he is portrayed as merely the lover who, for the moment, is most in favour with a high-class prostitute. If, on the other hand, the elegist's world is an artificial, literary, world, such inconsistencies are less important and more explicable. The elegist casts himself and his *puella* in roles familiar from the genres which are his models.[25] Thus, when the model is Hellenistic erotic epigram or Comedy, the *puella* will almost inevitably appear as a prostitute; conversely, when the model is the Adultery-Mime, she is likely to appear as an adulteress. One might object that even in a purely literary world one might reasonably expect consistency. The elegists, however, demonstrably do not concern themselves with consistency, even between elegies which draw their framework from the same source. Thus, for example, Ovid plays the role of the *cultus adulter* in *Amores* 1.4, giving erotodidaxis to the *puella* on how to dupe her *vir* at a banquet; in 2.5, he exploits the same situation, but achieves variety by portraying himself in the role of the duped *vir*. In both of these elegies, *vir* must mean 'husband'. This is proven by the words *iure coacta* at 1.4.64 and *iniciam dominas in mea iura manus* at 2.5.30.[26]

The very popular Adultery-Mime is the only type of Roman mime about which we have any substantial information, and it is also the only one which can be shown with any degree of certainty to have influenced Augustan elegy. It seems, however, *a priori* very likely, given this strong influence of the Adultery-Mime on elegy, that other types of contemporary mime were also exploited, even if not on such a large scale. A fairly strong case can be made for such influence on the elegists' treatment of the komos. We have considerable evidence, ranging probably from the second century B.C. to the third century A.D., for the popularity of the komos as a subject for Greek mimes; cf. *PLit. Lond.* 50, the 'Alexandrian Erotic Fragment' (= J.U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina* (1925), Lyrica Adespota 1); the Marissa Song (= Powell, Lyr. Adesp. 5); *PTeb.* 2 fr.d (= G. Manteuffel, *De opusculis Graecis Aegypti e papyris, ostracis, lapidibusque collectis* (1930) no.20); *PSorb.* inv. 2223 (= Powell, Lyr. Adesp. 3); *PRyl.* 1 no.15 (= Powell, Lyr. Adesp. 38); note also *PLit. Lond.* 52 (= D.L. Page, *Greek literary papyri* (1942) no.79) 22-3 ἐπικωμάζει καὶ μεθύει, κοινῆς δὲ φέρων πόθον Ἀφροδίτης ...; Herodas' second mimiamb, where the pimp describes an assault on his brothel by a komast; Theocritus' second *Idyll* (influenced by Sophron), where Simaetha reports Delphis' intention to go on a komos; Athenaeus 621C, where komastic scenes in μαγῳδίαι are attested. There is, by contrast, no firm evidence for komastic mimes in Rome. It seems fairly likely, however, that such mimes were staged in Rome also, since Roman mimes drew heavily on Greek sources for their material; cf.Cicero, *Pro Rab. Post.* 35 *audiebamus Alexandream, nunc cognoscimus. illinc omnes praestigiae, illinc, inquam, omnes fallaciae, omnia denique ab eis mimorum argumenta nata sunt.* If komastic mimes were in fact staged in Rome, there were presumably direct links between them and komastic elegies, given the affinities between the two genres as demonstrated above in the specific case of the Adultery-Mime.[27]

The possible existence of such links does not conflict in any way with the vital and pervasive influence of Theocritus and Hellenistic epigram on komastic elegies. Propertius, for example, may have exploited the subject matter of a komastic mime in combination with the dramatic techniques first developed by, above all, Theocritus, in composing his account of Hercules' visit to Latium (4.9). The central core of that elegy is structured as a komos.[28] Propertius' representation of a mythological figure in the role of a komast finds a close parallel in Theocritus' *Idyll* 11 and, to a lesser extent, *Idyll* 6, where Polyphemus is cast in such a role. This parallel in Theocritus strongly suggests that there are at least indirect links between Propertius' poem and mime, for, although Theocritus' portrayal of Polyphemus in love owes its basic impetus to Philoxenus' dithyramb,[29] the technique which he uses is manifestly indebted to mime.[30] The links between Propertius 4.9 and komastic mimes may, however, be more direct. Propertius' account of the story is highly amusing and farcical in many of its details; this in itself is reminiscent of mime. Moreover, the poem is aetiological; as I have argued above, Ovid seems to exploit contemporary mime in some of the aetiological tales in the *Fasti*. Finally, the juxtaposition of this poem with 4.8 may be significant. In that poem, Propertius appears to personalise a mythological version of the Adultery-Mime; here, casting Hercules

in the role of a komast arguably involves a very similar technique of mythologising mime, less elaborate in that it is not also personalised.[31]

Propertius 2.29 is divided by most editors into two separate poems (1-22 and 23-42). The chief obstacle to considering that elegy as a single poem is the change of scene and the lapse of time after line 22.[32] This obstacle can be removed if we consider the poem in relation to mime. Propertius makes extensive and elaborate use of komastic material in at least the first part of the poem.[33] I have argued for the influence of komastic mimes on the elegists' treatment of the komos. I have also argued (p.75) for the influence of the Adultery-Mime on lines 23-42. If, then, Propertius is exploiting these two types of mime in 2.29, the abrupt transition after line 22 is not surprising, for changes of scene and lapses of time are a typical feature of mime.[34]

There is clearly a fair probability that contemporary mime influenced the elegists' treatment of the komos as well as of the love-triangle. Since these themes are so fundamental to love-elegy, it seems reasonable to postulate the influence of mime on other general features of the genre. It is undeniable that the elegists drew on Comedy for some of their material.[35] Since, however, they nowhere acknowledge such a debt, and since mime had taken over many of Comedy's stock characters, themes and situations,[36] it seems possible that the links between Comedy and elegy are, in some instances, indirect, with mime, the Comic genre most immediately familiar in the Augustan period, as an intermediary. Alternatively, the elegists could even have drawn on both Comedy and mime simultaneously. For example, the sexual relationship between master and slave in Propertius 3.15 and Ovid, *Amores* 2.7 and 8, which has been traced to Comedy,[37] can be traced with equal probability to mime, since the dominant theme in all of these elegies is the love-triangle. The influence of Comedy is most apparent in Propertius 4.5 and Ovid, *Amores* 1.8. In both of these closely related elegies, the main character is an alcoholic procuress who instructs the poet's mistress in the art of prostitution. The situation has many parallels in Comedy, but procuresses were stock figures in mime also, and, although we have no evidence that they gave such erotodidaxis in Roman mimes, it seems very likely that they did. The alcoholic procuress, Gyllis, who attempts to persuade Metriche to be unfaithful to Mandris in Herodas' first mimiamb, is closely comparable to Propertius' Acanthis and Ovid's Dipsas,[38] and we know from the standard epithets *cata* and *carissa*[39] that procuresses were characterised as unsympathetically in mime as they were in Comedy and elegy. It might seem that the similarities between these particular elegies and scenes in Comedy are so close as to exclude the possibility of mime as an additional model. The elegists may, however, have drawn some of their inspiration from mime but exploited Comedy, the higher genre, in their presentation of the material. An interesting parallel for this practice of ignoring the minor genre is afforded by the scholiast's acknowledgement in his introduction to the *Dialogi Meretricii* of Lucian's

debt only to Comedy, particularly Menander, even though the importance of the influence of mime on that work is patently obvious.[40]

One final, more specific, point. In *Amores* 3.7 Ovid laments his impotence. This theme is almost unparalleled in elegy,[41] and it is generally assumed that Ovid derived it from an epigram by Philodemus, *A.P.* 11.30. While the influence of Philodemus is not to be discounted, Ovid may also have been influenced by mime.[42] Although physical defects can be assumed to have been a stock butt for humour in mime, as in other Comic genres, there is no direct evidence for mockery of impotence. Martial's reference to the mimograph Catullus in 12.83, however, suggests that it was a common theme.[43] More significantly, *Amores* 3.7 is imitated extensively by Petronius in his description of Encolpius' impotence at *Satyricon* 128-34. That whole episode is presented in a highly dramatic form, reminiscent of mime. Mime appears in fact to have had an important formative influence on the novel genre.[44] It seems possible, therefore, that Ovid and Petronius drew on mime as a common source.[45] A common debt to mime can be demonstrated with considerable probability for the theme of the surprised lover, discussed above. That theme, derived by the elegists from mime, occurs frequently in novels;[46] for example, at Petronius, *Sat.* 97-8, Apuleius, *Met.* 9.5-7 and 20-28, Heliodorus, *Aeth.* 1.12.1 and 16.2-4.[47]

Much of the argument which I have presented here is necessarily speculative. It seems certain, however, even on the evidence now available, that the influence of contemporary mime on the Augustan elegists was greater than is generally supposed. The same is probably true also of pantomime, an equally sophisticated genre equally popular with the Augustan intellectual élite.[48] We know even less, however, about Roman pantomime than about Roman mime. The close links between pantomime and literature are well expressed by Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* 748A ποίησιν γὰρ εἶναι τὴν ὄρχησιν σιωπῶσαν, καὶ φθεγγομένην ὄρχησιν πάλιν τὴν ποίησιν,[49] and well exemplified by Longus 2.37, where Daphnis and Chloe give a pantomime performance of the story of Pan and Syrinx, which they have just heard from Lamo. The principle underlying this passage in Longus is explained by Isidore 18.49 (*mimi*) *habebant suum actorem qui, antequam mimum agerent, fabulam pronuntiaret; nam fabulae ita componebantur a poetis ut aptissimae essent motui corporis.*[50] The titles of many tragic pantomimes are known,[51] but they are so vague and cover such a wide range of mythology that it is difficult to identify specifically pantomimic elements in other genres.[52] In the absence of any pantomime libretti, it would be helpful to have more precise information on what a pantomime performance involved. How, for example, could Pythagorean philosophy (Athenaeus 20CD) or Plato's *Dialogues* (Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* 711C) be presented as pantomimes?

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NOTES

1. I am grateful to Mr. I.M. Le M. Du Quesnay for much helpful criticism of this paper.

2. For the generally favourable opinion of mime in pagan antiquity, cf. H. Reich, *Der Mimus* (1903 repr. 1974) 50-80. In the following paragraphs, I select a mere fraction of the available evidence.

3. On *Ecl.*6.11. The story, as Servius records it, is patently apocryphal, since probably none of the *Eclogues* had been written when Cicero died. It may well, however, be based on fact; note *Ecl.*10.2 *quae legat ipsa Lycoris.*

4. This scene in Horace depends, of course, on a sophisticated literary tradition. The similarities with Lucian, *Convivium* 18-19 are particularly striking. The incident may or may not be historically true. The important point is that neither Horace nor his friends, including Maecenas, can have objected to having their enjoyment of this type of entertainment advertised and immortalised.

5. 2.3.17-18 *posito formose saltat Iaccho,/ egit ut euhantis dux Ariadna choros. Saltare,* though usually understood as referring to pantomime, can refer equally well to mime; cf. Reich (n.2) 57, n.1. A more important objection to the view that Propertius is referring to a mime is the fact that mimes rarely had mythological subjects; cf. p.75 below.

6. The despondent opening words of the *RE* article on *Mimos*, although written almost fifty years ago, are still worth quoting, for they are still true: 'Geschichte und Theorie des Mimos erfuhren im Altertum nie eine zusammenhängende Darstellung. Wir sind daher auf die zerstreuten, zwar zahlreichen, aber meistens nur zufälligen und nicht immer zuverlässigen Notizen in griechischen und römischen Schriftstellern angewiesen, die in ihrer Gesamtheit ein eindruckvolles Bild von dem hohen Alter, der weiten Verbreitung, der oft verblüffenden Lebenswahrheit, der grossen Lebenskraft und dem – bis etwa in das 1. Jhdt. unserer Zeitrechnung – ständig wachsenden Einfluss des Mimos geben. Auch in der Neuzeit hat sich die Forschung nur in bescheidenem Umfang und mit spärlichem Erfolg dem Mimos zugewendet.' Most of the surviving remnants of Roman mime are collected and discussed by M. Bonaria, *I Mimi Romani* (1965). The majority of these fragments are of little help in literary enquiries, for they have been preserved only by grammarians as illustrations of abstruse linguistic usages.

7. Cf. R.W. Reynolds, *CQ* 40 (1946) 77-84.

8. Ovid refers to such mimes also at *A.A.* 1.501-2; [id.] 3.605-8 (quoted below, p.76), *R.A.* 755. Further, almost contemporary, evidence for the popularity of the Adultery-Mime is provided by Valerius Maximus 2.6.7 *mimis ... quorum argumenta maiore ex parte stuprorum continent actus*; cf. also Seneca, *Contr.* 2.4.5 and Suetonius, *Otho* 3.

9. To cite just the instances in the *Amores*, the love-triangle is exploited, alluded to, or at least implied in some way in 1.4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 2.2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 19, 3.3, 4, **[5]**, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 14.

10. Horace presents a similar scene in the same context at *Satires* 2.7.56-61 *metuens induceris atque/ altercante libidinibus tremis ossa favore / quid refert, uri virgis ferroque necari / auctoratus eas, an turpi clausus in arca, / quo te demisit peccati conscia erilis, / contractum genibus tangas caput?* Compare also Juvenal 6.237-8 *abditus interea latet et secretus adulter / impatiensque morae silet et praeputia ducit.* Horace is possibly suggesting a formal link between Satire and mime when he compares Lucilius and Laberius: *nec tamen hoc tribuens dederim quoque cetera; nam sic / et Laberi mimos ut pulchra poemata mirer (Satires* 1.10.5-6). The existence of such a formal link is supported by Johannes Lydus, who is presumably reflecting a traditional view when he links Roman Satire with the phlyax-playwright Rhinthon of Tarentum, and Persius with Sophron (*De Magistratibus* 1.41). It is worth adding that the influence of mime has been detected on both the form and the content of Juvenal's ninth *Satire*; cf. G. Highet, *Juvenal the satirist* (1954) 274. (I owe this reference to Dr J.G.W. Henderson.) Mime may, therefore, have been an intermediary between (Old) Comedy and Satire. (On the links between mime and Petronius, see below, n.44.) I argue below, p.78, that mime may have been an intermediary between Comedy and elegy.

11. The debt to Propertius is obvious, that to Horace is more subtle: Ovid means his audience to recall the farcical scene at *Satires* 1.2.127-34 through his reference to Ilia at lines 39-40. Ilia is not mentioned in Propertius' poem, but she appears in Horace at lines 125-6. For such by-passing of the immediate model, cf. I.M. Le M. Du Quesnay, *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar* 1 (1976) 55 with n.213, and for the use of proper names to signal an allusion, cf. W. Kroll, *Studien zum Verständnis der römischen Literatur* (1924) 150.

12. The word *adulterium* occurs at *Amores* 3.5.44, but Ovid is unlikely to be the author of that poem; cf. E.J. Kenney, ΑΓΩΝ 3 (1969) 1-14. Even if he did write it, that need not weaken the present argument: both the subject-matter and the dialogue form in which it is presented suggest that the *Somnium* could also have been influenced by mime.

13. The love-triangle is not, of course, confined to the Adultery-Mime. One thinks, for example, of Catullus 17, with its dull-witted husband and beautiful young wife, *adservanda nigerrimis diligentius uvis* (16).

14. Margaret Hubbard, *Propertius* (1974) 151, has already observed in passing that 'we could not be ... more firmly located in the *verismo* of the mime'.

15. Compare Horace's mock-epic introduction to the contest between the two *scurrae* at *Satires* 1.5.51-4.

16. Cf. Hubbard (n.14) 56, n.1.

17. Cf. Hubbard (n.14) 149-52.

18. *Greece & Rome* n.s.18 (1971) 51-3.

19. *Latomus* 32 (1973) 616-22.

20. Cf. O. Crusius, *Neue Jahrbücher* 25 (1910) 92-8. There are some exceptions; for example, the anonymous *Faba,* Laberius' *Anna Peranna* (see below, p.76), and his *Paupertas* (cf. Crusius 96). Nonius 493M does, in fact, attribute an *Odyssia* to Laberius, but the text is probably corrupt and he is generally understood to be referring to the poem of Livius Andronicus.

21. This technique is not confined in elegy to the Propertian poems mentioned above; for Propertius in the role of Acontius in 1.18, cf. F. Cairns,*CR* n.s.19 (1969) 131-4; for Tibullus in the role of Odysseus in 1.3, cf. D.F. Bright, *Arethusa* 4 (1971) 197-214; for Ovid in the role of Hercules in *Amores* 3.1, cf. W.J. Froleyks, *Der* ΑΓΩΝ ΛΟΓΩΝ *in der antiken Literatur* (1973) 139-41; (Ovid's choice between the two goddesses, the regal virago, Tragedy, and the sly and sexy Elegy, also owes something to the Judgement of Paris). Ovid repeatedly identifies himself with mythological figures, especially Odysseus, in the exile poems; cf. H. Rahn, *Antike und Abendland* 7 (1958) 115-20. On the possible connection between the Odyssean and mime elements in Propertius 4.8, see also below, p.75 and n.47.

22. I am here dealing only with lines 23-42. I argue below, p.78, that 2.29 is a single elegy.

23. With the detail *tunica velata recincta* (645) compare, in poems possibly influenced by mime, Horace, *Satires* 1.2.132 *discincta tunica fugiendum est* and Propertius 4.8.61 *tunicis...solutis.* For the detail of leaping from the bed, for whatever reason, in such poems, note Horace, *Satires* 1.2.129-30, Propertius 2.29.39-40, Ovid, *Amores* 3.7.81-2 (see below, p.79); also *Fasti* 1.435, (2.350), 6.343.

24. Cf. Bömer on *Fasti* 3.523ff.:'Das einzig lesbare Fragment [Bonaria (n.6) no.10] geht auf eine

Liebesszene'. The amatory nature of the mime cannot be asserted with great confidence: the fragment in question reads *conlabella osculum.*

25. I am not of course denying the existence of the elegiac *puella* in real life. That is a separate problem.

26. Ovid's words at 1.4.40, *dicam 'mea sunt' iniciamque manum*, are obviously not to be taken at face-value, especially since they follow immediately on *fiam manifestus amator.*

27. Lucretius' attack on the *exclusus amator* at 4.1177-84 may help confirm the existence of komastic mimes in Rome. That passage is one of the chief pieces of evidence for the widely, and perhaps correctly, held view that komoi were a feature of real life in Rome. (On this question, cf., most recently, J.C. Yardley, *Eranos* 76 (1978) 20-1). F.O. Copley, *Exclusus amator* (1956) 45-6, argues that 'Lucretius would never have made himself look ridiculous by attacking with all the scorn of which he was capable something that was only a foolish fancy of the poets and had no counterpart in real life'. This is at least an overstatement. The attack on the *exclusus amator* is only a very small part of the much broader attack on sex and women and, of the eight lines devoted to the *exclusus amator*, five are directed not so much against him as against the use of cosmetics. Since, then, the role played by the *exclusus amator* is a relatively minor one, it does not seem so necessary to insist that he must be drawn from life, and not from literature. A compromise between these two sources is possible. Lucretius' source could have been the contemporary theatre for, if komastic mimes were staged in Rome, the komast could have been familiar to Lucretius and his audience equally well from stage-performances as from real life. Lucretius often illustrates his arguments with exempla taken from the theatre; notice especially lines 978-83 of this same book. The imagery at line 1186, *vitae postscaenia*, perhaps strengthens the possibility that he is thinking here of the theatre and hence, more specifically, of mime, by this time the most popular type of theatrical performance in Rome.

I make this suggestion diffidently. Even if Lucretius is not drawing directly on real life, he could of course be drawing on, for example, komastic epigram. (For his debt to epigram in his attack on sex generally, cf. E.J. Kenney, *Mnemosyne* 4th series 23 (1970) 380-8.) Certainly, although I consider the importance of this passage as evidence for the existence of komoi in real life in Rome to have been exaggerated, I should not wish to argue that a debt to mime (or any other literary model) excludes or even significantly diminishes the possibility that Lucretius is also reflecting reality.

28. Cf. W.S. Anderson, *AJP* 85 (1964) 1-12 and, more recently and in greater detail, P. Pinotti, *GIF* n.s.8 (19) (1977), 59-71.

29. Cf. A.S.F. Gow, *Theocritus* II 118.

30. Such a debt to mime can be seen most clearly in Theocritus' other komos poem, *Idyll* 3, which admits a change of scene between lines 5 and 6.

31. It may be worth adding that Highet (n.10), who detects the influence of mime on Juvenal's ninth *Satire*, suggests that 'conceivably the satire is also intended as a parody of the theme of the *exclusus amator*'.

32. Other possible objections are noted and rejected by F. Cairns, *Emerita* 45 (1977) 337-44.

33. Cf. Cairns (n.32) 344-9, who treats the whole poem as a komos and the transition after line 22 as a specifically komastic device.

34. The influence of mime on such abrupt transitions in Propertius is noticed by Hubbard (n.14) 52-3, with particular reference to 1.8, another poem the unity of which has often been disputed.

35. Cf. e.g. A.A. Day, *The origins of the Latin Love-Elegy* (1938) Chapter 5 and, most recently, J.C. Yardley, *Phoenix* 26 (1972) 134-9 and *TAPA* 104 (1974) 429-34.

36. The similarities between the plot of Menander's *Epitrepontes* and that of the third century A.D. mime *PLit. Lond.* 52 (= D.L.Page, *Greek literary papyri* (1942) no.79) are particularly striking.

37. Cf. Yardley, *TAPA* (n.35), who cites (pp.432-4) evidence for such relationships in both Comedy and mime.

38. It may be worth adding that the image which Ovid uses in his erotodidaxis at *A.A.* 1.59 *quot caelum stellas, tot habet tua Roma puellas,* finds its closest parallel at Herodas 1.32-3 (ἔστ' ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ) ... γυναῖκες, ὀκόσους ... ἀστέρας ἐνεγκεῖν οὐρανὸς κεκαύχηται.

39. Cf. *TLL.* s.v. *carissa.*

40. One may also compare Horace's acknowledgement in the *Odes* of his debt to his archaic, but not to his Hellenistic, models. The elegists may have been considerably influenced by such humble handbooks as Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata*, but they naturally preferred to lay claim to having poets such as Philetas and Callimachus as their models; cf. J. Griffin *JRS* 67 (1977) 19.

41. The other instance, Tibullus 1.5.39-42, is much briefer and more delicately expressed: *saepe aliam tenui: sed iam cum gaudia adirem, / admonuit dominae deseruitque Venus. / tunc me discedens devotum femina dixit, / a pudet, et narrat scire nefanda meam.*

42. It is worth noting, in this context, the hypothesis proposed by W. Abel, *Die Anredeform bei den römischen Elegikern* (1930) 70 n.16, that the introduction of mimetic dialogue to erotic epigram was an innovation made by Philodemus. The general influence of mime on epigram is of course much older; cf. Gow and Page on Asclepiades 25 (= *A.P.* 5.181).

43. Martial refers to this Catullus (*RE* 2) at 5.30.3 *facundi scaena Catulli*; cf. *Lib. Spect.* 7.4. It should be said, however, that in the present passage he may be referring to the aeschrological poems of the poet from Verona. The influence of mime on the mockery of impotence and other such defects in other genres has already been suggested by F.J. Brecht, *Philol.* Suppl. 22.2 (1930) 96. It may be worth adding that Pomponius wrote a *Hirnea Pappi* in the closely related genre of Atellane farce; for mime as a more modern equivalent of Atellane farce, cf. Cicero, *Ad Fam.* 9.16.7. It may also be worth adding that mime- (pantomime-?) actors (sometimes?) wore phalloi; cf. Schol. to Juvenal 6.65-6.

44. The exact extent of the influence of mime on the *Satyricon* and on the novel genre in general is uncertain; for a bibliography on this problem, cf. R. Astbury, *CPh* 72 (1977) 30 n.41, adding F. Möring, *De Petronio mimorum imitatore* (1915).

45. Petronius, by his imitation of Ovid's poem, acknowledges his debt only to the higher genre. This is yet another example of the practice discussed at the end of the preceding paragraph.

46. Mime is not, of course, the only possible source for this theme in novels. Its much earlier exploitation in Old Comedy and, more significantly, in Lysias' speech on the murder of Eratosthenes, shows it to be widespread and traditional.

47. The *Satyricon* is heavily influenced not only by mime, but also by the *Odyssey*; cf. A.M. Cameron, *Latomus* 29 (1970) 397-425. Petronius' exploitation of Odyssean and mime elements involves much the same technique as was suggested above for Propertius 4.8 (p.75).

48. The possible influence of tragic pantomime on the *Metamorphoses* is noted by G.Karl Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* (1975) esp. 68-9. Cairns (n.32) 353, suggests pantomime as the source of Propertius' mythological paradeigmata in 1.3.1-6.

49. The text is uncertain, but the meaning is clear.

50. Isidore is referring to pantomime, not to mime. The term *mimus* was often used in this inexact manner, especially in later antiquity.

51. Cf. *RE* s.v. *Pantomimus* coll. 847-9.

52. For the extensive influence of pantomime on Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, cf. Otto Weinreich, *Epigramm und Pantomimus* (1948) 161-72.