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Metre¹

In his first elegy, Ovid declares that the couplet is to be his basic unit of composition:

cum bene surrexit uersu noua pagina primo,
 attenuat neruos proximus ille meos...
 sex mihi surgat opus numeris, in quinque residat...
 Musa per undenos emodulanda pedes (17f., 27, 30).

From the manner in which he refers to the pentameter (*attenuat, residat*), it seems possible to make the further inference that it is to be the hexameter which carries the main emphasis within the couplet.

The principle that the couplet should be the basic unit of composition is strictly observed. The end of every pentameter in the *Amores* coincides with the end of a sentence or clause; we are never required to read on into the next couplet in order to complete the sense². This principle will have discouraged Ovid from constructing elaborate periods extending over several couplets. Such periods are not common³, and even in them the component couplets retain much of their individual identity; cf. e.g. 1.3.7ff.:

si me non ueterum commendant magna parentum
 nomina, si nostri sanguinis auctor eques,
 nec meus innumeris renouatur campus aratris,
 temperat et sumptus parcus uterque parens,
 at Phoebus comitesque nouem uitisque repertor
 hac faciunt et me qui tibi donat, Amor,
 et nulli cessura fides, sine crimine mores,
 nudaque simplicitas purpureusque pudor.

The principle that the couplet should rise up in the hexameter

¹ Most specific metrical points are discussed in the commentary. I here offer only an outline of the main principles of Ovid's handling of the elegiac couplet and a general appreciation of his artistry.

² On 2.6.17f., see p. 113.

³ Cf. 1.3.7-14, 1.10.1-8, 1.11.1-8, 1.15.1-6, 2.5.23-8, 33-40, 2.8.1-5, 2.13.7-15, 2.18.21-6, 3.[5.]9-14, 3.7.7-12, 3.13.13-7, 3.15.1-6.

and settle back in the pentameter is much less strictly observed. Often, the couplet can only be construed when viewed as a single unit; cf. e.g. 1.3.17f.:

tecum, quos dederint annos mihi fila sororum,
 uiuere contingat teque dolente mori

and 1.6.17f.:

aspice (uti uideas, immitia claustra relaxa!)
 uda sit ut lacrimis ianua facta meis.

Often, it is the pentameter which bears the main emphasis. This is the case most notably in couplets such as 2.19.55f.:

nil metuam? per nulla traham suspiria somnos?
 nil facies, cur te iure perisse uelim?,

3.6.89f.:

quid, si legitimum flueres, si nobile flumen,
 si tibi per terras maxima fama foret?.

3.7.1f.:

At non formosa est, at non bene culta puella,
 at, puto, non uotis saepe petita meis?

With their ascending periodic structure, such tricola, which are especially frequent in Ovid, run counter to the principle of 'rising' and 'falling'. The principle is nevertheless an important one. It is particularly suited to Ovid's rhetorical style, with its tendency to balance and antithesis, for it gives the pentameter the function of supporting the point made in the hexameter, either by expanding it, or by restating it in a different way, or by making a further point which draws its impetus from the hexameter. The opening twelve lines of Ovid's tirade against Cupid in 1.1 afford a clear and sustained illustration of this subordinate role of the pentameter:

quis tibi, saeue puer, dedit hoc in carmina iuris?
 Pieridum uates, non tua, turba sumus.
 quid, si praeripiat flauae Venus arma Mineruae,
 uentilet accensas flaua Minerua faces?
 quis probet in siluis Cererem regnare iugosis,
 lege pharetratae uirginis arua coli?
 crinibus insignem quis acuta cuspide Phoebum
 instruat, Aoniam Marte mouente lyram?
 sunt tibi magna, puer, nimiumque potentia regna:
 cur opus affectas, ambitiose, nouum?

an, quod ubique, tuum est? tua sunt Heliconia tempe?
uix etiam Phoebio iam lyra tuta sua est?

The protest against Cupid's interference in poetry (5) is supported by the observation that poets are under the control of the Muses (6). The argument that Venus does not interfere in Minerva's sphere of influence (7) is balanced by the argument that Minerva does not interfere in Venus' (8). Similarly ordered antitheses between Ceres and Diana and between Apollo and Mars occupy the next two couplets (9-12). The protest that Cupid's dominions are already too powerful (13) is developed in the complaint that he is attempting to extend them even further (14). The sarcastic general question about Cupid's omnipotence is made specifically relevant to poetry by the reference to Helicon (15), which is then reinforced by the reference to Apollo's lyre (16).

According to a marvellous anecdote recorded by the elder Seneca (*Contr.* 2.2.12), Ovid once agreed to allow his friends to stipulate three lines to be removed from his poetry, on condition that he be allowed to stipulate independently three which were not to be disturbed; when the lists were checked, they were found to contain the same three lines. Two of the lines are known, *Am.* 2.1.1.10:

et gelidum Borean egelidumque Notum,

and *Ars* 2.24:

semibouemque uirum semiuirumque bouem.

That both are pentameters may be indicative of that line's comparative weakness; since the hexameter so often carries the main point of the couplet, the pentameter has the greater scope for playful *lasciua*. Similarly, it may not be mere coincidence that the only lines in the *Amores* to be repeated twice in Ovid's later works are also both pentameters; they are 1.6.46 (= *Fast.* 4.520 and *Trist.* 5.4.4):

heu, melior quanto sors tua sorte mea!

and 3.13.14 (= *Fast.* 1.84 and *Pont.* 4.4.32, with only the minor alteration of *quos* for *quas*):

quas aluit campis herba Falisca suis.

Being less emphatic than the hexameter, the pentameter could be adapted the more easily to different contexts. The subordination of the pentameter reaches its greatest refinement in those couplets in

which the first hemistich of the hexameter is repeated *uerbatim* as the second hemistich of the pentameter. There are three instances of this unprecedented⁴ device in the *Amores*:

Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido;

Attice, crede mihi, militat omnis amans (1.9.1f.)

inuida, uestis, eras, quae tam bona crura tegebas;

quoque magis spectes — inuida, uestis, eras (3.2.27f.)

Ilia, pone metus! tibi regia nostra patebit

teque colent amnes: Ilia, pone metus! (3.6.61f.)

Such repetition, while serving to emphasise with particular force the point made in the hexameter, greatly diminishes the independence of the pentameter.

This subordination contributes very substantially to the couplet's unity, for it is the pentameter's relative lack of vitality which prevents it from breaking that unity by introducing a new idea which will run on into the following lines. In some of the few passages in which the pentameter does initiate a new period, a special effect is clearly intended. The refrain

tempora noctis eunt; excute poste seram

occurs five times in 1.6. On the first four occasions, the sentence ends with the end of the line but, in the final passage, Ovid declares:

urbe silent tota, uitroque madentia rore

tempora noctis eunt; excute poste seram,

aut ego iam ferroque ignique paratior ipse,

quem face sustineo, tecta superba petam (55ff.).

By the continuation into the next couplet, he conveys an impression of his impatience and exasperation; he is no longer content to wheedle the door-keeper. Similarly, at 1.8.109ff.:

uox erat in cursu, cum me mea prodidit umbra,

at nostrae uix se continuere manus

quir albam raramque comam lacrimosaque uino

lumina rugosas distraherentque genas,

the unbroken period extending over lines 110-112 expresses Ovid's difficulty in restraining himself from attacking Dipsas. There is a somewhat comparable effect at 1.4.35ff.:

⁴ See on 1.9.1f.

nec premat indignis sinito tua colla lacertis,
 mite nec in rigido pectore pone caput,
 nec sinus admittat digitos habilesue papillae;
 oscula praecipue nulla dedisse uelis.
 oscula si dederis, fiam manifestus amator
 et dicam 'mea sunt' iniciamque manum.

The injunction against kissing in 38 is set apart from the prohibitions in 35-37, in that it does not share in the parallelism of their expression: *nec...sinito, nec...pone, nec...admittat*. It is thereby rendered particularly emphatic, and Ovid is enabled the more easily to develop that point alone in the following couplet. The only other remarkable instance in the *Amores* of a pentameter introducing a new idea occurs at 3.13.18, where Ovid begins his discussion of Juno's hatred of goats. For less obtrusive instances, cf. 2.6.2ff., 2.10.16ff., 2.13.12ff.

Such close coherence of one couplet with the next, as in the passages just discussed, entails a slight challenge to the principle that the couplet is the basic unit of composition. Nowhere in the *Amores*, however, does Ovid accentuate that challenge by bringing a period begun in one couplet to a sudden halt before the end of the next, a device found occasionally, and to very good effect, in Propertius⁵. It gives emphasis to the isolated clause at 2.7.1ff.:

Gausia es certe sublatiam, Cynthia, legem,
 qua quondam edicta flemus uterque diu,
 ni nos diuideret,

3.11.47ff.:

quid nunc Tarquinii fractas iuuat esse securis,
 nomine quem simili uita superba notat,
 si mulier patienda fuit?

and 4.7.51ff.:

iuro ego Fatorum nulli reuolubile carmen,
 tergeminusque canis sic mihi molle sonet,
 me seruasse fidem.

At 4.8.67ff.:

atque ubi iam nostris lassauit bracchia plagis,
 Lygdamus ad plutei fullera sinistra latens
 eruitur,

⁵ See Fraenkel (1932) 74ff.

the enjambment suggests Lygdamus' discovery after his temporary escape from retribution. *Am.* 2.6.17ff.:

quid tamen ista fides, quid rari forma coloris,
 quid uox mutandis ingeniosa sonis,
 quid iuuat, ut datus es, nostrae placuisse puellae?

might be considered to offer a similar movement beyond the end of the pentameter. There, however, the case is slightly different: Ovid has not simply postponed the verb, *iuuat*, until the following hexameter, as Propertius postpones *eruitur*; rather, he has used it *ἀρό κοινοῦ*, and therefore, in a sense, the construction of the three clauses in 17f. is already complete. At 3.6.9ff.:

quid properasse iuuat, quid parca dedisse quieti
 tempora, quid nocti conseruisse diem,
 si tamen hic standum est...?

the continuation to the caesura in the second hexameter, combined with the lively tricolon in 9f.,⁶ suggests Ovid's unceasing haste, while the pause at the caesura in the second hexameter, combined with the heavy rhythm of *hic standum est*, suggests the obstruction by the river. This period is constructed in a manner closely similar to that of Prop. 3.11.47ff. (quoted above). It is not, however, entirely comparable, since, unlike Propertius, Ovid unifies his second couplet by completing it with a second conditional clause which is coordinate with that which occupies the first hemistich in the hexameter:

si non datur artibus ullis
 ulterior nostro ripa premenda pedi?

Within the confines of the couplet, Ovid is perhaps the least inhibited of the elegists in the use of sense-pauses. The normal cadences which emphasise and safeguard the unity and individuality of the couplet, the 'rise' in the hexameter and the 'fall' in the pentameter (1.1.17, 27), are not perceptible at e.g. 2.4.23f.:

molliter incedit: motu capiti; altera dura est:
 at poterit tacto mollior esse uiro,

3.3.7f.:

pes erat exiguus: pedis est artissima forma.
 longa decensque fuit: longa decensque manet

and 3.11.37f.:

⁶ See also pp. 121f.

nequitiam fugio, fugientem forma reduci;
 auersor morum crimina, corpus amo.

In such passages, the antithetical movement which so often occupies the whole couplet is given up in favour of a double antithesis. 3.7.47f. is the most extreme example of this type of couplet, presenting no less than three distinct antitheses, which ingeniously help to convey an impression of the ease with which Ovid has managed to seduce the girl:

optabam certe recipi: sum nempe receptus;
 oscula ferre: tuli; proximus esse: fui;

even there, however, the use of *optabam* ἀπό κοινοῦ preserves the couplet's unity to some degree.

Whereas 300 lines of elegiacs by Theognis and Meleager⁷ contain respectively 539 and 562 dactyls in the first four feet of the hexameter and the first two of the pentameter, 300 lines of elegiacs by Catullus⁸ contain only 333. This reflects a fundamental difference between the Greek and Latin languages: in Greek, short syllables are approximately twice as common as long; in Latin, the proportions are reversed. The Augustan elegists, and Ovid in particular, reproduce the elegiac couplet's original lightness much more closely than does Catullus. The first 300 lines of the respective books produce the following figures for dactyls in the first four feet of the hexameter and the first two of the pentameter: Prop. 1: 427, Prop. 4: 460, Tib. 1: 445, Tib. 2: 468, *Am.* 1: 524, *Am.* 3: 483.

The Augustan elegists also lighten the metre by making markedly less use of elision than does Catullus. The following statistics are drawn from the same 300 lines of the respective books:

	Prop. 1	Prop. 4	Tib. 1	Tib. 2	<i>Am.</i> 1	<i>Am.</i> 3
short vowel	41	36	15	28	9	15
-m	43	11	15	4	8	4
prodelision (<i>est, es</i>)	21	7	10	6	12	9
long vowel	29	1	7	4	2	7
diphthong	2	2	0	0	1	0

⁷ Theognis (ed. Young) lines 1ff., Gow-Page (1965) lines 3926ff. As with the other authors considered here, damaged lines are omitted and compensated for. For Catullus, Propertius and Tibullus, I use the texts of Mynors, Fedeli and Postgate respectively.

⁸ 65.1-68.139. I draw on these poems because their stylistic level is the most closely comparable to that of Augustan elegy.

As can be seen from this table, the Augustan elegists do not differ significantly one from another in their use of elision, except that Propertius employs the lighter types considerably more often than does either Tibullus or Ovid. This uniformity is remarkable, especially if Quintilian's judgement on Gallus as being *durior* than Tibullus and Propertius (*Inst.* 10.1.93; see p. 33) may be taken to imply that his metrical practices were closer to Catullus' than to theirs⁹. If that was so, the Augustan elegists might have been expected to display a gradual decline in the frequency of elisions. In fact, however, there is no such trend, even between Propertius' first book and his fourth, which was published well over a decade later¹⁰.

The lightness and smoothness of the Augustan elegiac couplet seem particularly well suited to Ovid's light-hearted treatment of his subject-matter; the often ponderous and tortured rhythms of a poem such as Catullus' magnificent *Si qua recordanti* (76), which expresses deeply felt emotions, could have no place in the *Amores*. Lightness and smoothness might easily degenerate into monotonous regularity, but Ovid avoids that danger. In the following pages, I shall attempt to demonstrate that the *Amores* display considerable metrical variety and virtuosity.

Since Ovid's metre is predominantly dactylic, spondaic rhythms often produce a remarkable effect. Only two couplets in the *Amores* contain the maximum number of spondees (but see n. 11): at 1.15.5f.:

nec me uerbosas leges ediscere nec me
 ingrato uocem prostituisse foro,

the slowness of the rhythm, combined with the unusual sense-break after the fifth foot in the hexameter (see p. 122) and with the rather unpleasant *e-* and *s-*sounds in the hexameter and the long *o*-sounds in the pentameter, expresses the distasteful boredom of a legal career; at 2.11.11f.:

non illic urbes, non tu mirabere siluas;
 una est iniusti caerulea forma maris,

⁹ The surviving fragments of Gallus' poetry are too limited to have any statistical value. It serves no real purpose to note that they offer no elision of any kind (one prosodic hiatus [*um erunt*], a device without parallel in Augustan elegy), and that they display fourteen dactyls out of a possible twenty-five in the first four feet of the hexameter and the first two of the pentameter (a ratio [56.00%] surpassed only by the sample taken from *Am.* 1 [58.22%]).

¹⁰ Propertius certainly refined his metrical technique in other respects, most notably in the decline in the use of polysyllabic words at the end of the pentameter, from 92 in Book 1 (36.25%) to 6 in Book 4 (1.25%); see Platnauer (1951) 17, Fedeli (1984) 286.

it is appropriate to Ovid's attempt to persuade Corinna that her proposed voyage will be tedious. In addition to 1.15.5 and 2.11.11, only eighteen further hexameters are completely spondaic in their first four feet: 1.2.49, 1.5.21, 1.8.27, 43, 85, 1.10.61, 1.13.21, 35, 1.14.39, 2.5.43, 2.11.27, 2.14.23, 2.19.29, 3.1.57, 3.3.39, 3.6.29, 3.9.17, 3.14.33. Such a ponderous rhythm seems particularly apposite at 1.13.21, suggesting the wearisomeness of rising at dawn:

nec tu consulto, nec tu iucunda deserto,

at 1.13.35, suggesting Tithonus' sad and feeble old age:

Tithono uellem de te narrare liceret,

at 2.11.23, ominously suggesting danger:

quod si concussas Triton exasperet undas,

at 2.14.27, suggesting disgust at the practice of abortion:

quid plenam fraudas uitam crescentibus uuis?,

at 3.1.57, suggesting Elegy's loathing of Corinna's shameful treatment of her:

quid, cum me munus natali mittis, at illa,

at 3.9.17, suggesting sorrow at Tibullus' death:

at sacri uates et diuum cura uocamur¹¹.

The series of three spondaic words not broken by a sense-pause at 2.14.23 is paralleled only at 1.13.13¹², where it suggests lethargy:

te surgit quamuis lassus ueniente uiator,

and, in rueful and melancholy contrast with the ecstasy of 1.5.19ff., at 3.7.39:

at qualem uidi tantum tetigique puellam!

intempestiua gives 3.7.67 a ponderous rhythm found nowhere else in the collection and is humorously expressive of Ovid's tardy recovery from impotence:

¹¹ In the pentameter, Ovid continues: *sunt etiam qui nos numen habere putent*. If *etiam* may be considered to be disyllabic (see the note), this melancholy couplet, like 1.15.5f. and 2.11.11f. (see above), appropriately contains the maximum number of spondees.

¹² See also the note *ad loc.*

quae nunc, ecce, uigent intempestiua ualentque.

Dactyls are not, however, so predominant as to prevent Ovid from achieving special effects with light rhythms. Seventeen couplets contain the maximum number of dactyls: 1.1.1f., 1.4.19f., 29f., 1.8.19f., 1.9.1f., 1.10.9f., 59f., 1.14.51f., 2.1.17f., 2.8.21f., 2.13.11f., 2.15.21f., 2.17.11f., 3.2.1f., 3.6.73f., 3.7.13f., 3.9.57f. In some cases, the lightness seems deliberate and significant: at 1.10.9f.:

nunc timor omnis abest animique resanuit error,
nec facies oculos iam capiti ista meos,

it suggests Ovid's relief at being free of the infatuation described in the unusually elaborate eight-line opening period; at 2.1.17f.:

clausit amica fores: ego cum Ioue fulmen omisi;
excidit ingenio Iuppiter ipse meo,

in combination with the asyndeton, it suggests the suddenness with which he was forced to abandon his *Gigantomachia*; at 2.15.21f.:

non ego dedecori tibi sum, mea uita, futurus,
quodue tener digitus ferre recuset onus,

it enhances his argument that, in the guise of the ring, he will not be a burden to his mistress; at 1.14.51f.:

me miserum, lacrimas male continet oraque dextra
protegit, ingenuas picta rubore genas

and at 3.6.73f.:

o utinam mea lecta forent patrioque sepulchro
condita, cum poterant uirginis ossa legi,

it suggests excited distress. Three poems begin with such couplets: at 1.9.1f.:

Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido;
Attice, crede mihi, militat omnis amans,

the swift rhythm suits the glib confidence with which Ovid proposes his paradoxical thesis that all lovers are soldiers; at 3.2.1f.:

Non ego nobilium sedeo studiosus equorum;
cui tamen ipsa faues, uincaut ut ille, precor,

it suits his brash and businesslike attempt to seduce a girl at the Circus; by contrast, however, at 1.1.1f.:

Arma graui numero uiolentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conueniente modis,

where he reports his attempt to compose a weighty epic, it is wittily incongruous.

The opening hemistich of 1.10.9 (*nunc timor omnis abest*) and of 2.1.17 (*clausit amica fores*), both discussed above, would have been equally at home as the second hemistich of a pentameter. 8% of the hexameters in the *Amores* begin with such swift rhythms. Despite this frequency, however, it seems that Ovid deliberately favoured hemistichs of that type in hexameters which mark a transition or increase the tempo after a comparatively static passage; in addition to 1.10.9 and 2.1.17, one may note especially:

- 1.1.5: quis tibi, saeue puer, dedit hoc in carmina iuris?
1.5.9: ecce, Corinna uenit,
1.6.13: nec mora, uenit amor,
1.11.15: dum loquor, hora fugit,
2.16.11: at meus ignis abest,
3.1.15: et prior 'equis erit' dixit 'tibi finis amandi?',
3.2.41: dum loquor, alba leui sparsa est tibi puluere uestis,
3.10.29: uictus amore pudor.

At 2.15.9, the three anapaests in a completely dactylic hexameter, which is not delayed by a sense-pause, produce a fast rhythm unparalleled in the *Amores* and convey an impression of Ovid's urgent longing for transformation into the ring:

o utinam fieri subito mea munera possem¹³.

The same unbroken sequence of three anapaests, but with a spondaic fourth foot, occurs also at 1.10.17:

quid puerum Veneris pretio prostare iubetis?

and, taking *opus est* as a single unit, at 1.11.23:

quid digitos opus est graphium lassare tenendo?

In the former passage, combined with the plosive alliteration of *p*, the

¹³ If *puella* is the object of *frui* at 3.7.5 (see the note), that line offers a second instance.

fast rhythm suggests Ovid's agitated indignation; in the latter, it suggests the excited anxiety with which he gives his instructions to Nape¹⁴.

There is a significant contrast in rhythm at 1.7.61f.:

ter tamen ante pedes uolui procumbere supplex;
ter formidatas repulit illa manus.

The hexameter is light and swift, as Ovid urgently attempts to supplicate his mistress, whereas the pentameter is heavy and slow, as she repulses him in terror. Words with the prosody of *formidatas* occur in pentameters elsewhere only at 2.16.28, 3.1.16, 52, 3.4.6, 18, 3.11.22. At 3.1.16:

o argumenti lente poeta tui,

the slowness of the rhythm, accentuated by the hiatus, well conveys Tragedy's disgust at Ovid's persistence with love-elegy. A similar variation to that at 1.7.61f. is achieved at 3.2.11f., perhaps the couplet which most brilliantly accommodates sound to sense:

et modo lora dabo, modo uerbere terga notabo,
nunc stringam metas interiore rota.

The completely dactylic hexameter suggests the gallop along the straight¹⁵, with the assonance in *uérbera térga* and the internal rhyme in *dabo...notabo* evoking the lashing with the whip and perhaps also the drumming of the horses' hooves. The line has seventeen vowels to nineteen consonants, every word except *et* ending with an open vowel, and yet elision, which would slow the line, is avoided. By contrast, the heavy spondees in the first hemistich of the pentameter, with twelve consonants to only five vowels, none of which is open, suggest the slowing down for the turn.

There are few unusual or harsh elisions (see pp. 114f.). Some achieve a particular effect. At 1.15.19:

animosique Accius oris,

the grandeur of the phrase is enhanced by the elision, for words with the prosody of *animosique* are otherwise elided by Ovid at the fifth

¹⁴ For anapaests suggesting speed in some way, cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.479 *subitam canibus rabiem*, Hor. *Ars* 261 *operae celeris nimium* and see also on 1.15.10 *dum rapidas Simois in mare uoluet aquas*.

¹⁵ Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.596 *quadripedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum*.

foot arsis only in the *Metamorphoses* (fourteen times)¹⁶. Similarly, the elision at 2.13.7:

Isi, Paraetionium genialiaque arua Canopi

can be paralleled only in the *Metamorphoses* (four times)¹⁷, and therefore it helps to set an impressive tone for the prayer to Isis. At 3.6.101ff.:

huic ego uae demens narrabam fluminum amores?
iactasse indigne nomina tanta pudet.
nescioquem hunc spectans Acheloon et Inachon amnem
et potui nomen, Nile, referre tuum?¹⁸

the elision in *fluminum amores* is unparalleled in Augustan elegy¹⁸ and, combined with the harsh elision in *nescioquem hunc*, may emphasise Ovid's irate disgust. At 2.19.20:

saepe time insidias,

if indeed that reading is correct¹⁹, the elision of an iambic word before a long vowel has no certain parallel in Ovid's elegiacs and may evoke the danger and panic of the situation.

Caesurae and sense-pauses within the couplet are also exploited effectively. 3.11.33:

luctantur pectusque leue in contraria tendunt

is the only hexameter in the *Amores* which neither has a strong third-foot caesura nor compensates for its absence by having strong caesurae in both the second and the fourth foot²⁰. The rhythm conveys an impression of tortured conflict, an impression which is quickly dispelled by the light and swift pentameter:

hac amor, hac odium; sed, puto, uincit amor²¹.

¹⁶ 1.730, 2.81, 3.24, 5.153, 7.586, 610, 8.381, 530, 836, 10.497, 11.133, 477, 13.526, 590. As in the next note, I draw on Schulte (1909) 19.

¹⁷ 3.567, 6.591, 9.773 *Isi, Paraetionium Mareoticaque arua Pharonque*, 10.229f. *ipsa suas urbes Ophistiaque arua parabat / deserere alma Venus*.

¹⁸ In the *Metamorphoses*, it occurs only at 6.524 *uirginem et unam*. See also Austin on Verg. *Aen.* 1.599 *omnium egenos*.

¹⁹ See the note *ad loc.*

²⁰ For lines of the latter type, see p. 83.

²¹ The contrast between the two lines will be all the greater if this couplet begins a new elegy (11B). Ovid almost always begins a poem or book with a dactyl in the first foot of the first line. For the rare exceptions, see on 1.8.1.

The caesura is blurred by elision only once²², at 1.6.57:

aut ego iam ferroque ignique paratior ipse.

Ovid elsewhere blurs the caesura in this way with the formulation *-que...-que* only in the *Metamorphoses* (four times)²³. The rhythm therefore, like the phrasing (see the note), is impressive, as suits the context, since Ovid is blustering, attempting to intimidate the door-keeper (see also p. 111). A strong stop occurs only four times at the weak caesura in the third foot of the hexameter: at 1.13.3f.:

quo properas, Aurora? mane! sic Memnonis umbris
annua sollemni caede parentet auis,

in combination with the second strong stop following immediately, after *mane!*, it seems to suggest Ovid's desire to bring Aurora to a sudden halt; at 3.2.63f.:

sed pendent tibi crura: potes, si forte iuuabit,
cancellis primos inseruisse pedes,

it conjures up a picture of the girl's feet dangling uncomfortably; at 3.3.1f.:

Esse deos, i, crede: fidem iurata fefellit,
et facies illi, quae fuit ante, manet,

the rhythm perhaps helps to convey Ovid's agitation; at 3.9.37f.:

uiue pius: moriere; pius cole sacra: colentem
Mors grauis a templis in caua busta trahet,

the sudden stop after *moriere* seems to emphasise Death's irresistible attack. Hexameters with a trochaic caesura in both the fourth and the fifth foot occur only at 1.6.67, 1.9.31, 2.16.15, 2.17.15, 3.6.9 and 93, and are rare in Augustan elegy in general²⁴. This rhythm may have been avoided because it produces a rather unsettling 'double-ending' effect. Such disruption seems appropriate to the context at 2.16.15f.:

solliciti iaceant terraque premantur iniqua,
in longas orbem qui secure uias,

3.6.9f.:

²² 1.10.7 *talis eras, aquilamque in te taurumque timebam* is not entirely comparable, since that line has a strong caesura in both the second and the fourth foot.

²³ 3.109, 226, 9.279, 13.614; see Christensen (1908) 179.

²⁴ See Platnauer (1951) 10, also Austin on Verg. *Aen.* 2.380.

quid properasse iuuat, quid parca dedisse quieti
tempora, quid nocti conseruisse diem...?

and perhaps also 1.6.67f.:

at tu, non laetis detracta corona capillis,
dura super tota limina nocte iace.

The principle that the couplet should rise up in the hexameter and settle back in the pentameter is only twice violated by the beginning of a new clause in the sixth foot of the hexameter: at 1.15.5f. (see p. 115), the effort required in making a fresh beginning at this unusual position in the couplet contributes to the impression of the laborious tedium involved in the pursuit of a legal career; at 3.13.5f.:

grande morae pretium ritus cognoscere, quamuis
difficilis cluius huc uia praebet iter,

it suggests the effort required to climb the steep road.

From the selection of passages discussed above, it is clear that Ovid at times varies his normally very strict metrical practices in order to achieve a particular effect. Even, however, in passages in which the metre remains unremarkable, it does not give an impression of tedious predictability, as can be seen from an examination of, for example, the catalogue of rivers in love at 3.6.25-44, a passage which, because it presents a catalogue, might have been particularly susceptible to monotony:

Inachus in Melie Bithynide pallidus isse 25
dicitur et gelidis incaluisse uadis.
nondum Troia fuit lustris obsessa duobus,
cum rapuit uultus, Xanthe, Neaera tuos.
quid? non Alpheon diuersis currere terris 30
uirginis Arcadiae certus adegit amor?
Pthiotum terris occuluisse ferunt.
quid referam Asopon, quem cepit Martia Thebe,
natarum Thebe quinque futura parens? 35
cornua si tua nunc ubi sint, Acheloe, requiram,
Herculis irata fracta querere manu;
nec tanti Calydon nec tota Aetolia tanti,
illa tamen tanti Deianira fuit.
qui patriam tantae tam bene celat aquae, 40

ferur in Euanthe collectam Asopide flammam
uincere gurgitibus non potuisse suis.
siccus ut amplecti Salmonida posset, Enipeus
cedere iussit aquam: iussa recessit aqua.

Similar phrases are kept apart (*isse / dicitur et...incaluisse* [25f.]²⁵, *occuluisse ferunt* [32], *ferur... / uincere...non potuisse* [41f.]), as are apostrophes (*Xanthe* [28], *Penee* [31], *Acheloe* [35]²⁶) and rhetorical questions (29f., 33f.). This variation in expression conspires with variation in rhythm to maintain our interest. In the first couplet (25f.), Ovid employs enjambment, the two parallel clauses both being controlled by *dicitur* in the first position in the pentameter. The second (27f.) has a sense-pause at the end of the hexameter, and makes its main point in the inverted *cum* clause in the pentameter. There is no proper internal sense-pause in either the third (29f.) or the fourth (31f.), but the difference in expression, a rhetorical question and a statement, prevents symmetry. The main sense of the fifth (33f.) is complete by the end of the hexameter, the pentameter adding only a subordinate point. The sixth and seventh *exempla*, the only two to be treated in two couplets, are effectively juxtaposed: the strong stop at the end of 36, followed by the triple anaphora of *tanti* in 37f., suggests Achelous' calculated risk in challenging Hercules' claim to Deianira, whereas the sweeping four-line period describing the Nile's love-affair (39ff.) suggests his inability to overcome his passion even with his mighty floods. The Nile is also effectively juxtaposed to the Enipeus (43f.): whereas the Nile's unassuageable passion is treated in a single sentence extending over four lines, Enipeus' swift consummation of his passion for Tyro is conveyed in two short sentences within a single couplet, the swiftness of the consummation being emphasised by the extremely virtuoso use of *epanalepsis* in the pentameter, each of the three words in the first hemistich recurring in a different form in the second.

²⁵ Note, however, that Ovid signals the end of the catalogue by constructing its final couplet in the same fashion as this opening couplet: *supposuisse... / dicitur et... dedisse* (81f.). For such deliberate parallelism, see also on 2.10.31-34.

²⁶ I cannot, however, suggest any reason other than metrical convenience for the occurrence of the apostrophes *docte Cattulle, prodige Galie* and *culte Tibulle* in the same position in consecutive pentameters at 3.9.62ff.

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