



Ovids Heroides als Elegien

Review Author[s]:
Betty Rose Nagle

The American Journal of Philology, Vol. 116, No. 1 (Spring, 1995), 152-154.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-9475%28199521%29116%3A1%3C152%3A0HAE%3E2.0.CO%3B2-1>

The American Journal of Philology is currently published by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/jhup.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

indefinite but contrastive). In another key discussion, Freudenburg argues that 1.10 addresses not the Stoic advocates of “rugged” style whom Horace took on in 1.4 but an entirely new set of critics with diametrically opposed stylistic tenets. The discussion of the extraordinarily fine points at issue in some of these debates (the treatment of final *s*, for example) is also rewarding. In general, the reader seeking an introduction to late Republican theories of composition could not do better than to consult this chapter. Freudenburg’s work reminds us that we need to take the literary debates of Horace’s day as seriously as Horace did and helps us do so.

ELLEN OLIENSIS

YALE UNIVERSITY

FRIEDRICH SPOTH. *Ovids Heroides als Elegien*. Munich: C. H. Beck, 1992. 258 pp. Paper, DM 98. (Zetemata 89)

“What’s love got to do with it?” sings Tina Turner. With *Heroides*, according to Friedrich Spoth, not as much as we are accustomed to think. His title contains his thesis: *Heroides* “as elegies” (note that he does not say “as love elegies”). This aspect, he claims, has been undervalued, and his monograph attempts to provide a thorough interpretation of the work from the standpoint of its genre. *Heroides* represents, not a new genre, nor a crossing or mixing of genres, but a development and extension of the genre of elegy. Elegy is an “open” genre—a system capable of expanding to include new material—of which subjective love elegy is one form or developmental phase. In these poems Ovid parodies and renews the genre; keeping love in the background, he extends the form for expression of subjective emotion in general, a purpose for which he himself employed it later in the elegies from exile. These “mythological paraclausithyra” in the tradition of Propertian elegy apparently effect a synthesis of myth and elegy, but actually exploit the tension between them. Propertian mythological exempla become the subjects of entire poems (e.g., Penelope in the programmatic *Heroides* 1). In the context of Ovid’s corpus, these poems mediate between love elegy (*Amores*) and epic (*Metamorphoses*).

After an introduction giving an overview of scholarship and of the literary context of *Heroides*, Spoth develops his thesis in chapters on the elegiac continuity of the poems; the heroines vis-à-vis love and mythology; the letter-form and problems of communication; the elegiac role; application of the elegiac system to myth; myth as both ideal and contradiction of elegiac love; dramatic irony in these subjective poems; some overlapping aspects of the poems (including retransposition of the elegiac system in *Heroides* and these poems as a critique of elegy); drama and elegy. He concludes with a brief discussion of some literary-historical and literary-theoretical considerations (including the

role of parody in genre development and the place of *Heroides* in Ovid's elegiac works).

This approach yields no results which are radical, novel, or unexpected. The insight about love's absence from *Heroides* is intriguing, but one could argue that real love is also missing from traditional so-called love elegy (Spath himself observes, rather anachronistically, that dependence is not love, 176). Also, it is instructive to observe the fulfillment of the elegiac system by "re-transposition" to its origins. Things come full circle; the feminized elegist becomes an actual female character; the comic influence on elegy becomes comic again, through parody; and so on.

The mediation from Ovid's *Amores* to his *Metamorphoses* by *Heroides* is clear, but what new light is shed upon this by Spoth's approach to *Heroides*? To be sure, elegy did not, as some have claimed, die during Ovid's career; but in view of his development of it as a medium for nonamatory self-expression and self-presentation, it is curious that the genre was not really rejuvenated for future generations of Roman elegists. Perhaps Spoth exaggerates Ovid's expansion of the genre's possibilities even for himself; Ovid manages to express his condition and emotions in exile by analogizing them to the laments of the *exclusus amator*. This is clever, and particularly apt if erotic elegy caused Ovid's exile. But how could this strategy expand subjective elegy's scope enough to make it serve the same purposes as personal lyric? (This seems to be the logical extension of Spoth's claim.) And would an ancient poet have seen any reason for doing so? As Spoth overestimates what Ovid did for subjective elegy, so too he underplays what its original erotic subject matter did to it; the "pure form" (223) of subjective erotic elegy led it in a seemingly irreversible direction.

This is not to denigrate Spoth's thorough examination of these poems through the lens of elegy. His monograph is full of excellent insights and observations on the individual poems in their elegiac context. There are discussions of all the single poems except for *Heroides* 6 (Hypsipyle) and 15 (Sappho), as well as some remarks on the double poems. Spoth demonstrates complete mastery of Roman elegy and scholarship on it (one flaw, a vestige of the book's origins as a dissertation, is an excess of footnotes testifying to this mastery). In the course of his argument Spoth deals with some of the perennial topics of scholarship on *Heroides*. He interprets *Ars Amatoria* 3.346 in context such that the phrase *ignotum . . . opus novavit* does not constitute a claim that *Heroides* comprises a novel genre. He counters the notion of "feminine psychology" by pointing to the feminized persona of the male elegist. He rejects the claim that the poems are *suasoriae*. He refutes claims about their "dramatic" quality, arguing that the characters do not change or develop. He offers a detailed critique of internal evidence for the claim that *Heroides* was actually performed on stage.

Spoth's appraisal of *Heroides* qua elegies is a detailed and valuable complement to treatments such as Florence Verducci's. Although he is conver-

sant with current ideas of reception and intertextuality, he interprets Ovid in the manner of Peter Knox and Stephen Hinds, that is, chiefly in terms of the assumptions and expectations of the poet's original readership. On this—except for a curious reference in passing to Ovid's adaptation of the genre for a largely female audience (219)—he is quite good.

BETTY ROSE NAGLE

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SUSAN TREGGIARI. *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991. xv + 578 pp. Cloth, £65, \$120; paper (1993), £19.95, \$29.95.

Viximus insignes inter utraque facem (Prop. 4.11.46): *nuptiae* evoke *funus*. Of this morbid symbolism the author of this learned, sober, and wise book takes no notice. Only a word on the wedding torches; none on the funereal; only a handful of pages on the wedding itself (161–70). The ceremony, with its pageantry, murky customs, and symbolism that was already obscure to the Romans themselves, was the scholarly province of Roman antiquarians. It still is. The most detailed modern description remains that of A. Roszbach, *Untersuchungen über die römische Ehe* (Stuttgart, 1853), 252–389. There is no serviceable collection of iconographical sources: Roszbach's *Römische Hochzeits- und Ehedenkmäler* (Leipzig, 1871) is outdated; it contains only a description of monuments, but no photographic reproductions. The Roman wedding as a social happening and as a religious ceremony still awaits its modern author.

It is the religious aspect that is most often underrated and neglected, even by Treggiari. Like every important event in Roman public and private life, *nuptiae* had to be conducted *auspicato*: "Like the veil, the *auspices* were part of a proper formal wedding, signifying the public approval of the couple's friends" (164). This misses the point: in ritual it was the opinion of the gods that counted, not that of friends. On the morning of the wedding, the *auspices*, private diviners, inquired after the will of the gods. This ceremony is amply attested in the sources, well into the imperial period (Roszbach, *Ehe*, 293–307); it should not be confused with consultation of the *exta*, the entrails of the sacrificial victims. (M. Humbert, *Le remariage à Rome* [Milan, 1972] 12–13, adduced by Treggiari, speaks of "le sacrifice auspicial," a terminological monstrosity.) Cicero complains (*Div.* 1.28) that *nuptiarum auspices . . . re ommissa nomen tantum tenent*. His enunciation (and its misleading paraphrase by Valerius Maximus, 2.1.1) is often invoked, rarely analyzed, never understood. Cicero does not say that the *auspicia* ceased to be taken; he rather intimates that they were consulted in an improper and perfunctory way. The passage is to be read in conjunction with other similar strictures, especially the complaint that divination from freely flying birds was replaced by *auspicium coactum et expressum* from the feeding of *pulli* kept hungry in a cage (*Div.* 2.72–73; cf. 1.27; *N.D.* 2.9; *Leg.* 2.33).