NOTES ON VALERIUS FLACCUS

i. 200-3

Jason is praying to Neptune to help the expedition.

ne Peliae te vota trahant: ille aspera iussa
repperit et Colchos in me luctumque meorum:
†illumet† tantum non indignantibus undis
hoc caput accipias et pressum regibus alnum.

The obelised reading is the original reading of V before it was erased to make illi me. The descendants of S have either illo metu or ille metu, but two of these in the margin and MT in an erasure have illum ego tu. This was read as an aposiopesis by Broukhus and others, comparing Virg. Aen. i. 135 quos ego—sed motos praestat componere fluctus. For some reason this suggestion has not found favour. Numerous conjectures, without aposiopesis or with a different one, are listed in Giarratano’s edition. The last Teubner editor, Kramer, obelised and assumed a lacuna; and E. Courtney conjectures inmeritum. But we must remember how fond Valerius was of Virgilian imitations. Virgil has this aposiopesis a quarter of the way through Book I, so Valerius introduces one a quarter of the way through his Book I in which Jason manages to control his anger at Pelias:

illum ego—tu tantum ...

In both passages the line ends with a word denoting waves. In both, ego occupies exactly the same position in the line; but the poet intentionally refrains from copying the rest of the wording.

Admittedly the MSS. which have this reading are late and may well not be independent of VS. If so, they have incorporated a conjecture most likely to be right, involving only the omission of two letters. We can obtain a remarkable insight into the copying mistakes of V’s scribe from the accident that ii. 213–62 are copied out twice (Va, Vb). In that passage omissions constitute a large percentage of the errors: ii. 215 In thalamos Va, Inthamos Vb; 219 Sista Va, Sistat Vb; 227 presere Va, pressere Vb; 240 om. VaS; precamum (for -ntum) Vb; 241 om. Vb; 247 Inruerant Va, Inruerint Vb; 251 ne quaere quis Va, nequēis Vb; 262 lassatas Va, lasatas Vb.

i. 330-2

Alcimede is lamenting Jason’s departure.

1. The writer is indebted, for help with these notes, to Mr. E. Courtney, who, however, takes a different view of some of these passages.

2. ‘More on Valerius Flaccus’, CR n.s. xii (1962), 115. Certainly inmeritū can have become by transposition irinmetū (cf. ii. 268, where V has famularibus for famularibus), but irrī is unlikely then to have become illi or illī.
quotiens raucos ad litoris ictus
deficiam Scythicum metuens pontumque polumque
nec de te credam nostris ingrata serenis!

330 raucos (rancos Paris 8089) excerpta, C: paucos VS
331 Deficiam excerpta: Deficiamus VS scithicum S: sithicum,
sciticum, siticum excerpta: cythicum V pontumque polumque
excerpta, C: potumque cretamque V

The passage i. 320 nato—334 is preserved by four florilegia whose readings are given by Ullman. The earliest of these is in Parisinus 7647, late 12th or early 13th century. Wherever they here differ from V they seem to be superior to it. At the end of 331 they have what seems clearly the right reading, pontumque polumque, one which goes far towards proving their independence from VS. Kramer (introd. pp. XLIV–XLV) accepts it for a very odd reason, that Schenkl had allegedly proved it an interpolation from Stat. Theb. xi. 67 and Silv. iii. 2.10. The Silvae were unknown in the 12th and 13th centuries; the passage in the Thebaid is not conspicuous, and Statius may have borrowed the phrase from Valerius; while the alleged interpolations from the Aeneid (Kramer, p. XLV) are unconvincing. V has simply conflated pontumque polumque into potumque, then the scribe’s eye has wandered to credam in the next line and he has written cretamque (cf. paterque, influenced by mater below, in the next quotation).

ii. 200–3

The poet describes Venus’ impact on Lemnos.

inde novam pavidas vocem furibunda per auras
congeminat, qua primus Athos et ponus et ingens
Thracal palus parterque toris exhorruit omnis
mater et adstricto riguerunt ubere nati.

201 primus[ pulsus Peerlkamp: pressus Köstlin: pronus Hirsch­
waelder et ponus] tum pontus Courtney angens Köstlin 202
palus] pavet Pierson parterque M: paterque V

If ingens is right, then Thraca should be a noun, ‘Thrace’, since Thracus adj. is a form found only in Gellius, whereas Virgil and others have the noun. Köstlin’s angens turns Thraca into acc. of Thrax, but results in an odd

3. B. L. Ullman, ‘Valerius Flaccus in the Mediaeval Florilegia’, CPh xxvi (1931), 21–30; cf. CPh xxiii (1928), 130. In the 1931 article he also evaluates the readings and criticises Kramer.
expression. We should accept Courtney's tum⁴ (V's exemplar may have written Athos et ingens, then inserted et pontus by mistake for tum pontus) and Pierson's pavet, despite pavidas in 200. This avoids the adj. Thraca and also disposes of the tautology et pontus ... et palus. But it does not account for the reading palus. We should perhaps postulate a lacuna, thus:

Thraca pavet ...
... palus pariterque etc.

ii. 629–32
The poet is describing the site of Cyzicus.

terra sinu medio Pontum iacet inter et Hellen
ceu fundo prolata maris; namque improba caecis
intulit arva vadis longoque sub aequora dorso
litus agit.

631 sub MT: per S: om. V

Editors since Thilo have read per, which has slightly better MS. authority. The site of Cyzicus⁵ is variously described by ancient writers as a peninsula or an island. Valerius will have consulted Apollonius Rhodius rather than geographers. Apollonius (i. 936–9) calls it νῆσος, and describes it as:

eίς ἀλα κεκλιμένη, δόσσον τ' ἐπιμύρεται ἴσθιμος
χέρσῳ ἐπιπηνής καταειμένος.

This submerging is considered by Valerius inconsiderate (improba), particularly, one imagines, to the pioneering Argonauts, since the then underwater ridge was invisible (caecis ... vadis). The suitable preposition for it is sub with the accusative.

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AN UNSUSPECTED SOURCE IN SHAKESPEARE?

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?

_Hamlet_ III. 1.57.

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4. 'Valeriana tertia', _CR_ n.s. XV (1965), 154.
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