ENALLAGE (HYPALLAGE) AND PERSIUS SAT. 4.33

BY

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It seems beyond doubt that Latin poets used sometimes to alter deliberately the syntactic relations in a sentence so that its wording becomes an unconventional, a seemingly irrational or a totally irrational inversion of a proper but conventional mode of thought. This device or set of devices is usually called enallage or hypallage, a designation somewhat arbitrarily applied if the original usage of the terms is considered. It might also be agreed that when such a figure is used a faculty of poetic imagination, by its nature not subject to weighing or measuring, operates an interplay of impression and counter-impression. The reader or auditor is reminded of the normal mode of the expression of an idea even though it is an abnormal one which reminds him; and he is made conscious of the instability and the ambiguity of a form of words in which two possible senses influence each other and balance.

The success or failure of such a use of the imaginative faculty depends, I suppose, upon the wit with which it operates—specifical-

1) See O. Hey, ALL 14 (1906), 105-6; R. Hildebrandt, Beitr. zur Erkl. des Gedichtes Aetna (Leipzig 1900), n. 1; Liddell-Scott-Jones, Gk-Eng. Lexicon s.vv. Hypallage is the term best sanctioned by English usage; cf. major dictionaries and A. F. Scott, Current Literary Terms: A Concise Dictionary (London 1965).

ly upon the degree of meaning, aptness and unexpectedness which is perceptible in the inverted form of words which constitutes a given enallactic expression. One can fairly readily put in order a list of examples whose qualities range from visionary wisdom or beauty through a less remarkable but still sufficiently apt, novel or amusing elegance to mere technical convenience and beyond that to mannerism, nonsense and near-nonsense—the stage which is reached when, and to the extent that, only the ordinary mode of expression, absent but perceived through an inverted form which reflects it, makes sense\(^3\). An attempt to give such a list follows:

\begin{quote}
\begin{itemize}
  \item anima seduxerit artus (V. Aen. 4.385, Elster, op. cit., 11);
  \item ibant obscui sola sub nocte per umbram (Ib. 6.268, Norden ad loc.);
  \item sine corpore vitas (Ib. 6.292);
  \item tot volvere casus (Ib. 1.9, cf. Servius ad loc.);
  \item quibus haec \ldots{} adridere velim (Hor. S. 1.10.88 f.);
  \item viles animas \ldots{} permisit vitae (Lucan D.B.C. 7.730 f.);
  \item dare classibus austros (V. Aen. 3.61, cf. 3.357, 455, R. D. Williams ad lococ.);
  \item conspicit \ldots{} radiis ignescere ferri (Stat. Theb. 4.665);
  \item tantam \ldots{} operis molem (Val. Flacc. 1.499, with examples given by P. Langen ad loc. Cf. also Prop. 1.22.5, 6 ff. with Leo, art. cit., 474 f.);
  \item auras suspiciens hausit caelum (V. Aen. 10.898 f. Cf., perhaps, 2.445 f., 453 tecta domorum culmina, pervius usus); 
  \item Adrastus \ldots{} utroque Iovem de sanguine ducens (Stat. Theb. 1.391 f.);
  \item gemina ex uno fumantia sacra vapore (Aetna 578);
  \item nulla tuum nobis subducet femina lectum (?)Tib. 4.13.1; vultus in ira \ldots{} (et ad caedes corde libido, Sil. It. 14.530 f., Hildebrandt, 11); 
  \item cum Castore fratri (Prop. 2.26A.9).
\end{itemize}
\end{quote}

I have found no statement about the frequency of enallage (hypallage) in various ages and authors, but it is certainly not uncommon in authors of the first century A.D., cf. S. Blomgren, Siliana (Uppsala 1938), 53 f., L. Legras, Étude sur la Thébaïde de Stace (Paris 1905), 321 f., especially his reference to ‘termes bouleversés comme à plaisir’, R. Hildebrandt, op. cit. in n. 1, 1 ff.

In the light of these and other considerations I want to consider the text of Persius, Sat. 4.33,

\begin{quote}
\begin{itemize}
  \item at si unctus cesses et figas in cute solem
  \item figas PCLMNΣ(U), frigas aV, fricas XGRWΣ(L)
\end{itemize}
\end{quote}

\(^3\) Cf. remarks of Hey, art. cit., 112.