

CLAUDIAN'S "INAMOENUS UTERQUE ALVEUS" AND ITS SOURCES

In the final part of the invective *In Rufinum* (V, 466 sqq.) Claudian takes the reader to the underworld to be present at the judgement of Minos who accuses Rufin of monstrous crimes. The scene opens with a description of two rivers – Cocytos and Phlegethon (466–468):

Est locus infaustis quo conciliantur in unum¹
Cocytos Phlegethonque vadis; inamoenus uterque
Alveus; hic volvit lacrimas, hic igne redundat.

Though, as we shall see later, it was quite customary in Greek as well as in Roman poetry to use epithets with negative prefixes in order to characterise the underworld and its various attributes, *inamoenus* is not a typical one. As for Claudian, he makes use of this word only once, and we can easily notice that the poet is not fond of its antonym *amoenus* either.² Our concern is to try to find out why Claudian speaks of the state of the dead in such terms and what could be the possible source.

Inamoenus is rarely found in Latin verse and prose. According to the *ThLL*, up to the 5th century inclusive we have only seven examples of this adjective.³ Five of them are dated to periods earlier than those of Claudian's lines. For the first time, the word appears in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It is attributed to the underworld where Orpheus searches for his beloved Eurydice (X, 14–16):

Perque leves populos simulacraque functa sepulchro
Persephonen adiit inamoenaque regna tenentem
Umbrarum dominum.

F. Bömer in his detailed commentary to the *Metamorphoses* has observed that *inamoenus* could well be created by Ovid himself.⁴ The scholar

¹ Claudian seems to be the only one to follow Homer in mentioning the confluence of the two rivers (*Od.* X, 513); other poets talk of them as an indivisible whole (e. g. *Stat. Theb.* VIII, 30 etc.). See: Claudian's *In Rufinum*. An Exegetical Comm. by H. L. Levy (Philological Monographs of the American Philological Association 30, Cleveland 1971) 212.

² The word occurs three times: V, 33; XXII, 189; *carm. min.* XIX, 1.

³ *Ov. Met.* X, 15; *Stat. Theb.* I, 89; *Silv.* II, 2, 33; *Plin. Epist.* IX, 10, 3; *Auson.* XVI, 5, 3; *Claud.* V, 467; *Macr. Sat.* I, 7, 2.

⁴ P. Ovidius Naso, *Metamorphosen*. Komm. v. F. Bömer. VII (Heidelberg 1980) 19.

believes that the poet possibly followed a passage from the *Georgics* (IV, 478–480), and especially, the expression *palus inamabilis*:

Quos circum limus niger et deformis harundo
Cocytus tardaue palus inamabilis unda
Alligat et novies Styx interfusa coerces.⁵

We observe several facts that support Bömer's idea: (1) both passages deal with Orpheus' journey to the underworld; (2) Virgil, as well as Ovid, defines Tartarus using negative epithets, such as *deformis*, *inamabilis*, and *inamoenus*; and (3) *inamabilis* can be understood as the closest synonym of *inamoenus*. To illustrate the latter point let us recall Ovid's expression from the dialogue between Juno and Tisiphone (*Met.* IV, 466 sqq.) when the latter calls upon the queen of the gods to leave *inamabile regnum* (IV, 477), i. e. the abode of the dead. Such a combination of words is only one step away from the above-mentioned *inamoenaue regna*. In the *Tristia* the same poet describes his new place of residence as *locus... inamabilis* (V, 7 b, 43) and *quo / esse nihil toto tristius orbe potest* (43–44). Surely Ovid does not depict the underworld here, but it seems plausible to conjecture that in exile the poet thought of himself as, in a sense, dead.⁶ That is possibly why he uses the word *inamabilis* – the same one used in the description of the underworld. If these assumptions are accurate, it would be reasonable to conclude that the adjective *inamoenus* was constructed on the model of *inamabilis*.

At the same time it is important to consider the possible existence of *inamoenus* before Ovid. Of course, we cannot exclude totally such a possibility because of the inevitable incompleteness of our sources. Although we cannot be certain about the written tradition before Ovid, it seems unlikely that the word was used in common spoken language. Our point is that, initially, *amoenus* was not typical of the spoken language either. This conjecture is supported by the presence of the diphthong *oe* which did not become a monophthong, a transformation that occurred in most words belonging to legal vocabulary and elevated style.⁷ If one compares the usage of *inama-*

⁵ Note a variation of these lines in *Aeneis* (VI, 438–439): *Fas obstat, tristisque palus inamabilis undae / alligat et novies Styx interfusa coerces.*

⁶ See also an interesting discourse by R. Kettemann who singles out elements of *locus horridus* in Ovid's descriptions of his exile: R. Kettemann, "Ovids Verbannungsort – ein *locus horridus*?", in: *Ovid: Werk und Wirkung I* (Frankfurt am Main 1999) 715–735.

⁷ Cf. *foedus*, *poena*, *moenia*, *poterium*, and *proelium*: И. М. Тронский, *Историческая грамматика латинского языка* (I. M. Tronskij, *A Historical Grammar of Latin*). Отв. ред. Н. Н. Казанский (Москва 2001) 80.

bilis, the word is found as early as in Plautus' time.⁸ Given the above analysis we come to the conclusion that probably *inamoenus* was an invented word whose inventor was Ovid.

We propose that Ovid had in mind not only Virgil's passage quoted above, but also the long tradition of using epithets with negative prefixes to refer to the underworld. There are numerous examples starting from Homer's poems. Tiresias describes Hades to Odysseus as ὑπερπεία χῶρον (*Od.* XI, 94). Naturally, prefixes of this kind do not always have negative connotations. When Hesiod talks about Στυγὸς ἄφθιτον ὕδωρ (*Theog.* 805), he has in mind the inviolability of an oath. One can also compare the epithet with α-privativum ἄάατος (*Il.* XIV, 271) used to describe the waters of the Styx, etc. In turn, Roman poetry depicts Tartarus in a similar way. Virgil, for example, calls it *regna invidia vivis* (*Aen.* VI, 154). Juno swears by *Stygii caput implacabile fontis* (*Aen.* XII, 816). Statius mentions *immitem... Styga* (*Silv.* III, 3, 193), and in *Thebais* the same poet talks about *Acheronte... nefasto* (IV, 456). Seneca describes a dark grove not far from the palace of the Pelopids where sacrifices are made (*Thyest.* 650 sqq.). The place is not, strictly speaking, the abode of the dead, nevertheless there are certain similarities in their depiction, such as the cries of the souls of the dead (670), and the comparison of the spring's water to the ugly waters of the Styx (*talis est dirae Stygis / deformis unda*, 666–667).

We have already cited Statius using such epithets as *nefastus* and *immitis* while talking about the rivers of the underworld. It is important to recall another passage from *Thebais*, which deals with the speech of Oedipus pleading to Tisiphone for help. The poet describes her appearance in such words (I, 88–91):

Talia dicenti crudelis diva severos
Advertit vultus. *Inamoenum* forte sedebat
Cocytos iuxta, resolutaque vertice crines
Lambere sulphureas permiserat anguibus undas.

Statius is the second poet after Ovid to use the rare adjective *inamoenus*, and again the epithet is attributed to Tartarus. Furthermore, Statius shows an unusual feature of the underworld when, in *Silvae*, he consoles Flavius Ursus, a father who had lost his son. The poem talks of *amoena silentia Lethes* (II, 6, 100). Such an expression could be understood as an oxymoron unless we have in mind that Statius means that the boy would go to a particular part of the underworld, namely Elysium.

⁸ *Inamabilis, inlepidus vivo* (*Bacch.* 615).

Returning to Claudian, one can see that two uses of *inamoenus* preceded him, one referring to Tartarus (Ovid) and the other to its river (Stattius). Would it be accurate to assume a borrowed usage here? Claudian mentions rivers of the underworld several times, but almost never ascribes any epithets to them.⁹ That is why his *inamoenus... alveus* (V, 467–468) remains aloof and is thus not accidental. Annette Eaton does not include this expression into her list of Ovidian parallels.¹⁰ Nevertheless, its absence does not undermine the borrowed usage hypothesis, since she only allows parallels of two words or longer. By contrast, in her discussion of *In Rufinum*, Eaton postulates that “the majority of the verbal parallels in the poem are clearly Ovidian, and once again come for the most part from ‘Metamorphoses’”.¹¹ Claudian’s usage of the word *inamoenus* is closer to that of Statius, in the sense that both attribute it to Cocytos. But it seems that Claudian is indebted to both poets, for it is difficult to prove that he was ignorant of Ovid’s account.

Stattius is the only Latin author to use *inamoenus* twice. The second instance is assigned to wild nature. The poet was invited to visit his friend’s villa located in the region of Surrentum, to the northeast of Naples. The passage deals with the recently built colonnade of the house (*Silv.* II, 2, 30–33):

Inde per obliquas erepit porticus arces,
Urbis opus, longoque domat saxa aspera dorso,
Qua prius obscuro permixti pulvere soles
Et feritas inamoena viae, nunc ire voluptas.

The beauty of the depicted villa and its colonnade dominates the surroundings. For Statius, the taming of nature was an important aspect in its relation with man.¹² Clearly, the dust and burning sun do not excite the poet who perceives them as unpleasant properties of southern landscapes, hence his expression *feritas inamoena*. What is important to the poet is not the architectural merit of the colonnade as such but its role in regulating the landscape.

As a final point, the entry in *ThLL* for *inamoenus* combines four examples from Ovid, Statius, and Claudian under the heading *de regionibus*. It

⁹ With the exception of *Rapt.* I, 22 and 87. But even there the adjectives (*livens* and *tacitus* respectively) do not have negative prefixes.

¹⁰ A. H. Eaton, *The Influence of Ovid on Claudian*. Diss. (Washington 1943).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹² See, for example: H.-J. Van Dam, *P. Papinius Statius. Silvae Book II: A Commentary* (Leiden 1984) 212.

might seem reasonable to add a subsection *de Tartaro* to separate a passage from *Silvae* (II, 2, 30–33), where Statius mentions bygone unpleasantness of the road.

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В статье исследуется происхождение выражения *inamoenus uterque / alveus* из инвективы Клавдиана *In Rufinum* (V, 467–468). Хотя использование прилагательных с отрицательной приставкой для определения подземного мира (в данном случае – Коцита и Флегетона) обычно для древнегреческой и римской литературы, *inamoenus* выпадает из этого ряда в силу своей малой употребительности (до Клавдиана слово засвидетельствовано пять раз).

Автор присоединяется к предположению Ф. Бемера, что слово *inamoenus* было придумано Овидием (*Met.* X, 15) по типу прилагательного *inamabilis*, использованного Вергилием для описания Тартара (*Georg.* IV, 478–480; *Aen.* VI, 438–439). Существование прилагательного *inamoenus* в разговорном языке до Овидия маловероятно, поскольку исходное слово *amoenus* принадлежало к высокому стилю, о чем свидетельствует сохранение дифтонга в корне.

По всей видимости, при создании нового слова Овидий опирался не только на текст Вергилия, но и на длительную традицию определения атрибутов подземного мира через эпитеты с отрицательной приставкой. Стаций в “Фиваиде”, как и Клавдиан, использовал *inamoenus* для характеристики Коцита (I, 89–90). Таким образом, можно полагать, что текст Клавдиана ближе к отрывку из “Фиваиды”, однако, по всей вероятности, поэт также имел в виду и выражение Овидия.

Статья “*inamoenus*” в *ThLL* объединяет примеры из Овидия, Стация и Клавдиана под заголовком *de regionibus*; целесообразно было бы выделение подраздела *de Tartaro*, чтобы таким образом отделить отрывок из “Сильв” (II, 2, 30–33), где речь идет о былой “неприятной дикости дороги”.