

NOTES ON PROPERTIUS 4. 1 AND 4. 4

I. PROPERTIUS 4. 1

28 *proelia nuda*

Editors are divided on the interpretation of *nuda*. According to Butler and Barber *ad loc.* it denotes the absence of defensive armour. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, 217 understands it primarily with reference to offensive weapons. 'Battles fought with sharpened sticks were *nuda* by comparison with swords and *pila*.' Camps compromises: '*nuda* presumably = *inermia*, which may be used to indicate absence either of offensive or of defensive arms, so that probably both ideas are present here.'

I think that Propertius does indeed wish to indicate the absence of both offensive and defensive arms in the accepted sense—but within the couplet rather than in this single phrase. Lack of proper offensive weapons is clearly expressed both in the hexameter by *infestis* and in the pentameter by *usta . . . sude*. So to complete the picture and provide a corresponding balance *proelia nuda* in itself is meant to denote simply the absence of defensive arms.

30 *magnaue pars Tatio rerum erat inter oves*

The idea that in such primitive days wealth lay in possession of flocks is no doubt a common motif in Latin poetry but is here totally alien to the context. The sense of the couplet is, I think, 'even Lycmon and Tatus, whom we traditionally think of as great military commanders, were in fact primarily peasants'. The point is brought out in the hexameter by the heavy emphasis given to *galeritus* (I take *prima* as = 'early', 'primitive'—cf. Quint. *Inst. Or.* 8. 3. 36). Thus in the pentameter *rerum* = 'business', without any special military connotations, i.e. 'most of Tatus' business was to do with pastoral matters (*inter oves*) [not, as you might expect, military affairs (*inter arma*)]'.

33–6 Mueller, followed by Enk, interchanges the pentameters of these two couplets. This has the advantage of placing together Bovillae and Fidenae as examples of towns formerly regarded as distant, and Alba and Gabii as examples of towns formerly powerful but now decayed.

Of course Propertius is not always as neat and logical as editors would like him to be, but in this case the change is recommended by a further consideration. It is generally agreed that the MSS. reading at the beginning of line 36 *hac ubi* is corrupt, but the suggestion of Baehrens, *ac tibi*, adopted by Butler and Barber and others, is unexpectedly lively and does not ring true in the context. *Tunc ubi* of Ritschl is a much more convincing correction both in the general context of 1–38 and on palaeographical grounds. (His alternative suggestion, *hinc ubi*, is less good, for *hinc* would be superfluous to the sense and confusing after *hinc* twice used in a different sense in 31–2).

But *tunc ubi* does not give line 36 a very natural connection with line 35. It does however follow very smoothly on the previous hexameter. The pentameter interchange thus may well be right.

39 *melius* means more than simply 'well was it that'. Butler's 'for happier destiny' is strongly supported by the fact that Troy, in contrast to Rome, was proverbially saddled with ill fortune—cf. Virg. *Aen.* 6. 61–2:

*iam tandem Italiae fugientis prendimus oras
hac Troiana tenus fuerit fortuna secuta.*

41 The MSS. reading *illam* at the end of this line is indefensible. Grammatically it must refer to the *Dardana puppis* of line 40, but the sense so given is unsatisfactory, since the *Dardana puppis* did not come into existence until after the successful escape of Aeneas and his friends from Troy (cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3. 5-6) and so obviously could not have been injured by the Wooden Horse.

illos, the correction of Schrader, gives reasonable sense, but there is some stylistic awkwardness in its having to refer over the nouns of the preceding pentameter to *profugos Penates* in line 39. See note on 47-8.

47-8 This couplet cannot possibly stand in its present position. The repetition of *arma* after its occurrence in line 46 would be quite pointless even if it had the same sense. Since it is in fact used in a different sense, the construction is impossibly clumsy. Furthermore *portans* following *vexit* is worse than weak.

As Housman saw, the couplet must follow lines 39-40, where it fits perfectly grammatically and gives excellent sense. The subject of *portans* is the *Dardana puppis*. The mention of the household gods of the Iuli naturally follows that of the Penates of the Trojan state. *iam bene spondebant tunc omina* etc. expands upon *felix terra tuos cepit deos*, and *tunc* here is picked up by *tunc* in line 45 where the thought is continued.

With the transposition of 47-8 it is just possible to retain the *illam* at the end of line 41 as referring to *felix terra*, i.e. the Wooden Horse did not injure Italy because Aeneas managed to escape the conflagration of Troy and so was able eventually to arrive there. However the idea is exceedingly far-fetched.

It is much better to accept Schrader's *illos*, which now has an immediate antecedent, *tuos, Iule, deos*. Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 2. 717.

Editors who have suggested this transposition have usually assumed that lines 49-52 or 49-54 go in sense with 47-8 and therefore must be transposed as well. However I do not think this is necessary (see below).

Once the couplet had fallen out of its correct place it was inserted after 46 because of the occurrence of *arma* in that line. *illos* in 41 was altered to *illam* to give it an antecedent in what was now the preceding line.

49-54 It is likely that in 45-6 Propertius is thinking of the prophecy of Anchises as given to Aeneas and the Sibyl in *Aen.* 6 where the future arrival of Augustus (792-807), Brutus (818-23), and Decius (824) is foretold. Following this train of thought Propertius proceeds in the next two couplets to speak of other prophecies concerning the beginnings of Rome made by the Sibyl and Cassandra.

There is evidence that Remus' death was regarded as a sacrificial offering rendering the walls of Rome inviolate for the future (cf. Prop. 3. 9. 50 and Florus 1. 1. 18). It is true that Propertius is our only authority for such a prophecy from the Sibyl. But it is very likely that he is here alluding to the reported Sibylline prophecy in Tibullus 2. 5. 19 ff. (given to Aeneas *postquam ille parentem dicitur et raptos sustinuisse Lares*), a passage which hints, but does not explicitly state (cf. line 20), that this was one of the details of the prophecy. (There are several similarities between 4. 1 and Tib. 2. 5).

There can be little doubt that in his reference to Cassandra's *carmina*, Propertius has in mind, and expects his audience to have in mind, the *Alexandra* of

Lycophron, a well-known *tour de force*, and the Alexandrian source *par excellence* for this topic.

Now *sero rata carmina* of line 51 and *vera fuere* of 52 are not to be taken as merely duplicating each other. Camps rightly sees this, but his own translation, 'if the story is true of that prophecy of Cassandra long after to be fulfilled', is weak. Rather *sero rata carmina* refers in general to the whole body of Cassandra's famous prophecy (which constitutes the *Alexandra*) whereas *vera fuere* refers to the particular details which concerned Priam (for which see Lycophron, 335 ff.). This preserves the natural meaning of the pentameter (*ad Priami vera fuere caput*). Priam's death can be said to mark the end of Troy and so the symbolic beginning of Rome's history, just as Remus' death marked the beginning of the actual city of Rome.

So the general sense of the two couplets 49–52 is 'If (as is the case) the Sibyl and Cassandra have made true prophecies concerning the (future) origins of Rome'. Editors have usually taken *si modo* (and *aut si* which is parallel to it) as dependent on *felix* in line 48. But we have seen that the couplet 47–8 is not in its correct place in the MSS. text and must be transposed to follow 40. In any case this explanation of *si modo* etc. did not make sense, for the *felicitas* of Rome or Italy is not conditional upon, or to be judged by, or the result of, the accuracy of the prophecies of the Sibyl concerning Remus' sacrifice or of Cassandra concerning Priam's doom. Editors have been misled by the common poetic conceit *felix si modo, felix qui*, etc.; this, however is irrelevant here. What then are these two pseudo-conditional clauses dependent upon?

At this point we must examine the context of couplet 53–4. Editors usually take it as an imaginary specimen of Cassandra's prophecy as referred to in line 52. But there are good reasons for thinking that this line refers only to the future fate of Priam. In view of Virg. *Aen.* 2. 567–8 it is hard to believe that anyone in Propertius' audience would have taken line 52 as = 'proved true after it had been related to old Priam'. The natural meaning is clearly 'proved true in respect of the fate of old Priam'. There are two further objections to the usual view:

- (a) Cassandra's prophecies in Lycophron are not related by her to Priam, but by a servant who had overheard her ravings.
- (b) Cassandra's prophecies in Lycophron are made well before the Trojan war started. Thus the phrase *huic cineri*, if it is meant to be part of what she said at that time, is odd.

If 53–4 are *not* meant to be an imaginary specimen of Cassandra's prophecy, it follows, firstly, that they are a direct apostrophe on the part of Propertius himself (a not uncommon construction for him), and secondly that there is no proper connection between them and line 52. Since we have already seen that the conditions *si modo* and *aut si* are in need of a main clause the case for a lacuna between lines 52 and 53 becomes very strong.

I suggest that there is a lacuna and that it should be filled by the patently misplaced couplet 87–8, for which a satisfactory home has not yet been found in the works of Propertius. *Dicam* and *canam* will thus at the same time provide the apodosis to *si modo* and introduce the rhetorical outburst in 53–4. The meaning of the passage is 'since the Sibyl and Cassandra have made true prophecies about the beginnings of Rome as a nation and as a city (= since there is material for prophetic poetry about Rome's origins), then I will be a prophet

and sing how Troy is to be resurrected as Rome and what adventures will occur on the way' (text uncertain in line 88). Propertius here employs the figure by which a poet himself 'does' what he describes others as doing (cf. line 57), and is alluding to the type of poetry exemplified by Tibullus 2. 5 and Horace, *Odes* 1. 15 (imitating Bacchylides) and 2. 3.

In this highly rhetorical section (39–54) Propertius has announced his intention of writing prophetic poetry. In lines 55–70 he goes on to envisage an additional task—aetiological poetry. There is nothing contradictory in this, for both types belong to a recognizable Alexandrine genre.

65–6 This couplet clearly cannot refer to the town of Assisi, which is perched on the top of a hill and does not 'rise out of a valley'. Camps refers the couplet to Umbria as a whole. Ovid (*Am.* 3. 15. 11 ff.) appears to have taken the same view. F. H. Sandbach (*CQ* xii [1962], 263–77) suggests that 65–6 refer not to Umbria but to Rome. In that case there will be no sense pause between couplets 65–6 and 67–8. However, if line 66, with its hortative subjunctive *aestimet*, was ever taken to refer to Rome it must have sounded exceptionally boastful even in the mouth of the Roman Callimachus. Perhaps Ovid was tactful in misinterpreting.

71 Some editions suggest *discere* for the MSS. *dicere* in this line, and it must be admitted that *discere fata* is in itself an appropriate phrase in the mouth of a fortune-teller. However it is not possible to understand simply that Horos is introduced as replying to a supposed enquiry on Propertius' part, since the whole tenor of 71–150 is clearly that of *unsolicited* advice (cf. the Ancient Mariner).

It has thus been suggested that Horos is supposed to be interrupting Propertius as he is on his way to some shrine of Apollo to ask about his personal future. But, whether we read *cantans*, *aversus Apollo* or *aversus cantat Apollo* (so Sandbach, art. cit.), it is clear that lines 73–4 refer unmistakably to proposed future *poetry*. (Cf. Prop. 3. 2. 9; Calp. *Ecl.* 4. 9).

It therefore seems that we cannot accept this tempting emendation.

quo ruis . . . dicere fata

The construction is strictly illogical, but the expression is quite understandable. Horos does not really wish to know whither Propertius is heading. *quo ruis* is simply rhetorical (cf. Hor. *Epod.* 7. 1; Virg. *Aen.* 2. 520), designed to make Propertius stop to think about the consequences of a decision to *dicere fata*. The choice of the word *ruis*, like *imprudens* and *vage*, indicates the speaker's disapproval of a wild idea.

It seems clear that in 71–4 (and also, presumably, 150) Horos warns Propertius against some new poetic undertaking. Why then does Book 4 after all contain some aetiological poems?

It has been suggested that Horos is not meant to be taken as a serious figure, and that therefore his advice is naturally ignored. But this is a risky assumption. Astrologers do not rank with technologists in twentieth-century European society, it is true, but in Imperial Rome they happened to be the influential intimates of emperors and their courts. Certainly Horos is treated as a genre figure in this poem, but it is by no means clear that we are meant to regard him (unlike Hercules in 4. 9) as a comic one as well.

Furthermore this theory is open to the objection that Book 4 in fact does contain a good deal of non-aetiological material. P. Fedeli, *Properzio Elegie libro IV* (Bari, 1965) suggests that this is because Propertius died before he

could complete the project announced in lines 69–70, and that Book 4 has thus been filled out by his editors by the addition of assorted earlier pieces which had not been published. This theory cannot be definitely disproved, but it seems to me that the quite elaborate arrangement of Book 4 is not the result of pure luck—an editor's fortunate discovery of four unpublished 'realistic' genre pieces (3, 5, 7, 8) to balance so neatly the four aetiological poems (2, 4, 9, 10) which Propertius had completed before his untimely demise, *plus* a poem on Actium which could equally neatly form the centrepiece of the whole book, *and* the funeral *laudatio* of Cornelia to bring it to a stately and noble clausula. Nor do I think it likely that Propertius would have wished to leave unpublished such poems as 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 when embarking on a completely new book of aetiological poetry.

It is also worth noting that poems 9 and 10, retailing episodes from legend and history, are aetiological only in the most formal sense, and that poem 4 is a frankly romantic melodrama. In fact only poem 2 (on Vertumnus)—by far the weakest piece in the book—can be said to be truly aetiological.

A more promising approach to our problem is to recognize the possibility that *dicere fata* refers to intentions other than those announced in 69–70. It seems to me almost certainly designed to pick up line 87 (which is not of course in its correct position) *dicam*: 'Troia cades, et Troica Roma resurges'. As Camps sees, *dicere fata* must mean 'to prophesy', and it is another instance of the familiar figure by which a poet does what he describes as being done. In other words the phrase refers to Propertius' previously expressed (on the transposition of 87–8 to the first section of the poem) intention to sing of the various prophecies concerning the fall of Troy and rise of Rome. This is the venture which Horos warns against—not the aetiological poems foreshadowed by 69–70.

74 It is true that the lyre is the instrument of Apollo (cf. 2. 31. 6, 3. 3. 14, 4. 6. 32, 69), not of the poet, but its importance here is as a symbol of poetic inspiration (cf. 2. 10. 10). The *verba* which Propertius is asking for are words for him to use in his new form of poetry. The source of such words is Apollo. Cf. 2. 1. 3. *non haec mihi cantat Apollo*.

81–2 *fallitur auro Iuppiter*.

'The will of Jupiter is *misinterpreted* for gold.' For *fallo* = 'render in a false form' cf. 4. 5. 14.

Horos is not here referring to people who pretend to know the future when they really do not, but rather to unprincipled fellow astrologers who give their clients falsely optimistic predictions instead of warning them of bad fortune when they really know that this is in store. Naturally by such a practice they attract more clients and so make more money. This is the point of *fallitur*. Horos contrasts this with his own *fides* (80, 92, 93, 108).

85–6 These lines are indefensible in their present position, since

- (a) It is hopelessly inept to say 'they have made into a source of profit the gods, the signs of the zodiac . . . and the significance (movements) of three particular signs of the zodiac'.
- (b) The construction, in which an indirect question is added after several nouns in the accusative case with a parallel dependence on *pretium fecere*, is very awkward.
- (c) The repetition of *signa* is pointless and clumsy.

The only other possible part of the poem where the couplet will fit the context is the passage from 103–8. Richmond placed it before line 103, but *hoc* at the beginning of that line clearly refers to the kind of problem exemplified in the case of Cinara (99–102), so there is no room for an insertion there.

I thus follow Housman in placing the couplet after line 108, *quid moveant* etc. thus being dependent on *exemplum grave erit Calchas*. This transposition is confirmed by the fact that there were special connections between the signs of Leo and Capricorn and bad sailing weather (shipwreck being the ultimate fate of the Greek armada which was not foreseen by Calchas). In the case of Leo one may compare Aratus, *Phainomena* 150 ff., and for Capricorn the famous passage *Phainomena* 285–98. The evidence in the case of Pisces is scanty, it is true (but cf. Man. 1. 428 and Virg. *Georg.* 4. 234), but this is not a fatal objection, since Propertius may be expected to be less than perfectly accurate in such details, and the main emphasis is in any case on Capricorn.

Once the couplet had been displaced from its proper place it was inserted as 85–6 in view of certain contextual similarities with 81–4 together with the occurrence of the word *signa* in 82. A very tentative explanation of the original displacement might run as follows. After ending line 108 *petenda fides* a copyist allowed his attention momentarily to wander back to 98/9 *fides/idem* etc. and then continued with the *idem* which begins line 111, thus omitting two couplets. On discovering the error he managed to reinsert one of the couplets (109–10) but lacked enough space to get in the other (85–6).

An alternative and perhaps less unlikely explanation of the loss of 85–6 from their correct position (following line 108) might be a damaged or torn exemplar. It may be more than a coincidence that the two displaced couplets of this poem are to be restored as 53–4 and 107–8 of the original, i.e. the second is exactly twice as far on as the first. Now this is the first elegy of a new book and so probably it began on a new page. Damage to the bottom corner of the first two pages would affect couplets 53–4 and 107–8 if we postulate double-column pages (27 lines a column) written on one side only.

93–4 *prolabor* is sometimes used of the rider (cf. Livy 27. 32, *equus prolapsus per caput regem effudit*), but here metrical technique requires *prolapso* to be taken with *equo* not *sibi*.

Heinsius's *eques* for the MSS. *equi* in 93 completely spoils the balance of lines 93–6. Each couplet is intended to express an example of parallel selflessness (the two boys are twins), and the point of *sibi* (contrasted with *equi*) is lost by the alteration. There is no necessary awkwardness in *equi* followed by *equo* (cf. 4. 1. 82–3 *Iuppiter . . . Iovis*, 4. 4. 20–1 *arma . . . armis*, 4. 4. 33–4 *captiva . . . captiva*, 4. 4. 39–40 *saevisse . . . saevos*). Furthermore *protegit ora* cannot mean (as Camps) 'raises his hand instinctively to cover his face'. *Dum . . . protegit* denotes a continuous action. The reason why Lupercus is thrown is not because he is riding along, hands to head, without holding the reins (it is difficult to see how this could be done for any length of time), but because he is bending forward and therefore incorrectly balanced when the horse stumbles. It may be unusually quixotic for a horseman to try to protect with his shield his animal's wounded head, but here that merely adds to the poignancy of the accident.

120 *lacrimis novis*

This phrase has no connection with the preceding stories which Horos has been recounting in lines 89–118. It refers to future troubles awaiting Propertius,

which have already been hinted at in 71-4 and which Horos, when he at last does tell Propertius' fortune in 146-50, indicates in the very last line. *novis* means 'in addition to the woes Propertius has already suffered in his life so far'—these are summarized by the astrologer himself in 121-46, i.e. father's early death, loss of estates, enslavement to a woman.

122 Propertius has told the reader in 63-4 that he comes from Umbria. It is possible that we are not meant to suppose Horos was present during the whole of the first part of the poem. Nevertheless, since the astrologer knows Propertius' name (71), and Propertius' home region was no great secret (cf. 1. 22. 9-10) he can hardly claim credit simply for the information he gives in line 121, as he is made to do according to the punctuation of the O.C.T. and Camps, viz. : *Umbria te notis antiqua Penatibus edit—mentior? an patriae tangitur ora tuae?* It is true that *notis Penatibus* is a new element, but according to this punctuation the astrologer is concerned solely with his accuracy on the geographical point.

Furthermore this punctuation requires us to take *tangitur* as = 'hit upon with my art', which is a very unusual meaning of the word, and *ora* as = 'region' rather than the more natural 'border'. Surely the use of the word *ora* here should lead directly to some mention of places which will serve to define more closely Propertius' *patria*. (*Patria* of course can mean something smaller than the whole country).

I prefer Markland's punctuation. Line 122 leads straight on to 123 ff. and *tangitur* is given its usual sense of 'is touched'. 'The border of your *patria* is touched where . . .' = 'Bordering your *patria* are . . .'.

Propertius was in fact born on an estate (4. 1. 129-30) in a plain in Western Umbria across from Perugia (1. 21). Now Mevania (Bevagna) lies towards the southern end of just such a plain. The *lacus Umber* no longer exists, but according to H. E. Good, quoted in Butler and Barber's note on these lines, it must have been further down to the west. Mevania and the *lacus Umber* are here cited as features identifying the *ora* of Propertius' *patria*—thus we are told *whereabouts* in Umbria he came from.

125-6 This is a highly suspect couplet (cf. Sandbach, art. cit., following Richmond). It is hard to get any relevant sense out of *vertice*, whether it is taken on its own or with *scandentis Asis*. *Asis* itself, as an alternative form of the name of the town, is unparalleled. On the other hand *Asisi*, the form we expect (and which is restored by most recent editors), ought to be a cretic (cf. Ptolemy 3. 1. 46). A second intervening relative clause (which we have here) is in itself not difficult, but this one involves connection with the first one by means of a *-que* which is not parallel to the *-que* of line 127 connecting the two main clauses. This is stylistically very awkward. Finally the removal of the couplet improves the structure of the whole passage 121-50, which will thus fall into seven successive groups of four lines.

The motive for the interpolation is obvious—a desire to claim Assisi as the home town of Propertius. There is evidence that such a tradition was being fostered in the second century A.D. (cf. Pliny, *Ep.* 6. 15. 1 and 9. 22. 1)—wrongly, since in fact *our* Propertius (whatever may have been the case with the gentleman commemorated in the inscription *CIL* xi. 5405) was born and lived on an estate in an Umbrian plain.

The material for the interpolator is not far to seek. *scandentis*, *murus*, *ingenio*, and *ille tuo* come directly from lines 65–6 (a couplet which perhaps does not refer to Umbria at all), *consurgit* is an expansion of *surgit* (67) and the anaphora of *murus* is modelled on that of *Umbria* in 63–4. *Vertice* may be a reminiscence of 1. 14. 5.

135–46 I would assign the whole of these twelve lines to Apollo, as quoted by Horos. The future tenses of the verbs throughout the passage indicate that it is to be understood as warning advice given to Propertius when he was still a very young man. His audience know that by this time it has all been confirmed by subsequent events (as revealed in Books 1–3). Horos resumes in his own person at line 147 where *nunc* is meant to follow on *mox* (131) and *tum* (133), and so bring the story up to date. Propertius has followed Apollo's advice up to the present, and in the future he will be immune from all dangers (as befits a lover, cf. 2. 27. 11–12, 3. 16. 13 ff.)—except one (150).

135 *fallax opus*

fallax refers to the *subject-matter* of love elegy, 'quod in fraudibus et fallaciis versatur' (Lachmann). It is picked up at line 146 *persuasae fallere rima sat est*.

139 *nam*

Not, as Camps, '(and so it has proved) for . . .', but simply 'for . . .'. Apollo continues his *carmen* with an explanation of *utilis hostis eris*.

140 *eludit*

Even if one assigns lines 139 ff. to Horos, not Apollo, the present tense here can hardly stand, in view of *erit*, *premet*, and *videbis* which follow. *eludet* must be read. For the corruption one may compare line 142, where the clearly necessary *premet* has become *premat* in NLP and *premit* in F.

141–4 Housman interchanges these two couplets—rightly. *illius* is thus placed, as it should be, in close proximity to *una puella* to which it refers. It seems clear that the two couplets 141–2 and 143–4 are meant to be parallel, both expanding upon *eludet palmas una puella tuas* of line 140 and both incorporating proverbial expressions. In the received text, however, couplet 141–2 is firmly attached by its opening *et* to the preceding couplet, and separated by a sense pause from 143–4. By the transposition, *et* will provide the link between 143–4 and 141–2 which the sense requires. Finally the reversed order is more natural, and the rather displeasing conjunction of *tuas* . . . *tuo* ending successive pentameters is avoided.

II. PROPERTIUS 4. 4

1–20 The arrangement of the opening couplets of this poem as given in the vulgate is, as most editors have realized, nonsensical. The main objections to the received text are:

- (a) If Tatius had palisaded the *fons* (as is stated in line 7) how did Tarpeia manage to gain access to it (15) and return to the Roman position on the Capitoline with absolute impunity?

- (b) The word *hinc* at the beginning of line 15 must refer to the *fons* mentioned in the previous line, but this entails an impossibly clumsy locution, *ex fonte fontem libavit*.
- (c) The general picture is hopelessly confused. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, 234 has pointed out that Tatius and his *vallum* ought not to appear before some mention of the campaign which brought them there.

My own arrangement of lines 1–20 is given below (p. 170). It entails one emendation only.

The first step towards restoring the correct arrangement of the passage is the recognition that, as Postgate saw, two different sources of water are mentioned by Propertius. Recent editions have been strangely blind to this fact, but so far from being ‘difficult’ (as Butler and Barber, 345, claim) the assumption is the only way to resolve the inconsistencies without resorting to fanciful emendation.

Obviously when Tarpeia went to fetch water she did not simply stroll into the enemy camp. This was situated on the level ground at the bottom of the hill, and to ensure a safe water supply it naturally incorporated, or was adjacent to, a palisaded spring. (Compare Livy 9. 2. 14 for a similar proceeding).

The spring Tarpeia *does* go to is, as one might expect, *hidden*—*lucus erat . . . conditus antro*—i.e. not under surveillance by the Sabines. Nevertheless it does afford her a good view of the invaders, even though it is outside and perhaps a little above their camp. This point is made quite explicit at line 19, *vidit harenosis Tatium proludere campis*.

It is clear from these considerations that the couplets 7–8 and 15–16 apply to the wrong descriptive passages, and must be changed around so that 15–16 can follow 3–6, and 7–8 be connected to 13–14. Further *illo* in line 14 cannot stand, as there is now no antecedent for it to refer to. Postgate’s *exili* for *ex illo* therefore seems unavoidable.

For such minor plastic surgery there are several major compensations. *hinc* at the beginning of line 15 can now stand. In fact it is precisely the word required after the general description given in lines 3–6. *hunc* at the beginning of line 7 becomes absolutely essential to the sense, for it distinguishes the fortified spring of the Sabines from the hidden one to which Tarpeia has been described as going. Tatius and his rampart are now introduced to us after some mention of the campaign which brought them there.

There is a fairly simple palaeographical explanation for the dislocation, which occurred under the influence of the threefold appearance of the same word (*fontem . . . fonte . . . fontem*) within seven lines.

The original mistake was made by a scribe whose eye wandered to *hunc Tatius fontem* etc. when he should have been writing *hinc Tarpeia deae fontem* etc.—an easy enough error to commit. As a result lines 15–16 (couplet 4 in the original) were displaced from the text.

Next, the displaced couplet was wrongly inserted, no doubt by a later copyist, after lines 13–14 (original couplet 6). This must have appeared to him to be a suitable place for them in view of the expression *exili fonte* in line 14 which provided a superficial link. Unfortunately this misguided attempt to find a home for the ousted 15–16 created fresh dislocation further along the track, as we shall see.

Now in the received text the imperfect indicative *stabant* of line 12 cannot possibly stand as though parallel to the subjunctive *quateret* in line 10, both dependent on *cum* at the beginning of line 10. On the contrary it seems obvious that *atque ubi nunc terris dicuntur iura subactis* etc. is meant to be parallel to, and to follow, *ubi nunc est Curia saepta* etc., and that both form part of the answer to the question *quid tum Roma fuit*?

In other words the couplet beginning *murus erant montes* (13-14) must come before that beginning *atque ubi nunc*, and lead into it, and so stand immediately after the question posed in 9-10, as being the first part of the answer.

But how did *atque ubi nunc* etc. (original couplet 8) get displaced and pushed forward?

Clearly because, as a result of the erroneous insertion of *hinc Tarpeia deae* etc. (original couplet 4) immediately in front of it (for reasons given above) the sequence of thought had been rendered unintelligible. Hence it was moved to the nearest position compatible with some sort of sense and connection, i.e. after 9-10 (original and vulgate couplet 5), where, despite the faulty grammar, it has been accepted by editors throughout the ages. Even Butler and Barber, who see that it cannot depend on *cum*, do not question its position, but take it as an emphatic statement. Yet the answer to a simple question cannot possibly begin with *atque*.

I would place the couplet *hunc Tatius fontem* etc. (7-8) before, rather than after, the *atque ubi nunc* couplet, though either is possible. It seems to me to be more characteristic of Propertius that, having written *bellicus exili fonte bibebat equus*, he should have interrupted himself to explain to his reader to whom the *bellicus equus* belonged, and why they happened to be in this particular spot. Furthermore he is naturally anxious at once to distinguish for our benefit *this* spring from that of Tarpeia. Then, after this brief parenthesis, the words *atque ubi nunc* etc. return to the main business of the sentence, answering *quid tum Roma fuit*. The same words are used as earlier to make this as clear as possible. If *atque ubi* etc. followed *immediately* on *ubi nunc* etc., the repetition of the words would be less effective or necessary.

Lines 17-18 (couplet 9) are in their correct place. They constitute an indignant rhetorical question from the poet. The outburst is prompted by the shameful of the idea expressed in lines 11-12 (original couplet 8). Editors do not seem to have emphasized sufficiently the emotional content of line 12.

The subject of *vidit* in 19 is of course Tarpeia, who, on my arrangement, has not been the subject of a sentence for twelve lines. But there is no harshness here, since *puellae* is mentioned in line 17 and is the subject of the relative clause at 18.

I have adopted just one emendation, Postgate's *exili* for *ex illo* (14). I suggest that the corruption occurred after the dislocations outlined above, when it was realised that Tatius' spring is here referred to. For now, owing to a mistaken transposition, Tatius' spring has already been mentioned. Hence the temptation to refer to it with an *illo*.

My rearrangement of these lines thus assumes just three transpositions, each of a single couplet, the first giving rise to both the others, and one corruption. In return it produces a picture which is clear, logical, and balanced, and in which the principals are introduced in their natural order, each within a self-contained scene description.

Vulgate line	Original couplet	
1	{ 1	<i>Tarpeium nemus et Tarpeiae turpe sepulcrum</i>
2		<i>fabor et antiqui limina capta Iovis.</i>
3		<i>lucus erat felix hederoso conditus antro</i>
4	{ 2	<i>multaque nativis obstrepit arbor aquis</i>
5		<i>Silvani ramosa domus, quo dulcis ab aestu</i>
6	{ 3	<i>fistula poturas ire iubebat ovis.</i>
15		<i>hinc Tarpeia deae fontem libavit: at illi</i>
16	{ 4	<i>urgebat medium fictilis urna caput.</i>
9		<i>quid tum Roma fuit, tubicen vicina Curetis</i>
10	{ 5	<i>cum quateret lento murmure saxa Iovis?</i>
13		<i>muris erant montes: ubi nunc est Curia saepta</i>
14	{ 6	<i>bellicus exili fonte bibebat equus,</i>
7		<i>(hunc Tatius fontem vallo praecingit acerno</i>
8	{ 7	<i>fidaque suggesta castra coronat humo)</i>
11		<i>atque ubi nunc terris dicuntur iura subactis</i>
12	{ 8	<i>stabant Romano pila Sabina Foro—</i>
17		<i>et satis una malae potuit mors esse puellae,</i>
18	{ 9	<i>quae voluit flammis fallere, Vesta, tuas?</i>
19		<i>vidit harenosis Tatium proludere campis</i>
20	{ 10	<i>pictaque per flavas arma levare iubas.</i>

- (a) Couplet 7 replaced couplet 4.
 (b) Displaced couplet 4 inserted after couplet 6.
 (c) Couplet 8 transposed to follow couplet 5.
 (d) *exili* corrupted to *ex illo*.

1 *nemus*

Recent editors have been attracted by Kraffert's conjecture *scelus*. The objections usually made to *nemus* are:

- (a) No other Latin author refers to a *Tarpeium nemus*. (But cf. Prop. 4. 8. 31.)
 (b) Propertius says nothing about a *nemus* in his conclusion at 93-4.

But these objections are misconceived. W. A. Camps (*Propertius, Elegies Book IV* [Cambridge, 1965]) himself points out that what we are being promised in this opening couplet is *not* the explanation of anything, but simply a story of past events. The aetiological significance of the poem will only be made explicit at the end. There was no *Tarpeium sepulcrum* existing in Propertius' day to be made the subject of an aetiological study. *Sepulcrum* thus probably means 'end', 'death', and the choice of the word is due to the tradition that Tarpeia was originally buried on the Capitoline hill, though her tomb was later removed by Tarquin. In all this Camps is surely right.

But in precisely the same way there was no such place as a *Tarpeium nemus* either, in the Rome of Propertius. The expression simply refers to the grove which provides the background to the first part of the poem. It is the grove to which the Vestal Virgin goes to fetch water, from which she first sees Tatius, and to which she continually returns afterwards (line 24). It is the place where she first succumbs to the passion which will betray Rome and destroy her.

It has been suggested that the influence of *lucus* in line 3 brought about the introduction of *nemus* into line 1. One might with more justice claim that the

appearance of *lucus* in line 3, with which the story proper starts, is intentionally designed to pick up *Tarpeium nemus* in line 1, with which the introduction to the story starts, and so guarantees the correctness of that reading.

13 Camps punctuates as follows:

ubi nunc est Curia, saepta: (sc. *erant*) = 'there were sheepfolds'—on the grounds that *saepta* as a participle with *Curia* is pointless.

However here Propertius is not primarily concerned to stress the pastoral nature of primitive Rome, but rather the startling fact of a Sabine encampment at the very heart of what is now the capital of the world. Furthermore Camps's punctuation produces a jerky line 13 and an abrupt line 14.

saepta as an adjective is at least not utterly superfluous, cf. Cicero *Rep.* 2. 17. 31, *fecitque idem [Tullius Hostilius] et saepsit de manubiis comitium et curiam*.

Is it possible that since Octavian's restoration in 29 B.C. the particular fence around the Curia, like the gas-holders at the Oval, had become a well-known distinguishing feature of it?

29 *Tarpeia . . . arce*

It is impossible to believe that Propertius by using this adjective could so casually have ruined the dramatic effect of the poem, whose aetiological significance is deliberately held back till the last couplet. *Tarpeia* here must surely be an intrusive gloss. The ousted word is anybody's guess. Since *arx* by itself frequently means the Capitulum, it is not even certain that we require an adjective to go with it.

34 *dum captiva mei conspicer esse Tati*

The MSS. reading really cannot be defended. It is condemned not so much by the grammatical rarity of *conspicer* used in a passive sense, as by the unsatisfactory meaning it produces. *Tarpeia*, in the condition she is in, could not care less whether she is *seen* to be (or admired as) *Tatius'* captive, she just wants to *be* with him whether anyone sees her or not. Moreover 'May I be a captive provided I am seen to be a captive . . .' is an odd way even for the lovesick to express themselves.

47 *pugnabitur* of the MSS. is of course indefensible, as the hypothetical plan which follows is relevant only to a *surprise* attack.

Of the proffered emendations Housman's *pigrabitur* is (as Butler and Barber ad loc. rightly claim) by far the best (a) on palaeographical grounds and (b) in view of her qualification, *ut rumor ait*; for the formal celebration of the holiday does not itself depend on rumours. *Tarpeia* is referring to a possible decision on the part of Romulus (which he in fact takes, 79–80) to allow the guards *to go off duty* and join in with the other citizens. This, rather than the possibility that they may then get drunk, is the important consideration.

59 The MSS. reading *nuptae* can stand (preceded by a colon) as a genitive with *mea* in the following line. In such constructions the genitive usually follows the possessive adjective—but not always. Cf. Catullus 66. 51 *abiunctae paulo ante comae mea fata sorores | lugebant*, where *abiunctae* is certainly genitive, since (a) the original has ἀπὲρ νεότητῶν με and (b) the *coma* has been *abiuncta*, the *comae sorores* have not.

Through the emphatic *commissas acies ego possum solvere* (which is, as we know, in fact untrue) Propertius demonstrates his sound psychological insight into the irrational state of mind of a lovesick woman. By contrast the emendation *nupta*,

with colon following, produces a rather flat line and an inferior connection with the pentameter.

71 *illa ruit*, etc.

If this is to be taken literally we have to understand that Tarpeia has woken up and that the scene has shifted to the following day. Yet the new scene seems only to begin at line 73. Furthermore such behaviour in public on the part of a Vestal Virgin would surely have attracted unwelcome attention or even suspicion. No doubt because of these difficulties Camps suggests 'she is swept away by her passion', but it is doubtful whether *ruit* can bear this meaning.

I suggest that the couplet should be understood in the context of the *preceding* four lines on the theme of Tarpeia's uneasy sleep, and that it describes what she is doing *in her dreams*.

82 *comes* has nothing to do with her undertaking to guide the Sabines up the Capitoline hill. As the word *futura* indicates, *comes* refers solely to the prospective reward, the *quid pro quo*, which Tarpeia will get when she has carried out her part of the bargain, i.e. marriage to Tatius, which as yet is only a future prospect.

pactis is clearly dative dependent on *comes*. As an ablative (= 'by the terms of the bargain') it would be hopelessly weak. And since *comes* does not mean *pars* Shackleton Bailey must be right in taking *pactis* as masculine. This is confirmed by Sil. 13. 842-3.

84 Who is the subject of *occupat*? Editors assume it must be Tatius, and most of them postulate a lacuna after line 83, in view of the rather harsh expression *mons . . . festo remissus* (= 'slackly guarded because of the holiday') which the vulgate offers in that line.

But the dogs are not envisaged as being asleep. They are *watch* dogs, whose job is to do just that. This is the point of the epithet *vocales*. It is only *after* they have been killed that we are told *omnia praebebant somnos*. Whatever may be the condition of their masters *they* have no part in the general air of drunken stupor.

But if the dogs are awake how can Tatius, struggling up a steep path (cf. 28 and 49), get close enough to them to kill them *with a sword* without their raising the alarm first? Clearly he cannot.

The subject of *occupat* must be Tarpeia. It is Tarpeia who kills the dogs. Watch dogs will not of course start barking when they are approached by someone who is familiar to them. So *she* can go up to them without exciting their suspicion. Of course she cannot put them out of action in full view of the guards. So she has to wait until the guards have left their post (cf. *festoque remissus*), and as soon as the coast is clear (*nec mora* 84) she carries out her preemptive mission (*occupat*).

There is no direct reference at all in lines 83-8 to the Sabine incursion. Camps has well pointed out that in line 83 *mons erat ascensu dubius* is expressed from the point of view of the *defending* side (to give a reason why it was not well guarded), not that of the Sabines.

Tarpeia is the subject of *occupat* in 84 just as she is the subject of *convenit* 81, *ligat* 82, *prodiderat* 87, and *petit* 88. The spotlight is kept on the principal subject of the poem throughout this vigorous and climactic passage.

What was a Vestal Virgin doing with a sword? *ense* does not of course mean 'her sword' but simply 'a sword'. It is surely not too much to assume that as

a result of the general drunkenness and confusion in the citadel Tarpeia was able to pick up a sword which had been left lying about—perhaps by one of the guards. Alternatively we may be meant to understand that she is given the sword by Tatius.

93 *Tarpeia*, the early and obvious correction of the irrelevant MSS. reading *Tarpeio*, can hardly be right. It is highly unlikely that a *duce Tarpeia* would ever have been corrupted to a *duce Tarpeio*. *Tarpeium* of Palmer is a much superior correction both palaeographically (TARPEIŪ) and on grounds of sense.

To understand a *duce* as referring to Romulus or Tatius (= ‘bestowed by the commander’) is misconceived. Such a construction with *adipiscor* is grammatically possible but hardly likely when it produces such an ambiguous line. And it is surely wrong to think of the hill getting its name in the same way as a modern ship! *duce* must refer to Tarpeia and her role in guiding the Sabines up the hill (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 1. 262). The fact that this detail has not been explicitly brought out in the earlier narrative gives the word point here.

94 As Shackleton Bailey points out, *praemia* is a wholly apposite word for the reward of having a hill named after one (cf. 4. 2. 49). Furthermore the pentameter must bear some relation to the hexameter preceding it. Thus *vigil* surely refers to Tarpeia. One must not be too literal-minded and refer it to Jupiter because of 85–6 *sed Iuppiter unus decrevit poenis invigilare suis*. *praemia* cannot mean ‘revenge’, and to end the elegy by telling Jupiter that his reward is unjust seems both weak and irrelevant.

But why is Tarpeia called *vigil*? Clearly, as Camps suggests, because she stayed awake when everyone else went to sleep. There is bitter irony in the fact that *vigil* usually has favourable connotations whereas in her case wakefulness was a means to treachery.

iniustae sortis

Shackleton Bailey takes this as a defining genitive, merely the equivalent of (*praemia*) *iniusta*, i.e. she did not deserve to have her name perpetuated in that way. But long-windedness is not a characteristic of Propertius, and seems particularly alien to this terse elegy.

The genitive looks as if it ought to denote the thing for which the reward is given. It is possible, with Camps, to take *sors* as = ‘watchman’s turn of duty’—an uncommon sense, but one made easier to understand by the preceding *vigil*.

To read *iniuste*, as an adverb with *vigil*, in this line is, I think, mistaken. For we are then left with *praemia sortis habes*—surely too bald a phrase when *sortis* has this unusual meaning.

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