

Callimachus incorporates into this section of the hymn extensive recollection of Theocritus 18 (the *Epithalamion for Helen*).<sup>2</sup> In this latter poem, the nubile Helen is praised as surpassing all her friends in beauty (22–5):

ἄμμες δ' αἱ πᾶσαι συνομάλικες, αἷς δρόμος ὠπτός  
χρισαμέναις ἀνδριστὶ παρ' Εὐρώταο λοετροῖς,  
τετράκις ἐξήκοντα κόραι, θήλυς νεολαία,  
τᾶν οὐδ' ἄτις ἄμωμος ἐπεὶ χ' Ἑλέναι παρισωθῇ.

Callimachus depends upon recognition of the Theocritean echo in his hymn to make his point: Athena's beauty is comparable to that of Helen, 'who combined femininity with very masculine Spartan athletics'.<sup>3</sup> Callimachus never mentions Helen by name, however. Instead, he opens the simile with a term of comparison, a reference to the Spartan river Eurotas, and mention of the illustrious Dioscuri.

The opening of the Propertian simile is identical: a term of comparison, mention of the Eurotas, and the naming of the Dioscuri. What makes the similarity between simile openings most unlikely to be accidental, however, is Propertius' point: Helen is really the important character in this comparison, as an embodiment of femininity combined with Spartan athleticism. Following Callimachus' example, Propertius constructs a simile that is visually and syntactically deceptive; Propertius' own innovation here, Helen's erotic partial nudity, is a creative embroidery upon Hellenistic material.

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<sup>2</sup> Bulloch 46–7, 131–2.

<sup>3</sup> Bulloch 132.

#### PROPERTIUS 4.1.8

The manuscript version of this line, apart from a nonsensical variant *tutus* for *bubus*, is

et Tiberis nostris advena bubus erat.

The trouble here has been that scholars have taken *advena* to mean 'stranger', 'foreigner', 'alien', or German 'fremd'. Clearly the sentence

and Tiber was a stranger to our oxen

makes no sense in the context, and for this reason many scholars have either produced strange translations ('alien Tiber served our oxen', Butler and Barber) or else have dabbled in dubious emendation (*temptus* Baehrens, *tortus* Postgate, *Tuscus* Havet in place of *bubus*).

Most recently S. J. Heyworth, in 'Propert. III and IV', *CQ* 36 (1986), 199–211 (208–9 in particular), has suggested *murus* for *bubus*. He feels that Ovid's *advena Thybris* and *advena Thybri* in *Fast.* 2.68 and 3.524 respectively, together with Varro, *LL* 5.29, make it 'probable' that *advena* in Propertius should also be taken attributively with *Tiberis*, not as predicate after *erat*. I cannot see why the usage in Ovid carries any implication whatever that we have the attributive use in Propertius also; and the word order in Propertius militates strongly against this. Heyworth also feels that, after the *boves* in 4.1.4, we cannot have yet another set of *boves* in line 8. But why not? There is a difference between the way the point is made, as between lines 4 and 8. In line 4, it was a specific batch of cattle, Evander's, which settled down at a specific (and particularly important) site in Rome. In line 8, it is generalised cattle which are to be found along the banks of the Tiber.

The fundamental objection to the views of Heyworth and other scholars is the

existence of a much easier and better solution. *Advena* in Latin is not 'stranger' but 'comer'. Certainly Tiber comes from elsewhere, but he is still a 'comer'. It makes perfect sense to say

and Tiber was a comer to our oxen.

(I use the word 'comer' here, *faute de mieux*, for interpretative purposes only. 'Visitor', suggested by a referee, might be more elegant.) Ovid and Varro, quoted above, show that Tiber was regularly regarded as *advena* (in their own time as well as in early times), so that *advena* is appropriate here. There are enough passages to show that *bubus* is appropriate; Heyworth himself quotes Ovid, *Fast.* 1.244:

tantaque res paucis pascua bubus erat.

The whole emphasis is on *bubus*;<sup>1</sup> Tiber came down to *oxen*, not to buildings. Similarly in the previous line the whole emphasis is on the single word *nuda*:

Tarpeiusque pater nuda de rupe tonabat. (4.1.7)

The sense of line 8 is clearly consonant with that of line 7, and it fits perfectly into the context. Why look any further for a solution?

This solution was anticipated by Guil. Hertzberg, who in *Sex. Aurelii Propertii Elegiarum libri quattuor* (1843), iii.390, says:

ne tamen hic in voce advena haereas, advena erat nihil est nisi adventabat, unde advenam commune fluviorum e remotioribus montium iugis venientium attributum esse recte Burmann observat.

He also quotes *advena Nilus* from Ovid, *Fast.* 5.268. I have been unable to find any more recent editions which adopt the same solution.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It may be noted that Rothstein (Berlin, 1924), although he says that the most important idea is that Tiber comes from a foreign land, nevertheless adds 'aber auch *bubus* ist wichtig' and goes on to explain its significance. I agree entirely with Heyworth that Rothstein's interpretation, in which emphasis is laid on two things at once, makes nonsense of the sentence. In any case, Ovid, *Fast.* 2.68 and 3.524, which refer to Tiber as *advena* in Ovid's own times, show that *advena* does not mean that Tiber comes 'from a foreign land', only 'from elsewhere'.

<sup>2</sup> I am greatly indebted to Professor O. Skutsch, whose clear exposition introduced this problem to me in 1950.

#### PETRONIUS, *SAT.* 141.4\*

his admoneo amicos meos ne recusent quae iubeo, sed quibus animis devoverint spiritum meum, eisdem etiam corpus consumant.

These are the very last words of Eumolpus' testament. The editors all print them thus, but I suspect a hidden corruption in *devoverint*. The text may seem to have an acceptable meaning, but only on a superficial reading inattentive to the whole context. A certain exegetical discomfort becomes noticeable if the translations are compared: Ernout renders 'maudire mon âme', Ehlers in Müller's second and third editions translates 'sie meinen letzten Atemzug herbeiwünschten' (thus giving *spiritus* a strained translation as though it were *extremus* or *ultimus spiritus*), and Cesareo-Terzaghi's edition (under Pasquali's supervision) prefers to render with a nuance of the future 'con quel cuore stesso con cui mi avranno maledetto l'anima'. Obviously,

\* I am very grateful to Glenn Most for translating this note.