

the one historically useful piece of information, that on the Twelve Tables, seems overstated.

University of California, Los Angeles

ANDREW R. DYCK

PROPERTIUS AND LIVY

Towards the start of the elegy which prefaces his third book, Propertius rejects lengthy, martial epic in favour of slender poetry (3.1.7–8): it is on account of the latter that fame (*fama*) elevates him above the earth, his Muse triumphant (9–10); accompanying him in the triumphal chariot are his *Amores* (11), and following the wheels is a crowd of writers (12 ‘scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas’). The latter, in the race for glory, rival the poet to no purpose (13–14). Many writers will praise Rome (15 ‘multi, Roma, tuas laudes annalibus addent’) and sing of future conquests (16), but Propertius’ pages, a special delivery from the Muses’ mount, are the perfect peace-time reading (17–18).

Scholars have detected in this passage considerable evidence of Propertius’ wide reading. In addition to Callimachus, Lucretius, and Virgil, for example, there is the possibility that line 8 (‘exactus tenui pumice uersus eat’) derives from a lost Greek poem which lies also behind Catullus 1.2.¹ Although it would be attractive to imagine that this lost poem was one of Callimachus’ own, there is of course no proof; but Callimachus has indeed been suggested as a source for the reference to the crowd two couplets later (11–12).² Be that as it may, we can be almost certain that in these lines Propertius is alluding to Livy. Towards the start of his preface, Livy reflects upon his future as an author and dwells on the probability that his fame will be obscure amidst the large crowd of other writers (3 ‘si in tanta scriptorum turba mea fama in obscuro sit’). It seems that nowhere else in the whole of Latin literature is the expression *scriptorum turba* to be found;³ Propertius must have been reading Livy.

When Propertius later refers to annals (15), scholars naturally associate the reference with Ennian epic; but, although the poet is talking primarily about poetry (cf. 16 *canent*), he is perhaps also glancing at Livy’s annalistic history (cf. Liv. 43.13.2 ‘meos annales’). And, when Propertius proceeds to announce that his name will be greater after his death (24 ‘maius ab exsequiis nomen in ora uenit’), he is perhaps upstaging Livy’s gloomy prediction that his name will be overshadowed by the greatness of others (*praef.* 3 ‘nobilitate ac magnitudine eorum . . . qui nomini officient meo’). These similarities may be nothing more than coincidental; but is it simply coincidence when Propertius, in the last of his prologue poems to Book 3, describes

¹ F. Cairns argued that both poets were drawing on ‘traditional Alexandrian material’ (‘Catullus I’, *Mnemosyne* 22 [1969], 153–8, at 155); T. P. Wiseman defended the reading *arida* . . . *pumice* in Catullus’ poem by maintaining that the poet was drawing attention to a Greek model (*Clio’s Cosmetics* [Leicester, 1969], pp. 167–8). On the latter point see now R. Renehan, ‘On gender switching as a literary device in Latin poetry’, in P. Knox and C. Foss (edd.), *Style and Tradition: Studies in Honor of Wendell Clausen* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1998), pp. 212–29, at pp. 224–7. An alternative scenario is that Propertius alludes directly to Catullus (cf. P. Fedeli, *Properzio: Il Libro Terzo delle Elegie* [Bari, 1985], *ad loc.*).

² S. J. Heyworth, ‘Some allusions to Callimachus in Latin poetry’, *MD* 33 (1994), 51–79, at 71.

³ The Livy parallel is mentioned neither by the commentators nor by D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 295 or G. B. A. Fletcher, ‘Propertiana’, *Latomus* 20 (1961), 85–92, at 85, ‘Further Propertiana’, *Latomus* 48 (1989), 354–9, at 357. An electronic search reveals no other parallel.

the early history of Rome as 'tantum operis' (3.3.4)? This was precisely the phrase with which Livy, invoking the practice of poets, concluded his preface before embarking on his history of early Rome (13 '... si, ut poetis, nobis quoque mos esset, libentius inciperemus, ut orsis *tantum operis* successus prosperos darent').⁴

University of Durham

A. J. WOODMAN

⁴ G. G. Ramsay describes *tantum operis* as 'a common phrase' but quotes no parallels (*Selections from Tibullus and Propertius* [Oxford, 1900], 271); J. P. Postgate quotes Plaut. *Men.* 435 and Liv. *praef.* 13 (*Select Elegies of Propertius*² [London, 1884], p. 153), the latter repeated by M. Rothstein (*Propertius Sextus: Elegien*³ [repr. Dublin and Zurich, 1966]) and Fedeli (n. 1 above) *ad loc.* In addition to Prop. 3.11.70, which some commentators also quote, the phrase is revealed by an electronic search to recur elsewhere in pre-Propertian literature only at Cic. *II Verr.* 1.147, where *tantum* is correlative with *quantum*.

A NOTE ON VIRGIL, *AENEID* 5.315–19

Haec ubi dicta, locum capiunt, signoque repente
corripiunt spatia audito limenque relinquunt,
effusi nimbo similes. simul ultima signant,
primus abit longeque ante omnia corpora Nisus
emicat et ventis et fulminis ocior alis.

The meaning of the expression *simul ultima signant* in Virgil's description of the foot race in the memorial funeral games for Anchises has been controversial since ancient times. The interpretation implied by R. A. B. Mynors's Oxford text printed above is that the word *simul* in line 317 is a conjunction and that the expression refers to the final section of the race. The sense presumably is: 'As soon as they trod the last stretch' Nisus came out in front, whereas previously the runners had all been in a bunch, pouring forth like a storm cloud from the start. This interpretation, which requires a full stop in the middle of line 317, was proposed by F. H. Sandbach¹ in response to problems generally acknowledged in the line as traditionally punctuated, that is, with a lighter pause after *similes* and a full stop at the end of the line—as, for example, in F. A. Hirzel's Oxford text: *effusi nimbo similes: simul ultima signant*. With this punctuation the last three words of the line have been taken to mean either that the runners fix their eyes on the finish, which gives a meaning to the verb which is difficult in the absence of any reference to the eyes, or that other people apart from the runners mark out the finishing line, which gives unexceptional sense to the verb but an implausible timing to the operation: it is odd indeed to leave the marking of the finish until after the race has started. These and other suggestions are discussed by Sandbach and R. D. Williams,² who believe that they are untenable.

While it seems to me that the criticism is correct, I think that the alternative

¹ F. H. Sandbach, *CR* 7 (1957), 102–3.

² R. D. Williams *P. Vergili Maronis AENEIDOS liber quintus* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 105–8. Williams supports Sandbach but prefers to take *simul ultima signant* as meaning 'As soon as they came in sight of the finish', referring to *A.* 2.423 (*ora sono discordia signant*) for *signare* in the sense of *discernere*. So also in his *The Aeneid of Virgil* i.419. But the reference to sound (*sono*) is important and there is nothing to correspond in 5.317; if Williams's translation is acceptable, it is hard to see why he objects to the traditional 'they fix their eyes on the goal'. For this reason I treat Sandbach's translation as the proper interpretation of the text as he punctuates it.