Although there was firmer understanding in 1900 than in 2000 that the new century would not begin until the following year, nevertheless the matter was debated in the correspondence-columns of *The Times*; either for that reason or for the relief of Mafeking and the Khaki Election, the year might therefore have seemed not unmemorable, especially to an author whose first book had appeared in it, but it is clear that Bailey confused the year in which his Lucretius was published with that in which he had completed the work.

He made the same mistake with the second edition too. Its preface, which begins with the words 'In his tribus et viginti annis, ex quo primum carmen Lucretianum edidi', is dated 'MCMXXI'. Twenty-three years did indeed separate the completion of the first edition and that of the second, but the Press's records show that the latter was published not in 1921 but on 8 June 1922. It is listed among 'Books Received' in *Classical Review* 36 (1922), 143, the August–September issue; the three reviews noted by Jules Marouzeau, *Dix années de bibliographie classique: bibliographie critique et analytique de l'antiquité gréco-latine pour la période 1914–1924* (Paris, 1927), did not appear until 1923.[9]

Surprising though Bailey's misdating of his editions may seem, it was made the easier by the publisher's decision not to print publication-dates in the Oxford Classical Texts. This aroused criticism at the time: Paul Thomas, reviewing Bailey's first edition together with Henry Furneaux's *Opera minora* of Tacitus, asked 'pourquoi les volumes ne sont-ils ni datés ni paginés?';[10] J. D. Duff made the same complaint in his review of the second edition,[11] observing that the date of the preface 'does not fix the year of publication', and therefore did not establish whether Bailey had taken account of Alfred Ernout's Budé edition, which is dated 1920. It is now clear that Bailey had the opportunity to peruse it at least while his own book was in press; however, he makes no reference to it, either because he had not seen it or because its text, like his own, was conservative.

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Belgique 43 (1900), 191–2; L. Valmaggi, *Bollettino di filologia classica* 7 (1900–1), 271, in issue no. 12 of June 1901. Lambrino himself gives 1899 as the publication-date of Bailey's text; so far as we know, he is alone in doing so. Gordon (n. 2), 68 gives January 1900.

[9] J. D. Duff, *CR* 37 (1923), 118; A. Ernout, *Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature* 57 (1923), 63; W. A. Merrill, *CPh* 18 (1928), 184. Marouzeau and Ernout give the publication-year as 1921, presumably from the editor's preface; Merrill gives 1922, Duff no date at all.

[10] Rev. cit. (n. 8), 192.

[11] Rev. cit. (n. 9).

A HUMOROUS *RECUSATIO*: ON PROPERTIUS 3.5

The contrast between the fourth and fifth elegies of Propertius Book Three has often been observed. A number of common elements, especially in their closures, signal a relationship and the fifth sets itself in opposition to the fourth, as the opening movement signals. We might say that the two elegies constitute a sort of diptych, a diptych in which the later poem functions as the logical and thematic complement to the former.[1]

[1] See the excellent commentary of P. Fedeli (*Properzio. Il Libro Terzo delle Elegie* [Bari, 1985]), especially 174–5, but also the notes on lines 1 and 47–8.

In both elegies, which come straight after the programmatic opening poems of Book Three, Propertius reaffirms his choice of life, which is also a choice of poetics: he wants to live a life of love, and he wants to make poetry out of the various events of his own love, and only out of them. In the fifth elegy, after an opening which is a smiling gesture of defiance ('We lovers are against war: the only type of battles that I know are the *pugnae amatoriae* with my Cynthia'), the poet assumes the serious conventional mask of the diatribic preacher, and inveighs against those who like to live in the middle of dangers and struggles, driven by ambition for power and wealth. Their life is in vain: death will render all men equal. While he is still a young man, Propertius proclaims, he wants to enjoy love; when he passes the age of youth, he will dedicate himself to philosophy, and in particular to the study of nature. For the moment he chooses the *philedonos bios* and reserves a *philosophos bios* for his old age:

> me iuvat in prima coluisse Helicona iuventa
> Musarumque choris implicuisse manus:
> me iuvat et multo mentem vincire Lyaeo
> et caput in verna semper habere rosa.
> atque ubi iam Venerem gravis interceperit aetas,
> sparserit et nigras alba senecta comas,
> tum mihi naturae libeat perdiscere mores . . . (3.5.19–25)

Propertius' aspiration is not in itself particularly original: Virgil and Horace proposed to do the same thing.[2] Propertius' originality lies rather in the way in which he professes his intention. We can see this most easily if we remember a passage of verse which is crucial to the tradition of Latin literature. I refer to the proem to the fourth book of Lucretius, those great lines which contain one of the most enthusiastic declarations of poetics ever uttered in Latin (4.1–17):

> Avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante
> trita solo. iuvat integros accedere fontis
> atque haurire, iuvatque novos decerpere flores
> insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam
> unde prius nulli velarint tempora musae;
> primum quod magnis doceo de rebus et artis
> religionum animum nodis exsolvere pergo . . .

In Lucretius' boast, the marked expressive element is the repetition of *iuvat* at the beginning of phrases.[3] Propertius reuses the pairing *iuvat / iuvat* to turn it into a strong signal of his allusion. Having established in this way the interdiscursive relationship with the text of Lucretius, Propertius can then easily assume a relaxed tone and put forward the etymological play on words[4] with which he seems to justify himself for having chosen a life completely dedicated to love: *me iuvat in prima . . . iuventa*, '*iuvat* in the light of my *iuventa*', 'I like this kind of life *because* I am young'.

[2] Critics usually stress the link to the famous passage of *Georgics* 2.475–82 (cf. Fedeli, 188–9), though it seems to me that this is a link of secondary importance. For Horace, cf. A. La Penna, 'Towards a history of the poetic catalogue of philosophical themes', in S. J. Harrison (ed.), *Homage to Horace* (Oxford, 1995), 314–28.

[3] For *me iuvet / iuvat* on its own in Propertius, cf. 2.13.11 and 2.34.59 (on the mood, cf. S. J. Heyworth 'Notes on Propertius Books I and II', *CQ* 34 [1984], 394–405, at 399).

[4] Cf. R. Maltby, *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991), s.v. *iuvenis* (p. 320).

But Propertius goes on with his joke. Lucretius had said that *iuvat* to crown his head with flowers so as to appear as a favourite of the Muses;[5] Propertius replies, correcting his illustrious predecessor with an insolent smile, '*iuvat*, indeed, to crown one's head, but with a garland of spring roses'—this is the only crown that young lovers like, the joyful symbol of banquets. The libertine spirit of the elegiac poet, proud of his own *débauche*, goes further. Lucretius had justified his boast as a poet by claiming the merit of 'freeing the mind from the tight bonds of superstitious beliefs', *animum . . . exsolvere*; Propertius in contrast maliciously brags of *mentem vincire*. In this way, the paradoxical etymological play in *mentem vincire Lyaeo*[6] (where, referring to wine as Bacchus under the epithet *Lyaeus*, Propertius creates the humorous impossibility of 'binding with him who loosens') reveals itself as also part of the joke: 'loosening' was in the text of Lucretius, but now it has been inverted into 'binding', 'binding with the wine of erotic banquets'.

Love poetry is, in short, opposed to cosmological poetry. The poet–lover greets from afar the poet-*vates* who had sung of the nature of things. To each his own Muses, to each his own crown as poet, to each age a different type of poetic excellence. For the moment, Propertius rejects the glorious example of elevated didactic poetry, but he promises later, when his youth is past, when his service as a soldier of love is finally over, to follow precisely this example.

Often, as we all know, the *recusatio* offers also a taste of that which it says it is unable to do,[7] and here too the elegiac poet does the same. Indeed, he goes further and offers a long example—a promise and an anticipation—of Lucretian poetry. The *recusatio* becomes, in fact, a *praeteritio*. It seemed as if the poet wanted only to play, but he wants also to show that he knows how to be serious: he smiles good-naturedly at Lucretius but he also knows how to render him admiring homage.

Propertius' humorous play arises in him, as we know, as intellectual irony, as counterpoint to the passion of his feelings. *Propertius ludibundus*, as Krokowski and Lefèvre have shown,[8] is the other face, the irreverent and libertine face, of the poet who is all ardour and passion, the mocking aspect of a poetry boldly proud of its own poetic choices.

Before concluding this note, I should like to offer some further marginal considerations, two of a textual nature and two concerned with literary history. It seems clear to me that in lines 19 and 21 of Propertius 3.5, where the manuscripts vary in their reading (see Fedeli, 187), one should read *iuvat . . . iuvat* and not *iuvet . . . iuvet* (with a desiderative subjunctive which would make the whole syntactic movement uniform

[5] The crowning through the agency of the Muses recalls in Lucretius the tradition of the symbolic gift which begins in Hesiod (*Theog.* 30–1) and is continued by Theocritus (7.128–9): cf. E. J. Kenney, 'Doctus Lucretius', *Mnemosyne* 23 (1970), 371. Lucretius describes how Ennius was the first to bring back down from Helicon a crown of evergreen leaves: cf. J. H. Waszink, 'Lucretius and poetry', *Mededelingen der Koninkl. Nederl. Akad. van Wet.* 17 (1954), 250–1; A. Kambylis, *Die Dichterweihe und ihre Symbolik* (Heidelberg, 1965), 173; W. Suerbaum, *Untersuchungen zur Selbstdarstellung älterer römischer Dichter. Livius. Spudasmata* 19 (Hildesheim, 1968), 57–9 and especially 310–11; cf. also Nisbet-Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace, Odes, Book I*, 97–8.

[6] Cf. 3.17.5–6.

[7] Cf. G. Davies, *Polyhymnia* (Berkeley, 1991), 11–77.

[8] G. Krokowski, 'De Propertio ludibundo', *Eos* 29 (1926), 81–100; E. Lefèvre, *Propertius Ludibundus* (Heidelberg, 1966).

with *libeat* in line 25[9]). The anaphoric coupling *iuvat . . . iuvat* of the Lucretian model must be the correct reading.

Further, it is likely that Propertius would have read the Lucretian lines as part of the proem to Book Four, and that therefore 4.1–125 (which Lachmann wanted to delete because they are almost an exact repetition of 1.926–950) already functioned prominently as the opening of Book Four, whether or not that placement was due to Lucretius or a later editor. While one might argue that Lucretius' lines are emphatic in both positions, as a 'proem in the middle', as a solemn declaration of poetics in a special and striking position, the verses more obviously possess the visibility needed for them to be recalled in Propertius' context: an indirect confirmation of something I myself hypothesized in an article of some twenty years ago.[10]

From the point of view of Latin literary history it is particularly significant that Propertius uses the great sublime model of the preceding literary generation at Rome for his own declaration of poetics, which may be humorous but is also full of admiration. By this I mean that Latin poetry now has its own national *auctores* which function as models and interlocutors; Latin literature is now consciously mature, has now acquired a storehouse of traditional texts with the prestige to function as such, and Lucretius has been accepted as one of the great institutional figures of that tradition. Horace too, in one of the odes of his first book, used the same verses in which Lucretius had solemnly celebrated the Muses to indicate his own force as an inspired poet: we meet with the same uncontaminated springs and crown of flowers given as a prize. The central theme of *Odes* 1.26 is the force itself of poetry.[11] The Muses protect the poet (*Musis amicus*, 1) and grant him the power to celebrate Lamia: 6–9 . . . *o quae fontibus integris / gaudes, apricos necte flores, / necte meo Lamiae coronam, / Piplei dulcis . . .*

Nothing could be more improbable, therefore, than that 'conspiracy of silence' that some critics have alleged Latin poets indulge in against Lucretius, a *fable convenue* in which few now believe.[12] The truth is that poets make largesse of references amongst themselves, pay homage, declare oppositions even, but always in this implicit mode, made up of allusions, quotations, texts remembered and reformulated, in a discourse that is coherent but always cryptographic. It is rare for poets to refer to each other by name: it is the texts that they know of their predecessors and colleagues, their words and verbal gestures. It is these texts that are the true personal records by means of which poets like to name each other: they renounce their empirical identity in order to assume the identity that they have succeeded in acquiring through the words of their poetry.[13]

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[9] *Contra* E. Courtney, 'Three poems of Propertius', *BICS* 16 (1969), 70–87, at 72.

[10] Cf. G. B. Conte, 'Proemi al mezzo', in *Virgilio: Il genere e i suoi confini*, (Milano[2], 1984), 121–3 (= 'Proems in the middle', *YCS* 29 [1992], 147–59).

[11] Cf. Nisbet-Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace, Odes, Book I*, 302: 'Horace is not celebrating his friend so much as his own power to celebrate his friend.'

[12] See definitively A. Traina, 'Lucrezio e la "congiura del silenzio"', in *Poeti latini (e neolatini). Note e saggi filologici* (Bologna[2], 1986), 81–91.

[13] I am grateful to the late Don Fowler for translating this *noterella*.