

PROPERTIANA*

1.2.9–14

*aspice quos summittat humus formosa colores,
ut ueniant hederæ sponte sua melius,
surgat et in solis formosior arbutus antris,
et sciat indocilis currere lympha uias.
litora natiuis † persuadent † picta lapillis,
et uolucres nulla dulcius arte canunt.*

The superiority of natural to artificial beauty.

In line 9 *formosa* can hardly be right; the context demands not just a ‘beautiful’ spot but a spot which owes its beauty to no artificial tending. *Formosa* looks very like an erroneous anticipation of *formosior* in line 11; if so, the word which it has displaced need have borne little resemblance to it. Hence Palmer’s *neglecta* is just as possible as negative phrases like *non uersa*, *non iussa*, *non fossa*, *non culta*, *non mota* (all of which have been proposed). Another possibility might be *deserta*; in favour of this I adduce (in addition to *solis* in line 11) 1.20.35 f. *nulli pendebant debita curae / roscida desertis poma sub arboribus*.

In line 13 to replace *persuadent* one’s first inclination is to look for another verb beginning with *per* or *prae* or *re* (e. g. *pergaudent*, *praefulgent*, *resplendent*, all of which, among others, have been proposed), but perhaps we should rather consider the prepositional phrase *per se* (of things which are as they are ‘natura sua, nulla alia re adhibita’, ThLL 10.1.1161.24); cf. 2.29.30 *heu quantum per se candida forma ualet!* Scaliger and Heinsius conjectured *per se dent*, but this requires the further change of *natiuis lapillis* to *natiuos lapillos*. So I suggest *per se sunt*. At 3.14.31 *nec quae sint faci(l)es nec quae dent uerba roganti* (on the reading see J. L. Butri-

*) The following modern editions are referred to: A. Palmer (London/Dublin 1880); H. E. Butler and E. A. Barber (Oxford 1933); P. J. Enk (Book 1, Leiden 1946); W. A. Camps (Cambridge: Book 2, 1967; Book 3, 1966); G. P. Goold (Loeb edition, 1990).

ca, CQ 47, 1997, 183), *dent* has been corrupted to *sint* (but perhaps by perseveration); at Anth. 26.9 R. I have emended *dent* to *sunt* (CM 47, 1996, 255, where I adduce further instances of the confusion of initial *d* and *s*).

1.18.25–28

*omnia consueui timidus perferre superbae
iussa neque arguto facta dolore queri;
pro quo diuini fontes et frigida rupes
et datur inculto tramite dura quies.*

Fontes or *montes* (Heinsius)? The latter has naturally attracted editors both on its own merits and in view of such parallels as 1.20.13 *duros montes et frigida saxa*. But *diuini* remains ‘a ludicrous epithet’ (Butler/Barber, for an unconvincing defence see F. Leo, *Ausgewählte Kleine Schriften* [Rome 1960], 2, 199 f.). Many suggestions have been made for its replacement; I add another, which at least has the merit of being closer to the paradosis than any other I know: *diri mi montes*. For *dirus* ‘de locis, terris’ see ThLL 5.1.1272.27 ff. The dative *mi* is very acceptable with *datur*.

2.6.31–32

*a gemat in terris ista qui protulit arte
orgia sub tacita condita laetitia!*
orgia Ruhnken : *iurgia* codd.

An imprecation on the man who revealed the mysteries of sex in erotic pictures.

In terris cannot be equivalent to *sub terris* (2.18.27, 3.5.39), but must mean ‘on earth’ (as at 2.17.9), which gives feeble sense. The most favoured conjecture has been Fontein’s *in tenebris*, ‘in the world of darkness’ (hardly ‘struck with blindness’, as Goold). Heinsius’s *aeternum* (adverb, as at 3.8.38) is seldom mentioned nowadays, but it may well be right; for *aeternum* used in connexion with the great sinners of the underworld cf. Verg. Aen. 6.617 f.

sedet aeternumque sedebit/infelix Theseus; as for the supposed corruption, at Curt. 4.1.22 *terrenis* has become *aeternis* in our manuscripts. Then *ista* will have to be changed; in any case it is a vague and unconvincing word. In preference to Heinsius's *ficta* I suggest *incesta* (a word used by Propertius at 3.11.39); for elision at this point of the Propertian hexameter see M. Platnauer, *Latin Elegiac Verse* (Cambridge 1951), 83 ad fin.

2.25.21–22

*tu quoque, qui pleno fastus assumis amore,
credule, nulla diu femina pondus habet.*

‘Who put on airs because your love is feasted full’ is Camps’s translation of the *qui* clause; he adds “It is hard to judge the exact value of *pleno* with *amore*”. I find it hard to give *pleno* any value at all, and would replace it with *prono*, ‘because your love-affair is proceeding smoothly’ (OLD 7); the same sense is expressed in 27 below by *flatus in amore secundi*. The same emendation (of *plena* to *prona*) has been made by Shackleton Bailey at Manil. 2.470 and by Delz at Sil. 3.532.

2.32.23–24

*nuper enim de te nostras me laedit ad aures
rumor, et in tota non bonus urbe fuit.*

‘A rumour in mine ears wounds me’ is described by Butler/Barber as “an odd, but intelligible phrase”; I agree with those who think it an intolerable collocation. Of numerous conjectures, the most promising seems to me to be *male* for *me*; then, with the minimum of further change, we can obtain satisfactory sense by writing *nostras male* <*lae*>*serat aures*. The use of the pluperfect instead of the aorist is frequent in Propertius; see Butler/Barber on 1.8.36, Enk on 1.3.17.

3.7.57–60

*'di maris Aegaei quos sunt penes aequora, uenti,
et quaecumque meum degrauat unda caput,
quo rapitis miseros primae lanuginis annos?
attulimus longas in freta uestra manus.'*

Last words of a young man drowning at sea.

Editors adduce 2.2.5 *fulua coma est longaeque manus*, where long hands are a mark of beauty. But in our passage we want not a mark of beauty but a mark of youthfulness (like *primae lanuginis*), such as long hair; hence the attraction of Oudendorps's change of *manus* to *comas*. But how could *comas* have become *manus*? I suggest that the change was due to someone's recollection of 2.2.5; because of that passage, instead of writing *comas* he has written *manus*, which is the noun which there has the epithet *longus*. It is quite a common, but insufficiently recognized, phenomenon for a scribe who has to repeat one of two words previously written to repeat the wrong one.

3.21.31–32

*aut spatia annorum aut longa interualla profundi
lenibunt tacito uulnera nostra sinu.*

To cure himself of love, the poet contemplates moving to Athens, where the passage of time or 'the sea's far-sundering will ease the wounds that linger in my silent breast' (Goold). Camps is justified in objecting that it is hard to find a useful meaning for *tacito* in this context, and therefore accepts Heinsius's change of *sinu* to *situ*, 'the growth or deposit that forms on things left long undisturbed', *tacito* being used of this 'gradual imperceptible process'. This seems to me to be far-fetched; I should rather change *tacito* to *placido*, used proleptically, 'leaving my heart at peace'; the *p/t* interchange is one of the commonest.

4.3.7–10

*te modo uiderunt † iteratos † Bactra per ortus
te modo munito Persicus hostis equo,
hibernique Getae, pictoque Britannia curru,
tunsus et Eoa decolor aqua.*

8 *Persicus* Dousa fil. : *hericus* codd.10 *tunsus* Housman : *ustus* codd.

We should start from the assumption that *ortus* is genuine, because it is well attested in the sense of ‘inhabitants of the east’ (OLD 2b), but *iteratos* makes no satisfactory sense with it. What is required is a characteristic, preferably one denoting some military activity corresponding to *munito equo* and *picto curru*; this requirement is not fulfilled either by Polster’s *mitratos* or by Barber’s *murratos*. It would be fulfilled by *(phar)etratos*, ‘quiver-bearing’; “Eastern peoples in general and the Bactrians in particular were famous for their archery”, says J. D. Morgan (CQ 36, 1986, 189), adducing Sil. 3.613 *uacuasque ostendent Bactra pharetras* and Sidon. Carm. 5.602 f. *positisque pharetris/... Bactra*; I add 4.6.81 below, *pharetris Eois* and Claud. 15.32 f. *pharetrata .../Susa*. I take *per* in the sense of *inter* (cf. Morgan, l.c. 190), and the phrase *pharetratos per ortus* closely with the subject of the sentence, ‘Bactra in the quiver-bearing East’. Mounted archers are mentioned in connexion with Bactra at 66 below.

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