PROPERTIUS 3.10.17

The vulgate text at Prop. 3.10.17–18 reads as follows:[1]

> et pete, qua polles, ut sit tibi forma perennis
> inque meum semper stent tua regna caput.
>
> **17–18** *om.* N **17** polles T, *uulgo*: pelles FLP

According to Stephen Heyworth,[2] *polles* is 'a securely correct reading that T did not derive from any extant earlier MS … Such a conjecture would have been within the compass of the age of humanism; yet *pellere* is not absurd here (cf. Cic. *Cael*. 36) and *pellas* would be a more obvious correction'. If Heyworth is right, Prop. 3.10.17 provides strong evidence in favour of T's independence from the Petrarchan tradition (FLP).

Four further arguments support the hypothesis of an authentic *polles*. First, a similar confusion appears in Plin. *HN* 20.101, where *pellere* must be corrected to *pollere* (*TLL* 10.1.1009.46 s.v. *pello*). Secondly, the relative clause *qua polles* surely conforms to classical syntax, as shown by a parallel example in Valerius Maximus (*TLL* 10.1.2539.15–18 s.v. *polleo*):

> nec tamen aut auctoritate, qua plurimum pollebat, aut religione, de qua nemo dubitabat, quemquam eorum adfligere potuit.
>
> (Val. Max. 8.5.2)

Thirdly, the collocation of *polles* and ablative *qua* referring to *forma* is semantically equivalent to the noun phrase *forma potens* that occurs at 2.5.28 (*Cynthia, forma potens; Cynthia uera, leuis*) and 3.20.7 (*est tibi forma potens, sunt castae Palladis artes*).[3] Fourthly, *polles* in verse 17 may provide an etymological wordplay with *pollice* in verse 14 (*et nitidas presso pollice finge comas*).[4]

Yet, another story remains possible. The first attestation of *qua* (or *quo*) *polles* dates from the very beginning of the fifth century:

[1] The omission in N is due to the homoeoteleuton (*caput*) between 16 and 18. As pointed out by P. Fedeli, *Properzio. Il libro terzo delle Elegie* (Bari, 1985), 345–6, such word repetitions at the end of contiguous distichs occur quite frequently in Propertius and there are no compelling reasons for following Lachmann and some later scholars in considering the couplet to be spurious; see W.R. Smyth, *Thesaurus criticus ad Sexti Propertii textum* (Leiden, 1970), 103. A.E. Housman (in unpublished notes), E.A. Barber (*dubitanter*) and J.L. Butrica ('Editing Propertius', *CQ* 47 [1997], 176–208, at 196) transpose it after 12 – its original omission resulting, for Butrica, from the homoeoteleuton between 11 and 17 (*pennis–perennis*). S.J. Heyworth, *Cynthia: A Companion to the Text of Propertius* (Oxford, 2007), 328–9 convincingly argues against this proposal.

[2] *Sexti Properti Elegos* (Oxford, 2007), xxxvi.

[3] See T. Riesenweber, *Uneigentliches Sprechen und Bildermischung in den Elegien des Properz* (Berlin, 2007), 87–8. At 2.5.28, the reading *uerba* of the manuscripts requires this form to be construed with *leuis* as an accusative of relation that seems both linguistically implausible and pointless in the context; see e.g. P. Fedeli, *Properzio. Elegie. Libro II* (Cambridge, 2005), 190. Heyworth (n. 1), 134 adopts Peiper's *uerna* in spite of the fact that this word never acquires a figurative meaning in elegy. I prefer *uera* because it underlines the conflict between Cynthia's external appearance and her real personality. For similar examples where *uerus* modifies a proper name, see Ov. *Rem. am.* 555, Petron. *Sat.* 126.18, Sen. *Suas.* 7.8, *Ilias latina* 824. For the easy confusion between *uera* and *uerba*, see the variance at Stat. *Achil.* 1.32 recorded by J. Méheust in his Budé edition (Paris, 1971), 7.

[4] See R. Maltby, *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991), 482.

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Pro eruditione qua polles et inclytus συγγραφεύς in Occidente laudaris
(Jer. *Adv. Rufin.* 1.9)

and the following sample suggests that this relative clause came to function as a stock expression in Late, Medieval and Renaissance Latin:

uirtute qua polles
(Symmachus, *Ep.* 4.7)

pro caritate qua polles
(Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 9.3.7)

discretione qua uiges, sollertia qua polles, instructione qua plurimum uales
(Braulio Caesaraugustanus; seventh century)[5]

scio enim, inquit, quia prophetiae spiritu quo polles, etiam hoc dicere potes si uis.
(Bede, *Vita sancti Cuthberti* ch. 24; eighth century)[6]

feruore fidei quo polles et amore sanctae plebis
(*Collectio Hispana Gallica Augustodunensis*, *Decretales* 58: *Item Innocentii ad Felicem Episcopum*; ninth century)[7]

tua qua polles pietas
(*Die ältere Wormser Briefsammlung* 17; eleventh century)[8]

caue ne ad sanguinem altum de quo ortus es et ad opem multam qua polles inspicias
(Andrea da Strumi, *Passio Arialdi* 6; eleventh century)[9]

et totum quo polles gratiae, et totum quo fulges gloriae
(Guillermus Alvernus, *Rhetorica diuina* 18; thirteenth century)[10]

nullum tibi discurrendi finem, qua polles in reliquis, ratio fecisset.
(Petrarch, *Fam.* 6.3.57)[11]

si tibi nascenti, quo polles, summus Apollo
ingenium celeste dedit
(Petrarch, *Africa* 9.18–19)

consilio quo polles plurimum
(*Historia Baetica*, p. 19)[12]

ea auctoritate qua polles
(Machiavelli, *Lettere* 156)[13]

[5] See P.F. Alberto (ed.), *Eugenii Toletani Opera omnia* (Turnhout, 2005), 402, lines 25–6.
[6] Available at: http://www.kennydominican.joyeurs.com/LatinPatrology/BedeVitaSanctiCuthberti.htm.
[7] Available at: http://www.benedictus.mgh.de/quellen/chga/chga_077t.htm.
[8] Ed. W. Bulst [= *MGH, Die Briefe der Deutschen Kaiserzeit* 3] (Weimar, 1949), 34, line 18.
[9] Andrea da Strumi, *Passione del santo martire milanese Arialdo*, ed. M. Navoni (Milan, 1994), 68.
[10] Guillermus Alvernus, *Rhetorica diuina* (Basle, *c*. 1492); available at: http://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/show/inc-i-36/.
[11] Petrarch, *Lettres familières*, ed. U. Dotti (Paris, 2002), 2.283.
[12] Carolus Verardus, Sebastian Brant and Leonardus Carmini, *Historia Baetica* (Basle, 1494); available at: http://www.digital-collections.de/.
[13] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Lettere*, ed. F. Gaeta (Milan, 1961), 350.

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Such evidence makes a humanistic correction plausible, all the more so since *polleo* does not occur elsewhere in Catullus, Virgil, Propertius, Tibullus or the Tibullan corpus; Horace uses it on one occasion only (*Ars P.* 242), and Ovid six times (*Fast.* 1.269, 2.425, 6.54; *Met.* 5.508, 7.196; *Tr.* 3.10.55) but always in the present participle form. It follows that *pollice* (verse 14), far from supporting *polles*, may have favoured the interpolation.

The alternative possibility of reading a form of *pello* in 3.10.17 is supported by two passages that deal with the attraction exerted by feminine beauty, that is by a true *forma potens*:[14]

quippe forma impulsi nostra nos amatores colunt

(Ter. *Haut.* 389–90)

ipsum in Hispania iuuenem nullius forma pepulerat captiuae

(Livy 30.14.3)

Yet, if we opt for the verb *pello*, further adaptations prove necessary. Neither future *pelles* nor subjunctive *pellas* capture the fact that Propertius is dealing with the actual powers of the girl's beauty – a point Heyworth seems to overlook when he claims that '*pellas* would be a more obvious correction [than *polles*]'. Indicative *pellis*, while appropriate to the context and recalling *qua primum oculos cepisti ueste Properti | indue* in verses 15–16, creates a metrical oddity, viz. an unusual lengthening of short *-is* at the penthemimeral caesura. Book 2 contains two pentameters with the same anomaly:

uinceris aut uincis, haec in amore rota est

(Prop. 2.8.8)

omnia si dederis oscula, pauca dabis

(Prop. 2.15.50)

But even if we do not emend them away, we should observe that, in both cases, the metrical deviation at hand involves a lexical repetition supplemented with rhyme, and that the initial aspiration of *haec* increases the plausibility of indifference to quantity in 2.8.8.[15] Thus the mere presence of leonine rhyme between *pellis* and *perennis* need not be seen as sufficient for the verse *et pete, qua pellis, ut sit tibi forma perennis* to be metrically acceptable.

The solution consists in assuming that *ut* stems from the corruption of a second occurrence of imperative *pete*:[16]

et pete, qua pellis, pete sit tibi forma perennis
inque meum semper stent tua regna caput.

[14] The example from Cicero (*Cael.* 36) mentioned by Heyworth is less relevant here: *candor huius te et proceritas uoltus oculique pepulerunt.*

[15] See M. Dominicy, 'De la métrique verbale à l'établissement du texte. Sur trois vers de Properce (IV,3,51; IV,7,85; IV,10,31)', *LEC* 75 (2007), 227–48, at 236–7; id., 'L'élégie III, 22 de Properce. Propositions pour une nouvelle édition critique', *AC* 79 (2010), 137–62, at 146.

[16] On hexameters that exhibit a pyrrhic word after the penthemimeral caesura, see P. Tordeur, *Deux études de métrique verbale* (Brussels, 2007), 209–13. According to V. Viparelli Santangelo, *L'esametro di Properzio: Rapporti con Callimaco* (Naples, 1986), 78, Propertius has 82 such verses.

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Confusions between *p* and *u* abound in manuscripts,[17] so that *pete* > *uete* could have been read as *uti* and (subsequently or simultaneously) corrected into *ut* for the sake of metre; indeed, classical poetry rules out pyrrhic *uti* (see for example 1.15.24, 2.22.35, 2.23.9, where the second syllable is scanned long). Once *pellis* was followed by *ut*, scribal correction to *pelles* easily eliminated the metrical anomaly.

Ovid has a quite similar repetition of *pete* ... *petes* preceding *sit tibi*:

> et quemcumque cibum digitis libauerit illa,
> tu pete, dumque petes, sit tibi tacta manus.
>
> (Ov. *Ars am.* 1.577–8)

We may surmise that he was struck by the morphophonological and grammatical pattern of his Propertian model, where leonine rhyme, alliteration in *pe-*, and the distribution of vowels (eight occurrences of short *e*; five of short *i*) contribute to isolating *qua ... forma*. In fact, his line exhibits a still more complex network of sound parallelisms: *dumque pe-* nearly copies *tu pete*; *(sit) tibi tac-* and *(tac)ta manus* are mirror images of *tu pete* and *dumque pe(tes)*. From a syntactical point of view, the two verses differ radically: in *Ars am.* 578, *pete* and *petes* take *cibum* as their direct object and the absence of *ut* before *sit tibi* in Ovid, far from being a grammatically optional feature as in Propertius, follows from the fact that the coordinate structure of the sentence links the subjunctive form to imperative *pete*. But such morphophonological echoes frequently involve syntactically heterogeneous materials: for instance, *nec tibi crediderim uotis contraria uota* (Lygdamus = [Tib.] 3.4.83) imitates both *tunc ego crediderim uobis et sidera et amnes | posse … ducere* (Prop. 1.1.23–4) and *quod si forte tuis non est contraria uotis* (Prop. 1.5.9).

Notice, to conclude, that examples of *pello* with an implicit direct object appear at Ter. *Eun.* 1080, Ov. *Met.* 10.486, Tac. *Ann.* 14.31.3 and perhaps Verg. *Aen*. 11.901 (where the variant reading *poscunt* may be preferred on the basis of 4.614).[18]

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[17] Examples: *ripis* > *riuis* (Hor. *Epod.* 2.25), *uetet* > *petet* (Hor. *Carm.* 3.27.15), *uel* > *per* (Hor. *Carm.* 4.4.43). See G. Friedrich, *Catulli Veronensis liber* (Leipzig–Berlin, 1908), 120 n. 1; J. Diggle and F.R.D. Goodyear (edd.), *The Classical Papers of A.E. Housman* (Cambridge, 1972), 1.102; M. Dominicy, 'Propertius 3.1.27', *Mnemosyne* 62 (2009), 417–31, at 428; id., 'Propertius, 4.5.19–21', *RhM* 153 (2010), 144–87, at 173.

[18] I am grateful to an anonymous referee for numerous suggestions.

WOMEN SCORNED: A NEW STICHOMETRIC ALLUSION IN THE *AENEID**

> μνήσαιο δὲ καί ποτ' ἐμεῖο
> στρευγόμενος καμάτοισι, δέρος δέ τοι ἶσον ὀνείρῳ
> οἴχοιτ' εἰς ἔρεβος μεταμώνιον· ἐκ δέ σε πάτρης

* Kate Allen and Donncha O'Rourke improved this paper with helpful comments, as did *CQ*'s learned reader.

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