ON THE ORDERING OF PROPERTIUS 2.33B.23–6

It is by now generally accepted that there are more poems than one in the lines transmitted as '2.33': 33a (1–22) and 33b (23–40), and a fragment or fragments (41–4).[1] There is little to say about the fragment(s); the couplets bear no connection to the main text of either of the complete poems transmitted here, and little connection to each other.[2] The opening of poem 2.33b, however, merits further attention. In particular, close attention to this opening offers support for the transposition of 2.33b.23–4 and 25–6, adopted by Heyworth in his *OCT*. My treatment of the matter here supplements the brief discussion in his textual commentary.[3]

Poem 33a forms a tidy whole. Murgia suggests 'every poem must begin with a good opening line, end with good closing lines, and be arranged relative to the poems around it so as to avoid confusion'.[4] The opening couplet of 33a sets the scene with astute economy. The opening line does the bulk of the work, *Tristia iam redeunt iterum sollemnia nobis*, then the pentameter adds crucial details, *Cynthia iam noctes est operata decem*. The couplet lays out all of the fundamental elements of the scenario that are required for the rest of the elegy to stand upon: the annual rites which Cynthia must perform, lasting ten days, have returned, unfortunately for Propertius. The remaining 20 lines of the elegy elaborate on and respond to this scenario. Furthermore, the poem's opening word, *tristia*, characterizes the poem's tone. The *sollemnia* are *tristia* from Propertius' perspective; and *tristia* also characterizes the state of mind of the poem's protagonist, Propertius.

Lines 21–2 are good closing lines. Shackleton Bailey points out two ways in which the ending is consonant with Propertius' sense of closure:[5] the final couplet begins with *at tu*, as do the closing couplets of 3.7 and 3.11,[6] and also recalls a key word from the opening couplet (*noctes* 2; *noctibus* 22). These two elements, the adversative with a change of subject, *at tu*, and the echo of a word from the opening, together provide a turn at the end of the poem that both rounds off and redirects its movement.

The second poem likewise ends well, with the poet revising his attitude to wine drinking, which he has railed against in 25–38 but now encourages. The comparatives, *largius* (39) and *mollius* (40), show him not only coming around to the idea but becoming an advocate, redirecting the movement of this poem also. More might be said about the appropriateness of the ending if the opening were more satisfying; the closing rounds off the central idea of the poem without, as things stand, linking with the poem's opening couplet, 23–4. In itself this might not be significant; a poem can surely close well without pointing directly at the opening lines, but there are further reasons to suspect the opening couplet of 33b.

[1] For a concise summary of the arguments, see now S.J. Heyworth, *Cynthia: A Companion to the Text of Propertius* (Oxford, 2007), 259.

[2] In his 1999 Loeb edition, J.P. Goold accepted Heyworth's suggestion that 41–4 do not belong with 33b, printing these two couplets as a fragment and reordered (43–4, 41–2). Yet the connection between the two is not strong and the couplets may equally be fragments from two different poems; Heyworth prints them as two separate fragments.

[3] Heyworth (n. 1), 261.

[4] C.E. Murgia, 'The division of Propertius 2', *MD* 45 (2000), 239.

[5] D.R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana* (Cambridge, 1956), 129.

[6] In 2.16.13, *at tu* at the start of a hexameter occurs again: it too is the final couplet of a poem if with Havet we divide the poem after 14. For further discussion, see Heyworth (n. 1), 177–80.

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Jäger commented on the weakness of 23–4 as an opening couplet: 'auf den ersten Blick scheint das kein rechter Gedichtanfang zu sein, denn kaum eine andere Elegie des Properz setzt so unvermittelt ein'.[7] Fedeli too is given pause: 'A prima vista l'esordio appare brusco e improvviso, tanto da far pensare a una possibile lacuna.'[8] Nor is *non audis* a particularly compelling introduction to what follows: the poem's main subject is not words but wine-drinking – the danger and the beauty – and it is introduced in the third line of 2.33b, line 25: *lenta bibis*. From this flows her disregard for the passage of time, *mediae nequeunt te frangere noctes?* The pentameter, 26, fills out the scene; it is wine and dice together that have beguiled away the evening: *an nondum est talos mittere lassa manus?*

If 23–4 follow rather than introduce this couplet, however, Cynthia's disregard of Propertius' words sharpens the focus of a scenario already nicely sketched in, and prompts the poet to restate the lateness of the hour in more vivid terms, *cum iam | flectant Icarii sidera tarda boves* (23–4).[9] The initial word of line 25, furthermore, neatly characterizes Cynthia's behaviour, and in more than one sense: Cynthia is leisurely and persistent in her drinking, and she is also 'not easily moved, unresponsive' with regard to Propertius.[10] It is thus the couplet transmitted second that provides us with what we need to know in a succinct, elegant fashion that includes careful placement in the initial position of a word that has resonance throughout the remainder of the poem. I suggest that 23–4 and 25–6 have been reversed, and that the poem has a fittingly pointed opening in 25–6.

When read as the poem's second couplet rather than the first, lines 23–4 gain point too. Cynthia's leisurely, persistent drinking is emphasized first in 25–6. Once it has been established that Cynthia is sufficiently preoccupied with drinking and dice-throwing that she has failed to notice the night passing, her attitude toward Propertius comes forward in 23–4 with *non audis*. It is here that the meaning Fedeli highlights in his discussion of *lentus* comes into play: '*lentus* indica un atteggiamento d'insensibilità e d'indifferenza da parte dell'amante che si sta disamoranda: Cinzia, dunque, continua a bere, insensibile alle parole di Properzio.'[11] This order of things is also, incidentally, mimetic in that our attention, like Cynthia's, is drawn first to drinking and only afterwards to Propertius' desire to be heard. In the course of the poem, Propertius voices his (negative) opinion on wine (27–34), but wine regains the upper hand in 35–40 and steals Propertius' attention also. The poem ends with a full wine cup offered to the unaffected drinker, *spumet et aurato mollius in calice*. If the poem opens with 25–6, the closing couplet is allowed to link gracefully with the poem's first words, refilling the cup that was drained at the start:

[7] K. Jäger, *Zweigliederige Gedichte und Gedichtpaare bei Properz und in Ovids Amores*. (Diss., Universität Tübingen, 1967), 230–1.

[8] P. Fedeli, *Properzio: Elegie Libro II* (Cambridge, 2005), 936–7.

[9] There is a textual difficulty in line 23 also, where the manuscripts read *uerba sinis* ***mea ludere***. The solution proposed independently by Housman and Watt, which is in any event preferable, emerges as by far the best when the line is read as the poem's third line rather than its first: *uerba sinis* ***me ecfundere*** gives a vivid description of Propertius' loquaciousness that draws on language appropriate to the poem's scenario, drinking – and pouring out drinks. See Heyworth (n. 1), 261 for parallels supporting this use of *ecfundere*.

[10] *OLD* s.v. *lentus* 5, 6 and 8 respectively.

[11] Fedeli (n. 8), 936–7.

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Lenta bibis: mediae nequeunt te frangere noctes.
an nondum est talos mittere lassa manus?
non audis, et uerba sinis me ecfundere, cum iam
flectant Icarii sidera tarda boues.

The strong sense of closure for 33a offered by 21–2 is now also matched by a strong opening for 33b. The enhanced sense of closure for 33b in 39–40 can now likewise strengthen arguments for separation of 41–4, already unrelated in subject matter, from the preceding lines.

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UNDEIFYING TIBERIUS: A RECONSIDERATION OF SENECA, *APOCOLOCYNTOSIS* 1.2

uelit nolit, necesse est illi omnia uidere quae in caelo aguntur: Appiae uiae curator est, qua scis et diuum Augustum et Tiberium Caesarem ad deos isse.

Like it or not, he cannot help seeing everything that goes on in heaven: he is superintendent of the Appian Way, along which, as you know, both the deified Augustus and Tiberius Caesar went to join the gods. (Sen. *Apocol*. 1.2; text and translation by P.T. Eden)

Contributing to the ongoing debate about what (if anything) Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* has to say about elite views of imperial apotheosis, Spencer Cole has recently put forward a very attractive case. He argues that Seneca is attempting to rescue the reputation of imperial apotheosis, at an early stage in its development, by marking a clear distinction between Claudius and Augustus in the work. Whereas the author/narrator of the piece (to whom I will refer as 'Seneca') never refers to Claudius as 'divine', and suggests that his entry into heaven is due to forceful contrivance rather than merit, the author does indeed refer to Augustus as a god, and suggests that his entry into heaven has been earned through merit.[1]

It is with some awkwardness, then, that Cole needs to excuse an 'anomaly' to this clear-cut thematic design, namely the apparent assertion from Seneca that – contrary to agreed historical fact – Tiberius himself has joined the gods (*Apocol*. 1.2, quoted above).[2] Cole is not alone in this sense of unease, as others before him have tried (unconvincingly) to explain away this Senecan sentiment.[3]

[1] S. Cole, 'Elite scepticism in the *Apocolocyntosis*: further qualifications', in K. Volk and G. Williams (edd.), *Seeing Seneca Whole: Perspectives on Philosophy, Poetry and Politics* (Leiden, 2006), 175–82.

[2] Cole (n. 1), 179–80 regards the sentiment as further evidence of Seneca's desire to mark a distinction between his own list of deified emperors and those officially recognized by senatorial decree: but this has the effect of undermining the careful Senecan design that he has thus far elucidated.

[3] I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford, 2002), 326–7 argues for a strong distinction in Senecan (and indeed Roman) thought between the mortal ritual of deification and absolute divine status. He refers to Seneca's comments about the deified Tiberius as a

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