

## PROPERTIUS 1.16.38

Te non ulla meae laesit petulantia linguae,  
 quae solet irato dicere tota loco†  
 ut me tam longa raucum patiari querela  
 sollicitas trivio pervigilare moras.  
 at tibi saepe novo deduxi carmina versu,

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ingrato *Fruter* tota *O* turba *et* verba *dett.*

To the host of suggestions<sup>1</sup> I would add

quae solet irato dicere turba foro

the sense of the passage is, 'I have never annoyed you with petulant language, with the things the mob in the heated forum is accustomed to say, that you suffer me to ... But I have often ...' His was, as line 41 explains, the language of poetry. The contrast between the language of the forum and poetry is an obvious one, and is made elsewhere by Propertius 'tum tibi pauca suo de carmine dictat Apollo | et vetat insano verba tonare foro. | at tu finge elegos' (4.1.133f.).<sup>2</sup> In the present passage the contrast is between the common language typical of the angry mob and the original ('novo', line 41) verses of the *exclusus amator*. It is particularly bitter that he should be condemned to the 'trivio' (line 40) which, like the *forum*, is the very *milieu* of the type of language he has eschewed.<sup>3</sup>

'Quae' is neuter accusative and the relative clause enlarges upon 'petulantia linguae'.<sup>4</sup> For similar uses cf. Cicero, 'cuius disputationis fit extremum fere de immortalitate animorum, quae se in quietate per visum ex Africano audisse dicebat' (*Lael.* 14), and 'nullis in aliis nisi de republica sermonibus versatus sum, quae nec possunt scribi nec scribenda sunt' (*Fam.* 2.8.2).<sup>5</sup>

Fruter's generally accepted emendation 'ingrato' is usually defended by 'the same corruption' at Prop. 1.6.10, 'quae solet irato tristis amica viro', where the later MSS. and Heinsius read 'ingrato'. That 'irato' is there correct has been convincingly argued by Francis Cairns.<sup>6</sup>

'Foro' may have become 'foco' which in turn begat 'loco', cf. Prop. 4.4.12 'stabant Romano pila Sabina Foro', where, 'Romano' notwithstanding, the majority of MSS. have 'foco'.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See W. R. Smyth, *Thesaurus Criticus Ad Sexti Propertii Textum* (Leiden, 1970), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ovid, *Tr.* 4.10.48ff.; Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.8.11) compares the pleasures of verse, 'poeticis voluptatibus', with the roughness of forensic language, 'forensi asperitate'.

<sup>3</sup> For this notion of 'vulgar language' cf. Cicero 'arripere verba de foro' (*Fin.* 3.2.4), and 'arripere maledictum ex trivio' (*Mur.* 14).

<sup>4</sup> My colleague Archibald Allen explains *quae* differently: comparing (e.g.) Prop. 1.5.17, 'et quaecumque voles fugient tibi verba querenti', where *dicere* is to be understood, he would supply *dicens* with 'petulantia linguae' to govern the 'quae' clause, 'saying the things which ...'

<sup>5</sup> Passages adduced by J. G. F. Powell, *Cato Maior De Senectute* (Cambridge, 1988), in his commentary on *Sen.* 3.7, 'Quae Gaius Salinator, quae Spurius Albinus, homines consulares nostri fere aequales, deplorare solebant!', where 'quae' is exclamatory. Powell's note (pp. 115-16) prompts me to suggest that 'quae' is also exclamatory at Prop. 1.18.24; there I would read 'a tua quot' (with the later MSS. and Housman for 'an tua quod') 'peperit nobis iniuria curas! | quae solum tacitis cognita sunt foribus!', 'What things known only to the silent doors!'

<sup>6</sup> *AJP* 95 (1974), 152.

<sup>7</sup> I thank the Editors and the anonymous referee of *CQ* for their helpful criticisms and suggestions.