

ARMED CAMPS IN PROPERTIUS

This is E. A. Butler's Oxford text (1960) of Prop. 2.13.1-2:

*Non tot Achaemeniis armatur †etrusca† sagittis
spicula quot nostro pectore fixit Amor.*

His critical note on the hexameter reads: "*armatur* NF1 PV; *armantur* F3 DVo.: *armatus* Housman *etrusca*] *Eruthra* Housman: *Persa* Barber: (*armantur*) *Susa* cod. Pici Mirandulani teste Beroaldo, Volscus." W. R. Smyth records another dozen conjectures on *etrusca*, including Pontanus' *Itura*, in his *Thesaurus Criticus ad Sexti Properti Textum* (Leiden 1970), p. 47. I wish to propose one more.

Housman¹) thought well of (*armantur*) *Susa*, which he called the "best conjecture yet proposed," citing Luc. 2.49, *Achaemeniis decurrant Medica Susis / agmina*, but it is not clear why *Susa* should have been lost to *etrusca*. Of *Itura*, Housman's opinion again is worth recalling: "many read *Itura*, which they mean for *Iturea*; but since they do not know whether this figment of theirs is fem. sing. or neut. plur. they cannot tell which form of the verb [-*antur*/-*atur*] to choose;" R. Hanslik printed *armatur Itura* in his Teubner text (Leipzig 1979). Housman's own

1) *Journ. Phil.* 21 (1893) 118 (= *The Classical Papers of A. E. Housman*, ed. J. Diggle and F. D. R. Goodyear, Vol. I [Cambridge 1972] pp. 244-45).

conjecture, *armatus Eruthra*, is close to MSS *armatur etrusca*, but his plea for the introduction of a mythical king, who allegedly gave his name to the Red Sea and was buried on the island of Ogyris (Strabo 766), is a tall order indeed²).

I would suggest that the manuscripts' *Etrusca* is an unremarkable correction of a received *trasca*, and that this *trasca* was a corruption of *castra*³). Propertius wrote:

Non tot Achaemeniis armantur castra sagittis

"Not with so many arrows are the camps of Persians armed..." For the transference of the proper adjective, one may compare 4.3.45, *Romanis utinam patuisent castra puellis*.

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2) H. E. Butler printed *armatur Erythra* in his Loeb edition (1912). For further discussion of the various conjectures, see J.-P. Boucher, *Rev. de Phil.* 35 (1961) 232–40. He himself proposed: *Non tot Achaemeniis armat Gortyna sagittis/spicula*, "Non, sur des flèches achéméniennes Gortyna n' aime pas autant de pointes que l'amour en a enfoncé dans mon coeur;" MSS *etrusca* then is the remnant of a gloss, *V(rbs) Etrusca*, on *Cortona < Gortyna*. For criticism, see P. J. Enk, who elicited from Boucher the translation quoted above and published it in his Leiden commentary (1962) ad loc., with this concluding comment: "intellexerim *sagittas spiculis armare*, sed non credo *spicula sagittis armare* significare posse id quod v.d. Boucher sibi velit." The same criticism may be applied to R. Verdière's defence of *armantur Etrusca* (*Riv. di Stud. Class.* 13 [1965] 23–25); he would translate: "Non, les flèches étrusques ne sont pas autant hérissées de pointes achéméniennes que l'Amour n'en a fichées dans mon coeur."

3) For this sort of corruption, see Housman, *Journ. Phil.* 18 (1890) 17–18 (= *Classical Papers*, pp. 148–49); among other examples, he discusses the miscopying of *et nigras* as *integras* at Prop. 3.5.24. The presumed corruption of *castra* to *trasca* will have been facilitated by the common confusion of *c* and *t* in minuscule scripts, and the "emendation" of *trasca* to *Etrusca* may have owed something to Propertius' use of the adjective *Etruscus* at 1.21.2, 10; 1.22.6; 2.1.29; 3.9.1; *Tuscus* occurs at 4.2.3, 49, 50.

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