

ANIMALS NOT ADMITTED: MARTIAL 4.55.23–24

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In *TAPA* 91 (1960) 376–80, explaining ll. 229–38 of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, F. Sokolowski adduced evidence to show that riding in sacred groves was not permitted; the vehicle (or animal) had to be left outside while the rider proceeded on foot. His evidence (apart from the *Hymn*) is epigraphic and Greek.¹

For further confirmation look to Spain and Martial (l.c.). In a catalogue of places of interest in the poet's native land comes the following:

et sanctum Buradonis ilicetum
per quod vel piger ambulat viator.

L. 24 has never to my knowledge been rightly explained. The note in the Delphin edition (V. Collosso, 1680) is typical: "et quippe loca tam amoena sunt, ut vel iners viator in iis libenter ambulet."

In Martial, as elsewhere, *ambulare* regularly means "walk," though it is occasionally used of other means of locomotion *per translationem*. The traveller, however lazy, who wanted to visit the grove, whether for purely touristic reasons or to pay his respects to the resident *numen*, must descend from his conveyance before entering.

¹ See also B. Jordan and J. Perlin in *GRBS* Monographs 10 (1984) 153: "Chariots and other vehicles drawn by animals were not allowed to enter sacred groves. Upon approaching the wooded precinct visitors must descend from their vehicles and enter the sanctuary on foot. The vehicle was left in an open space especially created for that purpose adjacent to the grove. The purpose of the procedure was to regulate traffic within the sanctuary and thus prevent damage to its vegetation from chariots and carts and from the draft animals pulling them. As Sokolowski says (378), 'it was the constant concern of the religious and state authorities to preserve trees, bushes and lawns around temples. The destruction of greenery, the grazing, stationing, and quartering of animals on sacred ground was rigorously prohibited.'" Another reason will occur to anyone who thinks of dogs and sidewalks. I owe these references to my colleague, Professor John Bodel.