

Two notes on *Silvae*, book 5

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Two Notes on *Silvae*, Book 5

Di Pierpaolo Campana, Pisa

Abstract: My aim is to restore two lines of Statius' *Silvae* (5, 2, 145 and 5, 3, 140). The first one shows a more complex situation and therefore I discuss the main attempts to solve the textual problems before giving my suggestion. The second one needs just the replacement of a single word and I try to suggest a solution which has some paleographical analogies with the manuscript tradition and parallels that suit the sense of the context.

1.

silv. 5, 2, 144-6

*hic suetus dare iura parens, hoc caespite turmas
adfari †vitae† specula castellaque longe
(aspicis?) ille dedit cinxitque haec moenia fossa*

*vitae specula M; vitae speculas Itali; late speculas Waller; velut e specula Traglia; quas hinc speculas Courtney*¹

Statius is imaging the words someone could say to Crispinus, when he, who is going to serve in the army, arrived in Caledonia, which was governed by his father Vetius Bolanus.

Line 145 shows two problems: the main one is *vitae*, which needs to be replaced by something else; the second one is *specula*, which is often supposed to be *speculas*, in connection with the following *castellaque*. In this context, *aspicis* in line 146 is usually thought to be a parenthetical question.

As Shackleton Bailey, who leaves the obelus, says, Waller's conjecture would be good only if we had (and we have not) a good parallel for *late speculas castellaque longe* in sense of *longe lateque speculas castellaque*. Courtney's *quas hinc* suggests a very complex explanation for the corruption. Traglia's attempt gives a good paleographical explanation but a less good meaning of the phrase: *specula*

* Wish to thank Kathleen Coleman, with whom I discussed this note.

1 These are the main conjectures; for a full record of the attempts to restore the text see the following editions ad loc.: J. S. Phillimore (Oxford 1905); H. Frère (Paris 1944); A. Marastoni (Leipzig 1961); A. Traglia (Torino 1978); E. Courtney (Oxford 1990); D. R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge, MA-London 2003, with translation); and D. A. Slater, *The Silvae of Statius* (Oxford 1908); E. Courtney, "Emendations of Statius' *Silvae*", *BICS* 15, 1968, 57.

means “watchtower” and I can not see why a mound should be compared with a watchtower, whose function was not to leave a *dux* speaking to the soldiers but observing the landscape.

My suggestion is to write these lines as follows:

*hic suetus dare iura parens, hoc caespite turmas
adfari; vel quae speculas castellaque longe
aspicis ille dedit cinxitque haec moenia fossa*

“Even the watchtower and forts which you see in the distance he set”². The abbreviations of *vel* are often read in manuscripts as *ut* or *t*.

Connecting the neuter pronoun to substantives with a different gender would not give problems: see for example Sen. *const.sap.* 8, 3 *damna et dolores, ignominias, locorum commutationes, orbitates, discidia, quae sapientem... non mergunt*³.

Moreover, *aspicis* as a parenthetical question seems to me odd in the context: Statius is imaging the speech of an hypothetical inhabitant when Crispinus hypothetically arrived in Caledonia. We can expect a parenthetical question like this only if someone was really showing the land, but it is less natural in a “potential” speech.

2.

silv. 5, 3, 139-40

*non totiens victorem Castora gyro
nec fratrem caestu virides †clausero† Therapnae.*

Statius is speaking about the many victories of his father in poetic contests, comparing them with the victories of Castor and Pollux in athletic games.

Line 140 is corrupt, but the sense of these lines is quite clear and they just need a verb that fits the context. The main conjectures are Watt’s *auxere*, Håkanson’s *coluere* (cf. *silv.* 4, 8, 53 *umbrosaue magis coluere Therapnae*), and Calderini’s *plausere*, accepted by Shackleton Bailey⁴.

2 The sentence would be a sort of *hysteron-proteron* in respect to the following: *cinxitque haec moenia fossa*.

3 The phenomenon is well known: about this kind of grammatical agreement see in general Hofmann-Szantyr II, 2, 2, 435.

4 See Shackleton Bailey cit. (n. 1), 401; and now also E. Courtney, “On editing the *Silvae*”, *HSCP* 102, 2004, 446 and Shackleton Bailey, “On editing the *Silvae*: a Response”, *HSCP* 102, 2004, 455.

My suggestion is *cinxere* (scil. *lauro*): among the examples of *cingo* in such contexts, see Verg. *Aen.* 5, 539–40 *sic fatus cingit viridanti tempora lauro / et primum ante omnis victorem appellat Acesten* (who won in an archery contest).

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