

# Housman emending Virgil (A. 4. 225)\*

*vade age, nate, voca Zephyros et labere pennis  
Dardaniumque ducem, Tyria Karthagine qui nunc  
225 expectat fatisque datas non respicit urbes,  
adloquere*

A hundred years ago A. E. Housman (*Classical Review* 19, 1905, 260 f.) rejected out of hand *expectat* in the sense of *moratur, terit tempus* (Servius *ad loc.*). He proposed instead *Hesperiam* and was careful trying to make it sound palaeographically probable. In this he has evidently failed to convince. Most editors of the 20th century have taken no notice of his article: e.g. W. Janell (Teubner 1920), H. Goelzer (Budé 1925), R. A. B. Mynors (OCT 1969), J. Perret (Budé 1977). An exception is the edition of R. Sabbadini - L. Castiglioni (*Corpus Scriptorum Lat. Paravianum* 1944) and their successor M. Geymonat (1973) where Housman is at least mentioned in the *apparatus criticus*.

Housman, however, deserves serious consideration. Since his time the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (s.v. *expecto* vol. V, col. 1897, 77 [by O. Hiltbrunner 1950]) has A. 4. 225 as its only example for the use of *expectare* in the sense of *desidere, otiosum esse*. Though R. D. Williams (1972) without discussion found the “very unusual usage” (i.e. ‘delays’) “perfectly acceptable” R. G. Austin (1955), in a sober discussion, dismissed on the one hand the emendations made (by Housman and A. Campbell<sup>1</sup>) and on the other the parallels adduced by A. S. Pease (1934) in defence of the traditional interpretation of *expectat*. Against Pease Austin rightly maintained that *expectare* clearly implies waiting with expectation for something to happen. In view of such ‘parallels’ (cf. also *OLD* s.v. *ex(s)pecto* 4 a) Virgil’s *expectare* here cannot easily be defended by instances like Juv. 1. 109 (to wait in a queue), Cic. *Fam.* 15. 17. 1 (at a gate for somebody to appear), Justinus 5. 4. 1 (fully armed to meet the enemy), Quintil. 4. 5. 19 (in court for evidence to be presented), Plaut. *Truc.* 916 (for the loved one to turn up), Cic. *Quinct.* 54 (for a friend to

settle his accounts), Sen. *Ben.* 5. 12. 1 (for a particular line of thought to be finished), Pers. 4. 19 (for the truth to be revealed).

So far, so good. What, then, about Austin's own solution? "... Aeneas is 'waiting expectantly' for something - the completion of Carthage, the work on which Mercury finds him busy (260): and the object to *expectat* can be supplied from *urbes*; it is in Carthage that he is awaiting his city, without any thought for the cities that Fate has already made his." The natural *transitive* usage is found at *A.* 4. 430 *expectet facilemque fugam ventosque ferentis* (Dido begging for a last concession to her need for a respite), or at 4. 134 *expectant* (where the leading persons are waiting for Dido to appear). Nevertheless, the arbitrary nature of understanding *expectare* along Austin's line is evident. If *expectare* is taken in the usual sense of 'wait for' the most natural object to be supplied would be *fatis ... datas ... urbes*, the exact opposite of the situation Jupiter is pointing at. Even if *urbes* alone could be taken with *expectat* the natural way to understand the reference would be to the promised city in Italy, not Carthage.<sup>2</sup>

If one compares Jupiter's message (223 - 237) to Mercury an observation seems relevant to our issue: Jupiter's complaint is that Aeneas has *no thought for the city* (*urbes* being probably<sup>3</sup> pl. for sing.) granted him by fate (reflecting in a milder form 221 leading up to Jupiter's intervention: *oblitos famae melioris amantis*). At the end of this passage (236) Jupiter returns to the reproachful *non respicit* (225) in the form of *nec prolem Ausoniam et Lavinia respicit arva*, giving *urbes* more substance and sting by means of the *nomina propria*. Though loyally passing on the gist of Jupiter's mandate Mercury is, at least partly, more excoriating (265 - 276). Instead of the first *non respicit* he laments Aeneas' forgetfulness (cf. 221): *regni rerumque oblite tuarum* (267). *Aut qua spe inimica in gente moratur* (235) becomes *qua spe Libycis teris otia terris*. And the two lines *Ascanione pater Romanas invidet arces?* (234) and *nec prolem Ausoniam et Lavinia respicit arva* (236) Mercury combines to become the exhortation *Ascanium surgentem et spes heredis Iuli/ respice, cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus/ debetur* (274 ff.). - The notion 'dally' is thus prominent in both accounts (respectively *moratur* and *teris otia*), Aeneas' 'forgetfulness' is taken up twice in each passage (respectively *non respicit/ nec ... respicit* in Jupiter's mouth, and more forcefully: *oblite* and the imperative *respice* in Mercury's). Thus *expectat* would create an imbalance in Jupiter's monologue by stressing the dallying of Aeneas twice.

In view of all this an emendation seems indeed called for. Housman's *Hesperiam* is elegant and gives excellent meaning. *Fatis datas* would then have to be taken with *Hesperiam* as well. I can see no objection to it from a linguistic or contextual point of view, and *-que*, of course, does not need to combine two finite verbs. But in my opinion Housman's attempt can be improved on by reading

*qui nunc  
optatas fatisque datas non respicit urbes*

For the reader, who has in the Third Book heard about the futile attempts at founding a new city, *optare* is by now established as a term used in connection with the quest for a new home: 3. 131 ff. *et tandem antiquis Curetum adlabimur oris./ ergo avidus muros optatae molior urbis* (cf. also 3. 509 *sternimur optatae gremio telluris ad undam*). Crete turned out not to be in accordance with the 'will' of fate. Apollo sends the Penates as his messengers to tell that he will grant an empire to the future city pointing to *Hesperia* (163), alias *Italia* (166), alias *Corythus*

(170), alias *terrae Ausoniae* (170/ 171) as the original home of Dardanus.<sup>4</sup> The address ends by maximizing the authority and will it rests on in the last resort: Jupiter himself forbids them to settle in Crete (171).

I see 225, in the above emended form, as reminding us of what has been the ardent wish on Aeneas' part (*optatas*) in the same breath as alluding to what is the highest will (*fatis datas*): Jupiter wants to remind Aeneas of the basis on which his whole enterprise depends, that there must be harmony between his own longing for a new city, i.e. a national existence, on the one hand and what is granted him by Fate on the other. It is exactly this kind of alliance between human wish and divine decree that would be conveyed by *optatas fatisque datas*. Aeneas has only to be reminded.

What might have happened at some narrow stage in the ancient transmission was that *expectare* ousted *optare*, e.g. by a comment, either interlinear or marginal, like: *optatas ... urbes: id est: urbes quas expectat*.

University of Oslo

EGIL KRAGGERUD

Department of Classical and Romance Studies

P.O. Box 1007 Blindern, 0315 Oslo

[[egil.kraggerud@kri.uio.no](mailto:egil.kraggerud@kri.uio.no)]

## NOTES

\* I am most grateful to the Editor for his corrections and suggestions.

<sup>1</sup> Campbell would have *exceptat* 'grabs', *Classical Review* 52, 1938, 162 f. combining it with *Tyrias* at 224 proposed by 'S.W.' *Classical Review* 2, 1888, 226.

<sup>2</sup> Austin was preceded in this interpretation by O. Jahn, who was rejected by R. Dietsch, *Theologumenon Vergilianorum particula*, (Programm) 1853 (I rely for this information on A. Forbiger and Pease).

<sup>3</sup> I leave the editor's question for the readers to decide: "I wonder if here it means what it says - i.e. Lavinium > Alba Longa > Roma, three in all!" (cf. 234 *Ascanione* [as heir to Alba Longa] *pater Romanas invidet arces* and likewise 274-275).

<sup>4</sup> *Dardaniumque ducem* (224) recalls 3. 94-98 and 3. 163-168.