

Martial 13.98 is edited by Shackleton Bailey in his Teubner edition as follows¹:

Caprea

Pendentem summa capream de rupe uidebis,
casuram speres. decipit illa canes.

It is thus translated in his Loeb²:

Roe deer

Should you see the roe deer poised on the summit of
a crag, you would think she was about to fall. She's
fooling the hounds.

His only comment in either place is a reference in the Loeb edition to his vindication of *decipit* against *despicit* at “More Corrections and Explanations of Martial”, *AJPh* 110, 1989, 149–50. However, other editors, such as Farnaby and Friedlaender, cite parallels that relate to a different animal:

Verg. *ecl.* 1.74–6

ite meae, quondam felix pecus, ite capellae:
non ego uos posthac uiridi proiectus in antro
dumosa pendere procul de rupe uidebo.

¹ Cf. *M. Valerii Martialis epigrammaton libri*, Stuttgart 1990, 448.

² Cf. *Martial, Epigrams*, Cambridge [Mass.] 1993, 213.

Ov. *Pont.* 1.8.51–2

ipse ego pendentis, liceat modo, rupe capellas,
ipse uelim baculo pascere nixus oues.

Baebius Italicus, *Il. Lat.* 888

tondent prata greges, pendent in rupe capellae.

In all three passages it is not roe-deer that hang from rocks, but goats, those hardy mountaineers³; and Shackleton Bailey himself, in the article cited, writes: ‘The goat in the painting or whatever looks as if she is about to fall...’ The hunting of wild goats is attested as well by Vergil (*Aen.* 4.152–3) as by Pseudo-Oppian (*Cyn.* 2.356–76); although most scholars prefer to suppose that *caprea* in Martial retains its proper sense, but has appropriated a poetic motif describing goats, the transference of sense presupposed by Shackleton Bailey’s first translation⁴, though not recorded in the *OLD* or *ThLL*, can also be documented.

The similarity between the words *caprea* and *capra* has demonstrably led both to mental confusion and to textual corruption. At Ov. *Fast.* 2.491 the paradosis runs:

Est locus, antiqui Capreae dixere paludem;

In the fifteenth century the correct name of *Caprae* was restored from Liv. 1.16.1; however, the alternative was interpolated into the tradition of Plu. *Rom.* 27.6: περὶ τὸ καλούμενον Αἰγὸς {ἢ ζορκὸς} ἔλος⁵. This evidently rests on

³ Note too *Culex* 51, in which goats ‘*scrupea desertas haerebant ad caua rupes*’, explained by Housman on Lucan. 3.295.

⁴ One referee remarks that both José Guillén (Zaragoza 1986) and Dulce Estefanía (Madrid 1991) render ‘cabra montés’.

⁵ So too Flor. 1.1.16, Sol. 1.20, *Vir. ill.* 2.13, Hier. *Chron.* s.a. A. 1300; cf. PF 57.6–7, and perhaps the *Vicus Capraria* and *Aedicula Capraria*. Plutarch (who like Solinus dates Romulus’ death there to the *Nonae Caprotinae*) has unequivocally Αἰγὸς ἔλος at *Cam.* 33.10, *Numa* 2.1; so too Zonaras 7.4 (ii. 96.16 Dindorf).

the knowledge that some Romans thought the animal after which the marsh was named to have been a roe and not a goat; Ovid was amongst their number, unless we will believe *a priori* that his text was corrupted in transmission to the archetype⁶. Unfortunately, we have no ancient explanation for the name.

At Scrib. Larg. 127 the *editio princeps* of Joanes Ruellius (Paris 1529) makes ‘*caprae montanae stercus*’, dried and rubbed with a grain of myrrh in three cyathi of wine, a cure for jaundice; it is cited with this reading by T. J. Leary in his edition of the *Xenia*⁷. However, Scribonius’ most illustrious editor, Joannes Rhodius (Padua 1655, 201) noted: ‘Galenus de Simpl. facult. lib. x. narrat Romae ad auriginem ex vino praebuisse medicum quendam: quoniam digerit et acre est’. Since Galen’s chapter (*Simp.* 10.22), is headed *περὶ αἰγείας κόπρου*, of which the doctor in question *τοῖς ἰκτερικοῖς ἐδίδου τὰς σπυράθους δι’ οἴνου πίνειν* (xii. 299 Kühn), the true reading must be the *caprae* of MS Toledo, Biblioteca del Cabildo 98.12 adopted by Sergio Sconocchia in his Leipzig Teubner of 1983⁸.

The resemblance of the names was explained by Varro by a resemblance between the beasts themselves: *LL* 5.101: *caprea a similitudine quadam caprae*. From that it does not take a goat’s agility to reach Serv. on *Aen.* 4.152: *ferae caprae hoc est caprae. et bene aptat descriptionem ad species, ut ceruis campos, capreis saxa permittat*⁹; in DS this scholion (with *campis* by persistence for

⁶ So apparently the Teubner editors E. H. Alton, D. E. W. Wormell, E. Courtney (Leipzig 1978), whose own study of the MSS’ relations indicate that *Caprae* (M = Oxford, Bodleian Library Auct. F. 4.25, s. xv) is an innovation against the *Caprae* of A (BAV, Reg. lat. 1709, s. x), U (BAV, Vat. lat. 3262, s. xi), and G (KBR 5369–5373, s. xi).

⁷ Cf. *Martial Book XIII: the Xenia. Introduction and Commentary*, London 2001, 160.

⁸ Conversely at Plin. *NH* 11.191, where *caprae* is transmitted, the 16th-c. correction to *caprae* is demanded by Aristotle’s *περὶ ζῴων* at *PA* 4.2, 676b27 (note too the following *cerui*).

⁹ Cf. Ti. Claudius Donatus *ad loc.* (I, 373 Georgii): *ferae, inquit, caprae, hoc est agrestes, quas capreas dicimus. mansuetae sunt enim quae sunt in gregibus nostris et quae non metuant hominum conspectum, agrestes uero timidae, leues ad cursum, quo fiebat ut saxi de uertice et iugis praecipitentur.*

capreis) is preceded by a corrupt note about *capreae* that appear to fall when they leap¹⁰. At *Aen.* 6.288 we read in both recensions that the Chimaera ‘*ore leo, postremis partibus draco, media caprea secundum fabulas fuit*’¹¹, although the true reference is to a mountain in Cilicia with a fiery summit and lions nearby, ‘*media autem pascua sunt*’, to which DS adds ‘*quae capreis abundant*’. From resemblance we have passed to transference: *caprea* must mean ‘goat’, as too at *HA Aurelian* 10.2: *ut . . . quingentos seruos, duo milia uaccarum, equas mille, ouium decem milia, caprearum quindecim in priuatam uillam Valeriani congereret*¹². The same catachresis reappears in medieval texts¹³.

This transference was abetted, and perhaps instigated, by the fact that the dative and ablative plural *capris* is not marked for gender. Normally this does not matter, since the species rather than the individual is intended; on other occasions the context, or a qualifying word, makes clear what is meant: Varro, *RR*

¹⁰ *ita enim capreae* [*caperae* MS Bern, Burgerbibliothek 167] † *suspensionis super saxa currunt ut putes cadere illas cum exiliunt* (cf. MS Bern, Burgerbibliothek 165: *quia putantur cadere capreae cum exiliunt*).

¹¹ For *caprea* Hamburg, Staats- und UB Cod. philol. 52 reads *craprea*; MS Bern, Burgerbibliothek 172 of DS corrects to *capra*, as does *Myth. Vat.* II §154, p. 216.19 Kulcsár (the MS D cited for *caprea* by Bode, p. 119 is a late text of Servius), cf. *caprinum* Alberic of London (*Myth. Vat.* III) 14. 5, p. 252.39 Bode; *Myth. Vat.* I §71, p. 31.4, 7 Kulcsár (1.71.2, 4 Zorzetti) likewise corrected the *caprea* and *capreas* he found in the echo of our passage at *Isid. Etym.* 11.3.36.

¹² That the Σ manuscripts read *caprarum* proves only that an Italian humanist could recognize the sense; cf. P. K. Marshall in L. D. Reynolds, ed., *Texts and Transmission: a Survey of the Latin Classics*, Oxford 1983, 355.

¹³ Erchempert, *Historia Langobardorum Beneuentanorum* 24 (*MGH, Scr. rer. Lang.* 243–4): “Non sumus” inquit “caprearum houile, ut in saxorum cauernis tueamur [*sic passiuē*], ad humiliaque denique descendamus, ut altos nos et inhumiles circumspectantibus prebeamus”; Richard of Bury, *Philobiblon* 9: ‘*quas nequaquam pedetentim pertranseunt, sed ad instar caprearum saltuatim ascendunt*’, correctly translated ‘like goats ascend by leaps and bounds’ by Ernest Thomas, rev. Michael Maclagan, Oxford 1960, 103.

2.3.4: *de capris quod meliore semine eae quae bis pariant, ex his potissimum mares solent summitti ad admissuras; CIL 6.32323.95* (of the sacrifice to the Moerae at Augustus' *Ludi Saeculares*): *agnIs femInIs et IX caprIs femi[n]Is*; Liv. 25.12.13: *Apollini boue aurato et capris duabus albis auratis*. However, there are occasions on which greater clarity is required.

Phaedrus 4.17 is headed 'De capreis barbatis', but is not concerned with roe-deer:

Barbam capellae cum impetrassent ab Ioue,
 hirci maerentes indignari coep̄erunt
 quod dignitatem feminae aequassent suam (1–3).

The author of the headings, however late he may have been¹⁴, evidently considered the diminutive *capellis* unsuited to functional prose¹⁵, but *capris*, imprudently conjectured by Hervieux¹⁶, would denote the entire goat kind and not merely the females.

Much earlier, however, we read at Suet. *Tib.* 45:

feminarum quoque, et quidem illustrium, capitibus quanto opere solitus sit inludere¹⁷, eidentissime apparuit Malloniae cuiusdam exitu, quam perductam nec quicquam amplius pati constantissime recusantem delatoribus obiecit ac ne ream quidem interpellare desiit, ecquid paeniteret; donec ea relicto iudicio domum se

¹⁴ See J. P. Postgate in his Oxford Classical Text, Oxford 1920, xiv.

¹⁵ *Capella* is used twelve times in Vergil's *Bucolics*, twice in the *Georgics*, and never in the *Aeneid*.

¹⁶ Léopold Hervieux, *Les Fabulistes latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge*, Paris 1893–9, II, 48 'CAPRI(E)S' (*sic*). Several editors emend silently, but A. Guaglianone, in his *Corpus Paravianum* edition (Turin 1958), retains the transmitted reading.

¹⁷ Cf. *Iul.* 22.2 (cited by Donna W. Hurley, in her and G. P. Goold's revision of J. C. Rolfe's Loeb edition, Cambridge [Mass.] 1997–8); the phrase implies *irrumatio* before the reference to φοινικισμός retrospectively reveals *feminarum* . . . *capitibus* to denote women as bearers of social and legal status, not merely as bodies.

abripuit ferroque transegit, obscenitate oris hirsuto atque
 olido seni clare exprobrata. unde mora in Atellanico
 exhodio proximis ludis adsensu maximo excepta
 percrebuit, hircum uetulum capreis naturam ligurrire.

Although Robert Graves in his Penguin translation renders the last five words ‘The old goat goes / For the does / With his tongue’¹⁸ and Catherine Edwards for her Oxford World’s Classics ‘the old goat is licking the does’ behinds’¹⁹, after *hircum* we wonder what does are doing here; surely the victims must be nannygoats, ‘chèvres’ in the Budé translation of Henri Ailloud²⁰. Here *capris* would not, for the original audience, have been free from ambiguity, since Tiberius’ tastes were not confined to females; moreover *capreis* allows the verse (*Atell. inc. nom.* 3 Ribbeck) to be restored as a bacchiac tetrameter, *hircus uetu|lus capreis | naturam | ligurrit* on the lines of *Atell. inc. nom.* 5: *Orcus uo|bis ducit | pedes — | ∪ — —*, without recourse to the scansion *cap’ris* dubiously admissible on the popular stage²¹. There is thus no need either to invoke confusion in Suetonius’ (or a copyist’s) mind, in a context of debauchery, with the name of the island made notorious by the emperor’s enormities, or to intrude it into the text as Bücheler did: the senarius *ligurrit naturam hircus uetulus Cap’reis* not only requires mute and liquid to make position, but leaves *naturam* suggesting the autoerotic suppleness of Catull. 88.8. Rather, we should allow that the use of *caprea* for *capra*, or at least of *capreis* for *capris*, was current Latin in the time of Tiberius.

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¹⁸ Cf. *The Twelve Caesars by Suetonius*, Harmondsworth, rev. 1979.

¹⁹ Cf. *Suetonius, Lives of the Caesars*, Oxford 2000.

²⁰ Cf. *Suétone, Vies des douze Césars*, Paris, rev. 1954–7. Louis Havet in his edition of Phaedrus (Paris 1895) invokes this passage in his note on the title of Phaedrus’ fable.

²¹ Such scansions had been impermissible in Republican drama, tragic no less than comic; that they are found in Phaedrus (2.2.10 *nigros*, 4.2.16 *pat’ris*), let alone the Senecan trimeter, does not prove that they would have sounded unforced in a farce.