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Level 3b

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Propertius' *Elegies*: A Selection

Welcome to the Latin Summer School! Over the course of this week we will be looking at a selection of Propertius' *Elegies* from Book 1 and Book 4.

A native of Umbria, Propertius was born c. 50 BCE and moved to Rome as a young man in order to devote himself to the fine arts and meet with the city's great litterateurs. Book 1 (published c. 30 BCE) was a real hit in the field of love poetry, prompting sponsorship from the famous patron Maecenas. The four poems we will examine from this book highlight the madness and vibrancy of erotic desire through the figure of Propertius' *puella*, Cynthia, while also situating the author in a wider canon of ancient literature. Book 4 (published *post* 16 BCE) is the work of an established Augustan author, far-reaching in its concerns of aetiology and state religion, although never losing touch with the elegiac *puella* that began it all. Thus we will read the two great Cynthia poems of this book in order to compare and contrast them with her depiction in Book 1 over a decade earlier.

The notes for this document are scanned from *Propertius Elegies: Book I* (1961) and *Propertius Elegies: Book IV* (1965), both edited by W. A. Camps. The commentary may provide help with grammar as well as literary and cultural understanding.

Selection of poems:

1.1 Love's Madness

1.2 Love Goes Naked

1.4 Constancy in Love

1.7 In Praise of Love Poetry

4.7 Cynthia from Beyond the Grave

4.8 Cynthia in a Fury

We're looking forward to meeting you in January!

Stef and Phillip

1.1

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.
tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus
et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus,
donec me docuit castas odisse puellas 5
improbis, et nullo vivere consilio.
ei mihi, iam toto furor hic non deficit anno,
cum tamen adversos cogor habere deos.
Milanion nullos fugiendo, Tulle, labores
saevitiam durae contudit lasidos. 10
nam modo Partheniis amens errabat in antris,
rursus in hirsutas ibat et ille feras;
ille etiam Hylaei percussus vulnere rami
saucius Arcadiis rupibus ingemuit.
ergo velocem potuit domuisse puellam: 15
tantum in amore fides et benefacta valent.
in me tardus Amor non ullas cogitat artes,
nec meminit notas, ut prius, ire vias.
at vos, deductae quibus est pellacia lunae
et labor in magicis sacra piare focis, 20
en agedum dominae mentem convertite nostrae,
et facite illa meo palleat ore magis!
tunc ego crediderim Manes et sidera vobis
posse Cytinaeis ducere carminibus.
aut vos, qui sero lapsum revocatis, amici, 25
quaerite non sani pectoris auxilia.
fortiter et ferrum saevos patiemur et ignes,
sit modo libertas quae velit ira loqui.
ferre per extremas gentes et ferre per undas,
qua non ulla meum femina norit iter. 30
vos remanete, quibus facili deus annuit aure,
sitis et in tuto semper amore pares.
nam me nostra Venus noctes exercet amaras,
et nullo vacuus tempore deficit Amor.
hoc, moneo, vitate malum: sua quemque moretur 35
cura, neque assueto mutet amore torum.
quod si quis monitis tardas adverterit aures,
heu referet quanto verba dolore mea!

NOTES

I

A poem of tormented feeling, of the kind of which Cat. LXXXV is the most famous example. The poet is prisoner of a passion from which, at least with half of himself, he longs to be free.

Of the motives used in developing the theme a number resemble motives that are used also by Tibullus and Horace, though not in identical applications. Compare for instance lines 1-4 with Tib. II, iv, 1-4, line 7 with Tib. II, v, 109, lines 9ff. with Tib. I, iv, 47-50, lines 19 and 24 with Tib. I, ii, 45-6, line 25 with Hor. *Epod.* xi, 25-6, lines 27-8 with Tib. I, v, 5-6 (where Tibullus desires as punishment for his failing the same painful treatment that Propertius desires as a means of liberation), line 33 with Tib. II, iv, 11.

Further, lines 1-4 recall in details the opening lines of *A.P.* XII, ci, an epigram of Meleager:

Τόν με πόθοις ἄτρωτον ὑπὸ στέρνοισι Μύϊσκος
ἄμμασι τοξεύσας τοῦτ' ἐβόησεν ἔπος·
Τὸν θρασὺν εἶλον ἐγὼ· τὸ δ' ἐπ' ὄφρῦσι κείνο φρύαγμα
σκηπτροφόρου σοφίας ἠνίδε ποσσι πατῶ.

New phases in the development of the thought begin with lines 9, 19 and 29 (or 31).

1-2. prima...nullis ante cupidinibus: at III, xv, 1ff. Propertius says that his first experience of love was with a certain Lycinna. But it was not what he now understands by love.

2. contactum: this word combines the associations of two meanings that it bears in other contexts: 'hit' by a missile, and 'infected' with a disease.

3. tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus: this can be rendered either (a) 'quelled my look of stubborn pride' (*fastus* being genitive of quality or definition); or (b) 'forced my stubborn pride to lower its eyes' (*fastus* being possessive genitive, and the notion of 'pride' being half-personified).

5-6. castas odisse puellas, etc.: 'to have no use for women who are not free with their favours, and to lead a reckless life'.

NOTES: I, 5-13

This could refer either to the poet's way of living in the company of Cynthia and her friends (cf. I, iv, 25-7, II, vi, 1 ff., II, xxxii, 29 ff., etc.), or to his seeking lower company as a result of unkindness on her part (cf. II, xxiii, II, xxiv, 9, etc.). The present poem purports to be written at a time when P.'s relations with Cynthia were unhappy. *castus*, -a is a less specific word than 'chaste', and could apply, for instance, to a courtesan who was faithful for a period to a single lover.

9ff. Milanion: the successful wooer of Atalanta daughter of Iasus (or Iasius). Atalanta, who had been exposed in infancy on Mount Parthenius in Arcadia and suckled by a she-bear, was extremely fleet of foot (cf. *uelocem* in line 15) and lived as a huntress in the Arcadian hills, where on a certain occasion two centaurs named Hylaeus and Rhoeteus tried to molest her. There was also a famous story, not mentioned by Propertius here, that Atalanta challenged all her suitors to race against her, and that Milanion succeeded by dropping three golden apples, which she could not resist stopping to pick up. [Another form of the legend places Atalanta in Boeotia, not Arcadia, and makes her successful suitor Hippomenes, not Milanion.]

11-13. nam modo...ibat et...ille etiam...: with this series compare I, iii, 41-3 *nam modo...rursus et...interdum*. The present passage is said to be the only one in classical Latin poetry in which *modo* = 'sometimes' in the first member of a series has not corresponding to it in the second member a word such as *modo*, *saepe*, *tum*, *rursus*, etc.

11. antris here = 'rocky glens', as sometimes elsewhere in poetry (see Housman on Manilius v, 311). The word more regularly means a grotto, or the space sheltered by an overhanging rock.

12. ibat...uidere: this infinitive of purpose or result after a verb of motion is not found in classical prose, but there are several instances in the Augustan poets. Cf. in this book vi, 33, xi, 5, xx, 24.

uidere can here be rendered 'to brave'. The Latin can keep the simple verb of experience and let the fact that the experience is a formidable one be sufficiently conveyed by the context: cf. Virg. *Aen.* VI, 134 *bis nigra uidere Tartara*; III, 431 *informem uasto uidisse sub antro Scyllam*. In English we have to use a stronger verb than 'see'.

13. rami here stands for 'club'. The same word is used of

NOTES: I, 13-20

Hercules' club at IV, ix, 15. [But Ovid, *A.A.* II, 191, speaks of *Hylaei...arcum.*]

14. **Arcadiis rupibus**: this may be ablative of place, or dative, or both: cf. I, xx, 16 (and, for a double construction, note on I, xix, 6).

15. **domuisse**: the perfect infinitive is used here, as often in the elegiac poets, simply as a metrically convenient synonym for the present infinitive. It does not indicate a time past in relation to *potuit*.

16. **tantum...ualent**: this is the general rule illustrated by the experience of Milanion which he has just cited. But his own case, he goes on to say, is an exception to the general rule.

preces. He has not actually said that Milanion made use of these, but he can easily enough expect us to assume it. He probably has in mind the standard figure of the devoted and imploring lover, and having dwelt so much, in his illustration, on the first of these attributes he has forgotten that he did not illustrate the second.

19. **deductae...fallacia lunae**: 'the trick of drawing down the moon'. *fallacia* is often used in comedy for the tricks and contrivances of the ingenious slave; in Virg. *Georg.* IV, 443 it is used of the magic whereby Proteus turns himself into fire, water, animal forms, etc. The value of the genitive *deductae...lunae* is as in I, xvii, 7 *placatae...fortuna procellae*, or Virg. *Aen.* I, 27 *spretaque iniuria formae*. The word *fallacia* suggests of course deceit or illusion, and Propertius may have intended this, for cf. the scepticism of the witches' powers implied in lines 23-4. But the phrase is really ambiguous; a keen analyst may press the distinction between the illusions created by a conjuror and the real miracles performed by a magician, but under which heading shall we classify the *fallaciae* of Proteus in *Georg.* IV, 443?

20. **sacra piare**: the usual meaning of *piare* is to appease (divine displeasure) or expiate (a religious offence) by the performance of *sacra*. In its context here and with *sacra* for object it evidently = 'perform' with a special overtone, very likely the idea of an elaborate and exact ritual.

[The ironical use of a word with holy associations in an unholy context is not un-Propertian; for cf. III, xix, 17-18 *matris iram natorum caede piavit amor.*]

23. **crediderim uobis . . . posse . . .**: 'believe your claim that you can . . .'

24. **Cytinaeis**. Cytina was a town in Thessaly, mentioned by Lycophron, *Alexandra* 1389, where the quantity of the second syllable is attested by the metre. Hence *Cytinaeis* is a plausible though not certain correction of the corrupt text given at this point by our MSS. Its meaning will be 'Thessalian', the town standing for the country as often in Augustan poets, and the witches of Thessaly being a byword: cf. III, xxiv, 10 *Thessala saga*, in a passage which seems to echo this one.

[Some read here *Cytaeines*, as the witch Medea is called *Cytaeis*—woman of Cytaea, in Colchis—by Propertius at II, iv, 17. The form *Cytaeine* would be an alternative to *Cytaeis* as *Nereine* (admittedly a patronymic) is to *Nereis*.]

31. **facili deus annuit aure**: the jump in thought between *aure* and *annuit* is worth noting, as it is characteristic of Propertius.

33. **in me nostra Venus noctes exercet amaras**: here *nostra Venus* could mean either (a) 'Venus whom I (or we lovers) serve'; or (b) 'the thought of her whom I love', *Venus* being taken as in Virg. *Ecl.* III, 68 *parta meae Veneri sunt munera*. The former meaning—'my (or our) mistress Venus'—is here more probable, in view of I, xiv, 16 ff.

noctes exercet amaras could mean either (a) 'troubles my nights and makes them wretched', *amaras* being taken proleptically and *exercet* as in Virg. *Georg.* IV, 453 *non te nullius exercent numinis irae*; or (b) 'works (i.e. brings about) nights of torment', *exercet* being taken as in Virg. *Aen.* IV, 99 *quin potius pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos exercemus?*

[The fact that *nostra* stands next to *me* does not, in itself, create a probability that a contrast is intended and so that *nostra* here means 'our'; for cf. II, xxxii, 23 *nuper enim de te nostras me laedit ad aures rumor*.]

34. **et nullo uacuo tempore defit amor**: 'and love never rests or ceases'.

35. **hoc . . . malum**: probably 'an unhappy state like this of mine'; but possibly 'this plague', like the Greek κακόν, meaning Cynthia, for the warning that follows seems from its terms to be a warning against Cynthia.

1.2

Quid iuvat ornato procedere, vita, capillo
et tenuis Coa veste movere sinus,
aut quid Orontea crines perfundere murra,
teque peregrinis vendere muneribus,
naturaeque decus mercato perdere cultu, 5
nec sinere in propriis membra nitere bonis?
crede mihi, non ulla tuaest medicina figurae:
nudus Amor formam non amat artificem.
aspice quos summittat humus non fossa colores,
ut veniant hederæ sponte sua melius, 10
surgat et in solis formosior arbutus antris,
et sciat indocilis currere lympha vias.
litora nativis praefulgent picta lapillis,
et volucres nulla dulcius arte canunt.
non sic Leucippis succendit Castora Phoebe, 15
Pollucem cultu non Helaira soror;
non, Idae et cupido quondam discordia Phoebus,
Eueni patriis filia litoribus;
nec Phrygium falso traxit candore maritum
avecta externis Hippodamia rotis: 20
sed facies aderat nullis obnoxia gemmis,
qualis Apelleis est color in tabulis.
non illis studium fucos conquirere amantes:
illis ampla satis forma pudicitia.
non ego nunc vereor ne sis tibi vilior istis: 25
uni si qua placet, culta puella sat est;
cum tibi praesertim Phoebus sua carmina donet
Aoniamque libens Calliopea lyram,
unica nec desit iucundis gratia verbis,
omnia quaeque Venus, quaeque Minerva probat. 30
his tu semper eris nostrae gratissima vitae,
taedia dum miserae sint tibi luxuriae.

II

In form this is a lecture to Cynthia. Its principal motive resembles one that appears (in a different application) in Tib. I, viii, 9-16:

quid tibi nunc molles prodest coluisse capillos
 saepeque mutatas disposuisse comas;
 quid fuco splendente genas ornare, quid ungues
 artificis docta subsecuisse manu?
 frustra iam uestes, frustra mutantur amictus
 ansaque compressos colligit arta pedes.

The same motive is introduced again, in Elegy xv, another lecture to Cynthia, in a different setting.

1. **ornato...capillo**: *ornato* here means '(elaborately) arranged'; cf. Ov. *Am.* I, xiv, 5 (*capilli*) *tenuēs et quos ornare timeres*.

2. **Coa ueste**: Coan silks were noted for their fineness and transparency. (The caterpillar that produced the raw material for them was not the same as the silkworm that we know.)

sinus: poets use *sinus* in an extended sense, both in singular and plural, to mean simply a woman's dress or gown; cf. Ov. *Fast.* v, 28; Tib. I, ix, 70; Ov. *Her.* XIII, 36. (It may be that the idea of a flowing or billowing dress is included.)

Coa...ueste...sinus: for this ablative of the material of which the *sinus* consist cf. Virg. *Ecl.* III, 39 *diffusos hedera... pallente corymbos*.

3. **Orontea**: 'Syrian', after the river Orontes in Syria.

4. **teque...uendere**: 'set off your charms', as a vendor sets off his wares to make them as attractive as possible; for a similar idiomatic use of *uendere* cf. Hor. *Epist.* II, i, 4-5 *si uersus... concinnior unus et alter... totum... uendit... poema*; and for a somewhat similar one cf. Juvenal VII, 135 *purpura uendit* (= 'advertises') *causidicum*.

muneribus: this can hardly here mean 'gifts'. It must be used in an extended sense, and mean 'finery' or the like.

7. **non ulla tuae est medicina figurae**: i.e. no doctoring can make your appearance more beautiful than it already is. The word *medicina* seems normally to be used of what remedies an

NOTES: II, 7-20

undesirable condition and not of what produces or enhances a desirable one; but the Greek φάρμακον can be used in both senses and it may well be that here *medicina* = φάρμακον and *figura* = μορφή.

[The most authoritative manuscripts here read *non ulla tua est*.... If we keep that, the meaning will be 'your doctoring of your looks is trouble wasted'. The resolution of a negative word like *nullus* into a positive word and a preceding negative particle is a favourite mannerism of Propertius; cf. II, xxviii, 52 *Europe nec proba Pasiphae*; II, xii, 8 *nostraque non ullis permanet aura locis*; I, vi, 23 *non umquam*, etc. For *nullus* = 'worthless' or the like cf. Cic. *Acad.* II, xcvi *aut quidquid igitur eodem modo concluditur probabitur aut ars ista (logic) nulla est.*]

8. nudus amor: the adjective gives a reason for Love's attitude. 'Being naked' himself he does not care for a woman who tries to make herself beautiful artificially by adornment.

11. solis...in antris: 'in lonely glens'; i.e. in wild conditions. For the meaning of *antris* cf. on I, i, 11.

13. litora natiuis persuadent picta lapillis: the meaning required by the context is 'beaches decked with their native pebbles are charming to the eye'. But *persuadeo* elsewhere means always 'induce someone to do or believe something', and it does not seem likely that the sense here required can be extracted from it. No probable correction has yet been suggested.

15-16. Phoebe and Hilaira were daughters of Leucippus, a legendary king of Messenia. Castor and Pollux fought over them with the sons of Aphareus, Lynceus and Idas.

15. non sic: i.e. *non cultu*.

17-18. Euenus had a daughter named Marpessa, who was carried off by Idas (see on 15-16). Pursuing them Euenus fell into a river in Aetolia, which was thenceforth named after him. When later Apollo tried to take Marpessa from Idas, Jupiter (= Zeus) let her choose between them, and she chose the man rather than the god because he would grow old with her.

19-20. Oenomaus King of Elis obliged all applicants for the hand of his daughter Hippodamia to compete with him in a chariot-race, with the penalty of death if they were defeated. Pelops coming from Phrygia induced the king's groom to remove (according to one account) a linchpin from his master's chariot,

NOTES: II, 20-III, 2

with the result that Oenomaus was killed and Pelops acquired both his daughter and his kingdom.

21. **obnoxia**: 'indebted to'; cf. Virg. *Georg.* I, 396 *fratris radiis obnoxia... Luna*.

22. **qualis...color...**: one can supply in thought with *facies* in the preceding line *tali colore* (as an epithet) or *color* (in apposition).

Apelleis: by the famous Coan painter Apelles, of the fourth century B.C.

25-6. **non ego nunc...sat est**: the thought seems to be: 'after all, I am the one you really mind about and want to please; you neither need nor ought to get yourself up to please other men'. The first sentence is a meiosis and really means 'I know very well that I am much more important to you than your other admirers'.

25. **istis**: Cynthia's other admirers; cf. for the existence of them II, vi, 1 ff., and for the use of *isti* I, viii, 3 and II, ix, 1.

27-8. **libens**: this goes with *Phoebus* as well as with *Calliopea*.

28. **Calliopea**: later the muse of epic, but in Propertius' day the Muses were not yet rigidly specialized. Here one could fairly translate 'the Muse'.

30. **omnia...probat**: there are alternative ways of taking this: (a) *omnia* is in apposition to the content of line 29, or of lines 27-9; or (b) *omnia quaeque* stands for *omniaque quae...*, and adds a new group of items.

31. **nostrae uitae**: 'to me always', cf. I, vi, 21 *nam tua non aetas umquam cessavit amori*; I, xiii, 23 *amor Herculis...sensit gaudia*, etc.

1.4

Quid mihi tam multas laudando, Basse, puellas
mutatum domina cogis abire mea?
quid me non pateris vitae quodcumque sequetur
hoc magis assueto ducere servitio?
tu licet Antiopae formam Nycteidis, et tu 5
Spartanae referas laudibus Hermionae,
et quascumque tulit formosi temporis aetas;
Cynthia non illas nomen habere sinat:
nedum, si levibus fuerit collata figuris,
inferior duro iudice turpis eat. 10
haec sed forma mei pars est extrema furoris;
sunt maiora, quibus, Basse, perire iuvat:
ingenuus color et motis decor artubus et quae
gaudia sub tacita discere veste libet.
quo magis et nostros contendis solvere amores, 15
hoc magis accepta fallit uterque fide.
non impune feres: sciet haec insana puella
et tibi non tacitis vocibus hostis erit;
nec tibi me post haec committet Cynthia nec te
quaeret; erit tanti criminis illa memor, 20
et te circum omnis alias irata puellas
differet: heu nullo limine carus eris.
nullas illa suis contemnet fletibus aras,
et quicumque sacer, qualis ubique, lapis.
non ullo gravius temptatur Cynthia damno 25
quam sibi cum rapto cessat amore decus,
praecipue nostro. maneat sic semper, adoro,
nec quicquam ex illa quod querar inveniam!
invide, tu tandem voces compesce molestas
et sine nos cursu, quo sumus, ire pares! 30

IV

A rebuke (as is also the following Elegy v) to an associate who is supposed to be trying to come between Propertius and Cynthia. Here the intruder is trying to turn Propertius against Cynthia; in v he is setting up as a rival for Cynthia's favour. These two elegies are in outline the same kind of poem as Cat. LXXVII and XCI, in which the poet addresses people who have betrayed his trust in an affair of love. But their content is concerned chiefly with Cynthia and Propertius: Cynthia's beauty and power to charm and to intimidate, and Propertius' total subjection. The detailed motive in lines 13-14 here seems to recall *A.P.* v, cxxxix, 5-6 (Meleager):

ἢ γάρ μοι μορφὰ βάλλει πόθον, ἢ πάλι μοῦσα,
ἢ χάρις, ἢ...τί λέγω; πάντα· πυρὶ φλέγομαι.

1. **Basse:** an iambic poet: cf. *Ov. Trist.* iv, x, 47-8 *Ponticus heroo, Bassus quoque clarus iambis, dulcia conuictus membra fueremei.*

5. **Antiopae:** Antiope was daughter of Nycteus and became mother by Jupiter (= Zeus) of Amphion and Zethus. It was this Amphion whose lyre bewitched the stones to build the wall of Thebes.

6. **Hermionae:** the daughter of Menelaus, whose hand was disputed by Neoptolemus and Orestes.

7. **formosi temporis aetas:** 'the age of beauty', or (giving a value to the combination of *aetas* and *temporis*) 'all the age of beauty', i.e. with an emphasis on duration. For *formosum tempus* = 'age of beauty', cf. *Hor. Epod.* xvi, 64 *tempus aureum* = 'age of gold', or *Ov. Met.* i, 89 *aurea...aetas.*

9-10. **nedum...turpis eat:** 'much less, if matched with common beauties, could she fail to win the judge's favour, and come away defeated and ashamed'. Propertius imagines a judgement like that of Paris. *duro* is said here from the loser's point of view.

10. **inferior:** 'defeated'.

turpis: 'humiliated' by her defeat.

11. **extrema:** as is shown by the contrast which follows, *extrema* here means 'least' (because 'last'). It is used somewhat similarly in *Livy* xxii, xxix, 8, where an order of *merit* is given by the series *primum...secundum...extremi ingenii (uirum)...*

NOTES: IV, 13-24

13. ingenuus color: this may be (a) a 'natural complexion', not produced by cosmetics; cf. Juv. III, 20 *nec...ingenuum uiolarent marmora tofum*; or (b) a 'fair complexion'; cf. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, p. 16, where the author points out that in Cic. *Pis.* I the opposite, namely a *seruilis color*, is attributed to a person of swarthy complexion; or (c) ?a 'delicate complexion'; cf. Ov. *Am.* I, vii, 50 (*sustinui*)...*ingenuas ungue notare genas*.

13-14. et quae gaudia sub tacita dicere ueste libet: ?'and joys which I prefer (*libet*) to recite in secret'. Some think the text corrupt, but the rather strange form of expression may be Propertius' own. For the aposiopesis cf. I, xiii, 18 *et quae deinde meus celat, amice, pudor*. For *sub tacita ueste dicere* cf. II, xxv, 30 *in tacito cohibe gaudia clausa sinu*, and the phrase *in sinu gaudere* (Cic. *T.D.* III, 51; Seneca, *Ep.* cv, 3; Tib. III, xix, 8 = IV, xiii, 8) used of one who rejoices silently about his own good fortune. The *sinus* in these phrases is the deep fold of the toga across the breast. It thus seems possible that *sub tacita ueste dicere* means here in effect 'keep to oneself', as does *suo premit ore* at Virg. *Aen.* VII, 103; or perhaps 'tell in private'. But there can naturally be no certainty about this.

[Many editors read *ducere* and take *ueste* as referring to bed-clothes. But *libet*—'I am glad to', 'I choose to'—does not seem a strong enough verb to be then appropriate.]

16. hoc magis accepta fallit uterque fide: here *fallit* must mean 'defeats your efforts'. *accepta fide* would normally mean 'having received an assurance (from the other)'; cf. Liv. xxxviii, xxxiii, 3 and xxxix, xii, 4; also Ter. *Eun.* 139. It is commonly understood here as standing for *data acceptaque fide* and meaning 'as we have vowed to one another to do' or 'in accordance with our mutual pledges'.

17. non impune feres: cf. Cat. Lxxviii, 9 *uerum id non impune feres*; Ov. *Met.* II, 474 *haud impune feres*....

19-20. nec tibi me...committet...nec te quaeret: she will not let Propertius keep company any more with Bassus, and she will not visit or invite (*quaeret* could mean either) Bassus herself.

23-4. nullas...et...: the *et* may be justified by the fact that the thought in the hexameter, though negative in form, is positive in content: she will make her laments at *every* altar.

NOTES: IV, 24-V, 5

Cf. however also II, iv, 12 *huic nullum caeli tempus et aura nocet*.

24. **et quicumque sacer qualis ubique lapis:** 'every sort of sacred stone that anywhere there is'. The expression looks like a parody of the language of religious formulae, e.g. Liv. xxxvi, ii, 5 *quisquis magistratus eos ludos quando (= quandocumque) ubique (= ubicumque) faxit, hi ludi recte facti donaque data recte sunt*. For prayers addressed to sacred stones cf. Lucr. v, 1198-9 *nec pietas ullast uelatum saepe uideri uertier ad lapidem atque omnes accedere ad aras*.

26. **sibi cum raptto cessat amore decus:** 'when her charms lie idle because a love has been stolen from her'. For *cessare* in this sense cf. II, viii, 30 (Achilles) *cessare in tectis pertulit arma sua*. For *sibi* where *ei* would be more regular, cf. Sall. *Jug. LXI Metellus...in his urbibus quae ad se defecerant...praesidia imponit*. [*decus* is a correction for *deus* of the MSS.]

27. **praecipue nostri** = 'especially my love'. For *nostri* thus used cf. Tac. *Ann. VI, 22 initia nostri* = 'our beginnings'; Sen. *Ep. LXI, 3 finem nostri* = 'our end'. This genitive of the personal pronoun is much more commonly used when the genitive is objective, so that *amor nostri* would more usually mean 'love of me', which the context here excludes.

adoro: unlike the simple verb *oro*, the compound *adoro* is not found elsewhere with a verbal construction, but only with accusative of the person to whom prayer or worship is addressed. Cf. note on I, iii, 3.

1.7

Dum tibi Cadmeae dicuntur, Pontice, Thebae
armaque fraternae tristia militiae,
atque, ita sim felix, primo contendis Homero
(sint modo fata tuis mollia carminibus),
nos, ut consuemus, nostros agitamus amores, 5
atque aliquid duram quaerimus in dominam;
nec tantum ingenio quantum servire dolori
cogor et aetatis tempora dura queri.
hic mihi conteritur vitae modus, haec mea famast,
hinc cupio nomen carminis ire mei. 10
me laudent doctae solum placuisse puellae,
Pontice, et iniustas saepe tulisse minas;
me legat assidue post haec neglectus amator,
et prosint illi cognita nostra mala.
te quoque si certo puer hic concusserit arcu— 15
quo nollem nostros me violasse deos!—
longe castra tibi, longe miser agmina septem
flebis in aeterno surda iacere situ;
et frustra cupies mollem componere versum,
nec tibi subiciet carmina serus Amor. 20
tum me non humilem mirabere saepe poetam,
tunc ego Romanis praeferar ingeniis.
[nec poterunt iuvenes nostro reticere sepulcro
'ardoris nostri magne poeta iaces.']
tu cave nostra tuo contemnas carmina fastu: 25
saepe venit magno faenore tardus Amor.

VII

This elegy forms a pair with Elegy ix. Both are addressed to Ponticus, an epic poet (i.e., according to ancient ideas, a poet in by far the grandest and best department of poetry), who is here warned that he may fall in love, and in Elegy ix will be found to have done so. Both pieces involve a comparison between elegy and other forms of poetry, and an assertion of its peculiar value to lovers. Similar thoughts occur in Tibullus II, iv, 15 ff.:

ite procul, musae, si non prodestis amanti;
non ego uos, ut sint bella canenda, colo;
nec refero solisque uias et qualis, ubi orbem
compleuit, uersis luna recurrit equis.
ad dominam faciles aditus per carmina quaero;
ite procul, musae, si nihil ista ualent.

1. **Pontice**: an epic poet; cf. on I, iv, 1. Poem ix also is addressed to him.

2. **fraternae...militiae**: the war between the brothers Eteocles and Polynices. Ponticus was writing a Thebaid.

NOTES: VII, 3-16

3. **ita sim felix**: 'as I hope to be happy'. The prayer is a conventional formula giving positiveness to an assertion. It has a value similar to that of 'I vow' or 'I'll swear' in English. Here it may have an affectionately ironical tone.

5. **consuemus**: probably a contracted form of *consueuimus*.
agitamus: 'are occupied with'; cf. *agitare conuiuia*, etc.

6. **aliquid duram . . . in dominam**: 'some means to soften the hard heart of my lady'.

7. **nec tantum . . . dolori**: i.e. and write not as a poet would but as a lover must.

8. **aetatis tempora dura**: 'the torments I endure, day in, day out'.

9. **uitae modus**: 'my life's span'.

11-12. **me laudent . . . minas**: 'may people tell in praise of me how a girl of talent chose me above all others for her lover; and tell too how often I bore her anger, undeserved'. The 3rd person plural in *laudent* is as in English 'they say . . .', 'people will say . . .', etc. and Latin *ferunt, dicunt*, etc.; cf. II, xx, 9 *mi licet aeratis astringant bracchia nodis*, etc.

solum need not suggest that she literally had no other lover, for cf. Ov. *A.A.* I, 131 *Romule, militibus scisti dare commoda solus!*

For *minas* cf. on I, x, 26 and I, xix, 24.

11. **laudent . . . placuisse**: an unusual construction with *laudo*, but cf. Virg. *Aen.* II, 585 *extinxisse nefas . . . laudabor*.

15. **concusserit**: we should expect *percusserit*; just as in III, xvi, 16 *percutit ante faces* we should expect *concutit*. This avoidance of the obvious compound is worth noting as a mannerism of Propertius; see note on I, iii, 3. But it remains possible that *concusserit* here is meant to convey the force of a shot that makes the victim reel.

16. (**quod nolim nostros, heu, uoluisse deos**): '(and I hope, ah I hope, that our gods may not so decree)'. For the sentiment cf. I, vi, 23 *et tibi non unquam nostros puer iste labores afferat*. For the form of expression cf. Virg. *Aen.* v, 50 *sic di uoluitis*; also Ov. *Fast.* IV, 122 *a, nolim uictas hoc meminisse deas!* For *heu* giving pathos to a wish for the future cf. II, xx, 16 *si fallo, cinis, heu, sit mihi uterque grauis*. For the infinitive *uoluisse* without perfect force cf. on I, i, 15, etc. For *nostros . . . deos* of the lover's gods cf. II, xxxiv, 26.

[The reading printed in the text and translated above is a conjectured substitute for *euiolasse* of the MSS. In four other

NOTES: VII, 16-VIII A, 1

places in Propertius our principal manuscripts give *e* or *et* where it cannot possibly be right. See I, xix, 22 (*ne te*)... *abstrahat e nostro puluere iniquus amor*; II, xii, 15 *euolat e nostro quoniam de pectore nusquam*...; II, xxii, 44 *quid iuuat et nullo ponere uerba loco?*; IV, x, 27 E (or Et) *Veii ueteres, et uos tum regna fuistis*... In all of these *heu* would be wholly appropriate and produces best sense at the cost of least alteration of the received text; and this is true of the present passage also.

Exclamatory *ei* might at first sight seem preferable to *heu* in these passages as nearer to the MSS. Though it appears to be confined in extant classical Latin (at least after Catullus) to the phrase *ei mihi*, it occurs quite often in Plautus and Terence (and cf. also Cat. LXVIII, 92-3) without the attached *mihi*, and Propertius' language shows some affinities with theirs. But where it occurs it seems always to stand as first word and never in parenthesis.]

17. **longe**: 'of no avail to you': cf. Virg. *Aen.* XII, 52 *longe illi dea mater erit*; Caes. *B.G.* I, 36 (Ariovistus threatening the Aedui) *si id non fecissent, longe his fraternum nomen populi Romani afuturum*.

18. **surda**: 'unhearing', and so of no help to you. But *surdus* can also mean 'unheard' and so 'forgotten', and this meaning is also present here as an overtone.

23. **nec poterunt...sepulcro**: a rather surprising jump in thought after 21-2.

4.7

Sunt aliquid Manes: letum non omnia finit,
luridaque euictos effugit umbra rogos.
Cynthia namque meo uisa est incumbere fulcro,
murmur ad extremae nuper humata uiae,
cum mihi somnus ab exsequiis penderet amoris,
et quererer lecti frigida regna mei.
eosdem habuit secum quibus est elata capillos,
eosdem oculos; lateri uestis adusta fuit,
et solitum digito beryllon adederat ignis,
summaque Lethaeus triuerat ora liquor.
spirantisque animos et uocem misit: at illi
pollicibus fragiles increpuere manus:
"perfide nec cuiquam melior sperande puellae,
in te iam uires somnus habere potest?
iamne tibi exciderant uigilacis furta Suburae
et mea nocturnis trita fenestra dolis?
per quam demisso quotiens tibi fune pependi,
alterna ueniens in tua colla manu!
saepe Venus triuio commissa est, pectore mixto
fecerunt tepidas pallia nostra uias.
foederis heu taciti, cuius fallacia uerba
non audituri diripuere Noti.
at mihi non oculos quisquam inclamauit euntis:
unum impetrassem te reuocante diem:
nec crepuit fissa me propter harundine custos,
laesit et obiectum tegula curta caput.
denique quis nostro curuum te funere uidit,
atram quis lacrimis incaluisse togam?
si piguit portas ultra procedere, at illuc
iussisses lectum lentius ire meum.
cur uentos non ipse rogis, ingrate, petisti?
cur nardo flammae non oluere meae?
hoc etiam graue erat, nulla mercede hyacinthos
inicere et fracto busta piare cado.
Lygdamus uratur candescat lamina uernae -
sensi ego, cum insidiis pallida uina bibi
at Nomas arcanas tollat uersuta saliuas;
dicet damnatas ignea testa manus.
quae modo per uilis inspecta est publica noctes,
haec nunc aurata cyclade signat humum;
et grauiora rependit iniquis pensa quasillis,
garrula de facie si qua locuta mea est;
nostraque quod Petale tulit ad monumenta coronas,

codicis immundi uincula sentit anus;
caeditur et Lalage tortis suspensa capillis,
per nomen quoniam est ausa rogare meum.
te patiente meae conflauit imaginis aurum,
ardente e nostro dotem habitura rogo.
non tamen insector, quamuis mereare, Properti:
longa mea in libris regna fuere tuis.
iuro ego Fatorum nulli reuolubile carmen,
tergeminusque canis sic mihi molle sonet,
me seruasse fidem. si fallo, uipera nostris
sibilet in tumultis et super ossa cubet.
nam gemina est sedes turpem sortita per amnem,
turbaque diuersa remigat omnis aqua.
unda Clytaemestrae stuprum uehit altera, Cressae
portat mentitae lignea monstra bouis.
ecce coronato pars altera rapta phaselo,
mulcet ubi Elysias aura beata rosas,
qua numerosa fides, quaque aera rotunda Cybebes
mitratisque sonant Lydia plectra choris.
Andromedeque et Hypermestre sine fraude maritae
narrant historiae tempora nota suae:
haec sua maternis queritur liuere catenis
bracchia nec meritas frigida saxa manus;
narrat Hypermestre magnum ausas esse sorores,
in scelus hoc animum non ualuisse suum.
sic mortis lacrimis uitae sancimus amores:
celo ego perfidiae crimina multa tuae.
sed tibi nunc mandata damus, si forte moueris,
si te non totum Chloridos herba tenet:
nutrix in tremulis ne quid desideret annis
Parthenie: potuit, nec tibi auara fuit.
deliciaeque meae Latris, cui nomen ab usu est,
ne speculum dominae porrigat illa nouae.
et quoscumque meo fecisti nomine uersus,
ure mihi: laudes desine habere meas.
pelle hederam tumulo, mihi quae praegnante corymbo
mollia contortis alligat ossa comis.
ramosis Anio qua pomifer incubat aruis,
et numquam Herculeo numine pallet ebur,
hic carmen media dignum me scribe columna,
sed breue, quod currens uector ab urbe legat:
"hic Tiburtina iacet aurea Cynthia terra:
accessit ripae laus, Aniene, tuae."
nec tu sperne piis uenientia somnia portis:

cum pia uenerunt somnia, pondus habent.
nocte uagae ferimur, nox clausas liberat umbras,
errat et abiecta Cerberus ipse sera.
luce iubent leges Lethaea ad stagna reuerti:
nos uehimur, uectum nauta recenset onus.
nunc te possideant aliae: mox sola tenebo:
mecum eris, et mixtis ossibus ossa teram."
haec postquam querula mecum sub lite peregit,
inter complexus excidit umbra meos.

VII

In this elegy the ghost of the poet's mistress Cynthia appears to him, shortly after her funeral. The greater part of it, lines 13-94, consists of the ghost's speech to the poet. This falls into sections as follows: (13-22) she reproaches Propertius as forgetful of their love; (23-34) she complains of his perfunctory attention to her funeral; (35-48) she professes to believe that she has been poisoned, and that her place has been taken by a successor, who with Propertius' acquiescence is trying to obliterate her memory; (49-54) however, she will not reproach him further; for a long time they were happy together; she swears that for her part she has been faithful to him; (55-70) in the world below her place is with the heroines who have been true lovers in life, and who have suffered; (71-86) she gives directions to him to care for her favourite servants, and about the treatment of her grave; (87-94) she bids him heed her message, and declares that they will be reunited in time to come. Lines 1-12 and 95-6 provide the setting of the speech.

The dream motif was a favourite with the Hellenistic poets: witness for instance Theocritus XXI and the form of the *Aitia* of Callimachus (cf. Propertius, II, xxxiv, 32 *somnia Callimachi*); it occurs also in Tib. II, vi, 37-40 and repeatedly in the *Aeneid*. The lot of lovers in the underworld is described, and contrasted

with that of the wicked, in Tib. 1, iii, 57-82. Further, in lines 1, 3, 8, 14 and 96 of the present elegy are apparent echoes of *Iliad* XXIII, 103-4, 68, 66, 69 and 99-100, from the scene in which the ghost of Patroclus appears to Achilles. However, there is nothing in any of this to prevent us supposing that the poem derives in some degree from a real experience.

It is not easy to reconstruct with confidence the background assumed by the poem. The household referred to in lines 35-47 seems to belong to Propertius; the statements made about it are not of course to be taken as all necessarily true; Cynthia's imagination is fired by jealousy. The house from which Cynthia used, in the early days of their intrigue, to slip away by stealth to meet Propertius (lines 15-18) may be the house of a man who kept her as mistress and from whom Propertius seduced her. The terms of lines 5-6 might suggest that Propertius and Cynthia were still associated at the time of her death. But this interpretation of lines 5-6 is not inevitable; and the general effect of the elegy may be felt to tend to an opposite conclusion. What is clear is that the elegy as a whole presents a portrait of Cynthia, and an unromanticized portrait at that. In this setting the impact of the couplet 85-6, in the grand manner, is very powerful. It will be observed that the tone of Cynthia's speech changes at line 49.

1-2. sunt aliquid...rogos: 'the shades are no fable; death is not the end of all; and somehow a wan ghost does survive the pyre'. For the phrase *sunt aliquid...manes* ('there are such things as...') cf. Juv. II, 149 *esse aliquos manes et subterranea regna nec pueri credunt*. For *euincere* of getting past a hazard or obstacle cf. Ov. *Met.* XIV, 75-6 *ubi...Charybdin euicere rates*; *Met.* xv, 706 *euincit...Siculi...angusta Pelori*.

3. incumbere: she appears to bend over the bed; cf. Ov. *Met.* xv, 21-2 *hunc super incumbens pressum gravitate soporis clauiger* (Hercules, in a dream) *adloquitur*.

fulcro: the *fulcrum* is the raised head-end of a Roman bed, on or against which the pillow is placed.

4. extremae...uiaae: the edge of the road, i.e. the roadside.

5. penderet: 'hung back' or 'held off', i.e. 'would not come', cf. Virg. *Georg.* I, 214 *dum nubila pendent* (before the rainy season). Either sleeplessness or fitful sleep may be meant. (The ancients did not distinguish as clearly as we do between a dream-apparition and a 'ghost'.)

ab: 'after'.

amoris: 'of her whom I had loved'.

6. et quererer lecti frigida regna mei: either (a) 'and I grieved that my bed was a cold and desolate domain'; or (b) 'and I grieved that she who once reigned in my bed was now a cold and lifeless corpse'; the abstract *regna* standing for the person, as do the abstracts in I, xv, 20 (*Hypsipyle*) *Haemonio tabuit hospitio* (= *Jason*), or IV, vi, 71 *subeant conuiuia* (= *conuiuiae*) *luco*.

For *frigida* cf. on the one hand Ov. *Am.* III, v, 42 *frigidus in uiduo destituere toro*; and on the other Virg. *Georg.* IV, 506 *illa... Stygia nabat iam frigida cumba*. Both ideas are probably present; which we suppose to be dominant will depend on what we suppose to have been the relationship between Propertius and Cynthia at the time of her death.

7. eosdem: a similar synzesis occurs several times elsewhere in Propertius, but only here and in the next line (8) does it fall in the first syllable of the verse.

7-8. capillos...oculos: her hair arranged in the same way; the same (? fixed) look of the eyes. According to Pliny *N.H.* XI, 37, 155 the eyes were closed at death but opened again on the pyre—in this case apparently on the bier. (The word *oculos* is from ὄμματα in *Il.* XXIII, 66, where what is meant seems to be simply 'face' or 'expression'.)

10. summaque Lethaeus triuerat ora liquor: 'her lips were wet with the water of Lethe'; literally 'the water of Lethe had (?lightly) touched her lips'. For the pluperfect in descriptions of a state resulting from a past action, cf. (e.g.) IV, ix, 24 *fecerat*; Lucan x, 112-15 *laqueataque tecta ferebant diuitias crassumque trabes absconderat aurum* (describing a ceiling). There is no need to assign a strong value to *tero* in *triuerat*; cf. Virg. *Ecl.* II, 34 *nec te paeniteat calamo triuisse labellum*. *summa* need mean no more than 'the surface of', otiose in English here; but it may have an adverbial value, with the effect of 'lightly'. *Lethaeus liquor* may simply stand here, as at line 91 below and Tib. I, iii, 80, for water of the underworld; symbolizing the state of death because of the associations of the name, but without any specific reference to the power sometimes attributed to Lethe of making one forget one's past life—an idea prominent in our minds because of *Aeneid* VI and Plato, *Republic* x.

11. spirantisque: 'of the living (Cynthia)' (genitive).

animos et uocem misit: the verb *misit* is strictly appropriate

to *uocem* and from it is supplied a sense appropriate to *animos* (= 'spirit', perhaps almost 'temper'); in fact, a zeugma.

at illi: adding a descriptive touch, with a change of grammatical subject but not (here) of the subject of thought; cf. IV, iv, 15 (and note), from which it appears that there need be no antithesis between what follows and what has been said already.

12. pollicibus fragiles increpuere manus: a regular meaning of *increpare* is 'reproach' or 'rebuke', and this may be assisted by an act or gesture: cf. Hor. *Od.* IV, xv, 1-2 *Phoebus uolentem proelia me loqui... increpuit lyra*. If we compare the phrase *crepare digitis* = 'snap the fingers', it seems clear that some form of gesticulation, reinforcing Cynthia's indignant speech, is being described. *fragiles* might suggest lean boniness as of a skeleton; but it *need* not refer to anything but the slenderness of Cynthia's hands (cf. II, ii, 5 *longae... manus*). *pollicibus* (literally 'thumbs') may stand simply for fingers, as at II, v, 24 *nec duris ausim (? sc. genas tuas) laedere pollicibus*; but possibly Cynthia's gesticulations included snapping the thumb and forefinger. Cynthia's manner, and style of speech and behaviour, are just as they were when she was alive.

13. perfide, nec... puellae: the sound is important in this line.

15. exciderant: 'had you forgotten...?', i.e. so that I found you asleep just now. Whether or not he was asleep, she professes to think that he was.

uigilacis: the termination *-ax* indicates a disposition, as in *minax*, *audax*, *loquax*, *mordax*, *sequax*, etc. Here the disposition is to stay awake all night, keep late hours, etc. The Subura was an area N.E. of the Forum, favoured by the demi-monde. So the sense is: 'had you forgotten the night-life of the Subura, and our adventures together there?'. She is recalling the early days of their affair.

16-18. et mea... manu: it is not clear what was the establishment from which Cynthia had to escape thus furtively in order to keep her assignation with Propertius. Perhaps that of some man whose mistress she was when she first became acquainted with the poet.

19. pectore mixto: the meaning is clear, but the expression is strange, perhaps deliberately so, to convey the closeness of the embrace.

21. foederis... taciti: presumably an understanding that

they would always remain lovers. *taciti* in view of what follows cannot mean 'unspoken', so must here mean 'secret (between them)'. The construction here used—the exclamatory genitive—is a very rare one in Latin.

23. **at mihi non oculos quisquam inclamavit euntis**: the verb *inclamare* is used ordinarily with an accusative of the person, and means 'call to' by way of summons or exhortation. Here the meaning appears to be 'call to me (to stay) as the light left my eyes'. With *oculos...euntis* (acc. pl.) cf. *Ov. Tr.* III, iii, 44 *labentes oculos* (of a dying person).

[It may be preferable here to read *eunti* (*sc. mihi*) = 'dying'; cf. *Lucr.* III, 526 *saepe hominem paulatim cernimus ire*, and *Ov. Am.* III, ix, 49 *fugientis* (genitive) *pressit ocellos*.]

24. **unum...diem**: this recalls the legend that Protesilaus was allowed to return for one day to Laodamia; cf. *Stat. Silv.* v, iii, 272.

25. **nec crepuit fissa...custos**: Propertius did not provide a watcher to stand guard by the corpse as it lay awaiting burial. The 'cloven cane' was probably a kind of rattle for scaring away bad spirits, or giving the alarm; a κρόταλον consisting of a split cane is referred to in a scholium on Aristophanes, *Clouds* 260 (quoted in Starkie's edn.).

26. **laesit et...caput**: (?)her head was propped on (and bruised or grazed by) a piece of terracotta instead of a pillow; evidence of cheap arrangements. (But uncertainty remains about the meaning of this line.)

27. **curuum**: 'bowed (from grief)'.

28. **atram quis...incaluisse togam**: this sentence in itself could mean either that he wore mourning but did not weep, or that he neither wore mourning nor wept. The second of these is the meaning required by the context here; Cynthia would not mention anything he had done right.

31. **cur...non ipse...?**: 'why were you not there to...?'.

33. **graue**: 'too much trouble (or expense)'.

nulla mercede...: 'that cost (little or) nothing'.

34. **fracto busta piare cado**: 'and break a wine-jar, as reverence requires, over the ashes of my pyre'. The wine was scattered over the bones after the burning, before they were put in the urn; cf. *Virg. Aen.* VI, 226-7 and [*Tib.*] III, ii, 17-19.

35. **Lygdamus**: a slave of Propertius; cf. IV, viii, 79-80.

uratur...candescat lamina: he is to be tortured with a

heated strip or plate of hot metal, to make him confess the plot on Cynthia's life. This plot is of course to be understood as part of the wild imagining of an angry and jealous woman; not as a real event, or even as one in which the speaker seriously believes. This is the way Cynthia used to carry on.

36. insidiis pallida: 'discoloured' by the poison. As will be seen from line 82 below, *pallida* means 'off-colour'; not necessarily (though frequently) what we should call 'pale' in colour.

insidiis must here either stand by metonymy for 'poison', as a furtive means of harm, or mean 'the assassin's arts'.

37. ut Nomas arcanas tollat uersuta saliuas: 'though artful Nomas hide away her secret liquors'. Nomas is a wise-woman who knows about charms and poisons and the like; as she too is to be tortured, she is probably a slave in the household, like Lygdamus. [*ut* is a conjecture, for *aut* of the MS. tradition.]

38. dicet... manus: 'will make her confess whose hands (or that her hands) are guilty'. Propertius has a way of taking for subject of a transitive verb someone or something other than the true agent; cf. I, xvii, 25 (the Nereids by bringing fair weather are said to unfurl the sails of the ship); II, xxvi, 49 (Amydone vows to accept Neptune's embrace on a certain condition, and he embracing her is said to be paying her vow); IV, vi, 25 (the sea-god is said to form into crescents the fleets which assume this formation on the sea). The *ignea testa* serves the same purpose as the *lamina* of line 35.

39. inspecta est: the historic perfect, saying simply that something happened in the past without specifying frequency (which here is indicated by *per... noctes*); cf. notes on IV, i, 19 and on *non tulit* in IV, vi, 28. The meaning is 'stood exposed to public view nightly, a common harlot and cheap at that'. The epithet *uiles* is the more easily attached to *noctes* because in the jargon of erotic poetry *nox* often has the special sense of a night or part of a night spent with a woman.

40. cyclade: a special kind of woman's dress, grand and long.

signat humum: her long dress sweeps the ground (*literally* 'marks' it).

41-2. at grauiora rependit... mea est: if any of the maids has forgotten to watch her tongue and has referred to Cynthia's beauty, she is punished by having extra big basketfuls of wool weighed out to her as her day's task, to be returned at the end of the day in the form of an equivalent weight of spun yarn.

43. **Petale**: another woman servant, now old.

44. **codicis immundi**: the *codex* was a block of wood, attached to the leg to prevent escape or by way of punishment.

immundus regularly means 'dirty', and in fact such a *codex* would collect dirt as it was dragged around. There is the further idea that this was an unbecoming and humiliating (*turpis*) form of punishment for an old woman such as Petale; *anus* standing in apposition at the end of the line and the sentence is evidently said with special point.

45. **Lalage**: another maid.

46. **ausa rogare**: a slave making a special request to master or mistress would do so 'by the name of. . .' someone dear to the person addressed.

47. **confluit**: the subject is the new mistress.

48. **dotem**: either (a) this is meant literally, and the woman in question is accumulating a dowry in order to be able to enter into a regular partnership with some man of her own social order; or (b) the word is used in an extended sense to mean private capital, more generally.

rogo: in the context, this must be the fire on which the image (or a gold ring with a portrait on it) is melted. But the term suggests Cynthia's funeral pyre too.

49. **non tamen**: here Cynthia's tone changes (exactly in the middle of the elegy).

51. **iuro...carmen**: the accusative is of the thing sworn by. The idea in *nulli reuolubile* is taken from the thread which the Fates spin, and which can never be unspun; as they spin they sing a prophetic song (as in *Cat. LXIV, 320ff.*) and this is spoken of in terms more strictly appropriate to the thread.

52. **sic...sonet**: the familiar wish formula, used to reinforce a statement or a request; cf. iii, 67 above (a request).

55. **sortita**: 'separately assigned'. The participle is passive here, though the verb *sortior* is commonly deponent.

turpem: 'grim'.

per: the context shows that this must here mean 'beyond'.

56. **turbaque...aqua**: 'and the shades are ferried across the water two separate ways'. *omnis* need not be translated; it reinforces idiomatically the division indicated by *diuersa*, as in *Caes. B.G. I, 1 omnis Gallia diuisa est in partes tres*; *Cic. Cluent. I animaduerti, iudices, omnem accusatoris orationem in duas diuisam esse partes*.

remigat: here probably 'is rowed', i.e. travels in a rowed vessel. But at II, xxvii, 13 Propertius conceives the dead as rowing the ferry-boat themselves.

57. Clytaemestrae stuprum: i.e. *Clytaemestram adulteram*.
aut ea Cressae: if *aut ea* is right (it is a conjecture for *altera Cressae* of the MSS., which cannot stand with the preceding *una*, since Clytaemestra and Pasiphae are grouped, not contrasted) the picking up of the subject by the demonstrative will resemble the kind illustrated by Kühner-Stegmann II (2), pp. 564-5 in respect of *et is, isque*, etc. [An alternative line of conjecture would keep *altera*, re-punctuate, and emend *una* at the beginning of the line to *unda*, thus: *unda Clytaemestrae stuprum uehit altera*. But it is then difficult to make the link with what follows.]

57-8. uehit...portat: for a similar combination of these two verbs cf. IV, i, 46-7.

Cressae...mentitae lignea monstra bouis: the reference is to Pasiphae, wife of Minos, king of Crete, who fell in love with the famous bull and had a wooden image of a cow made, under cover of which she let the bull serve her; in this way the Minotaur was conceived. The phrase could theoretically be construed in several ways, but as *Cressae* because of its position must surely be a substantive (= 'the Cretan woman' = Pasiphae) rather than an adjective agreeing with *bouis*, the effective possibilities are two, both requiring *stuprum* to be supplied with *Cressae* from what has gone before: (a) 'the incestuous crime of the Cretan queen, the wooden horror of the pretended (*mentitae* passive, like *sortita* in 55) cow'; or (b) 'the incestuous Cretan queen, whose fraud contrived (*mentitae* active, as usual) the wooden horror of the cow'. Probably most readers will judge (a) too strongly figurative, and so will prefer (b).

59. [*raptā* is an emendation. The MSS. give *parta*.]

60. ubi: we have to understand 'to the place where'.

61-2. qua numerosa...choris: the tuneful lute, and the round bronze cymbals associated with the worship of Cybele, and the lyre accompanying turbaned dancers with music in the Lydian mode—none of these has any special association with the underworld, that we know of. They are here enumerated simply to suggest the musical delights that the blessed enjoy with their other blessings.

Cybēbes: genitive. This alternative form of Cybēle's name has been favoured by many editors where a long penultimate is

required. But the MSS. here have *Cybēles* or *Cybelles*, and neither of these is an impossible variant; cf. IV, xi, 51.

63. Andromedeque et Hypermestre: from what precedes it is clear that we are here thinking of virtuous heroines; from line 69 it is clear that they are also heroines who have suffered in this world. Hypermestra is an apt instance in both respects; she was the one of the fifty daughters of Danaus who refused to murder her husband at her father's command and was put in chains by her father (cf. Ov. *Her.* XIV) on this account. Andromeda, as we have her story, was exposed to the sea-monster because of her mother's vanity and not for any virtue or affection of her own; and while we hear that she married her rescuer Perseus, we hear nothing of her conduct as a wife. Hence Heinsius' proposal to emend *maritae* in line 63 to *marita*, restricting the term to Hypermestra. But the context makes it certain that Andromeda is cited here as a virtuous woman, whether as a famous example of such or not. Propertius and Cynthia may have known a version of the legend that we do not know. Or it may be that, finding in Andromeda a good example of a *suffering* heroine, he is ready to imagine her as notably virtuous too and cite her accordingly; much as in I, ii, 15 ff. he cites various legendary beauties as dispensing with make-up, though this cannot really have been part of the legends about them.

64. narrant historiae tempora nota suae: literally 'relate the famous perils of their story', i.e. 'tell of the perils for which they are famed in legend'. For *tempora* in this sense cf. Hor. *Od.* II, vii, 1 *o saepe mecum tempus in ultimum deducte*. [Here *tempora* is an emendation for the MS. *pectora*. An alternative is to keep *pectora* and understand it as nominative in apposition to *Andromede* and *Hypermestre*, finding an object for *narrant* by reading *historias...suas*.]

65. maternis: a remarkable use of the adjective, for it must mean 'suffered on her mother's account'; cf. III, xxii, 29 *non hic Andromedae resonant pro matre catena*.

67. magnum: 'a monstrous deed'; for *magnum* as a neuter substantive cf. Cic. *Verr.* IV, 2 *magnum videor dicere; attendite quomodo...*

69. sic mortis lacrimis uitae sanamus amores: 'thus with tears in death we console ourselves for (*literally* try to heal) the wounds love caused us while we lived'. Whatever may be the

case with Andromeda (see on line 63 above), this sentiment suits the speaker and arises naturally from the reference to Hypermetra in the preceding line; and it is hard to think of any alternative which would fulfil these conditions. We have to suppose an extra sense ('wounds of') accruing to *amores* from that of the verb *sanamus*, much as in IV, iv, 83 an extra sense ('guard on') appears to accrue to *mons* from that of the participle *remissus*.

72. Chloridos herba: 'the magic herbs (i.e. drugs or spells) of Chloris'. Chloris is either the successor complained of in lines 39-40 or a witch employed by her.

73. nutrix: Cynthia's, of course, and dependent on her.

74. potuit, nec tibi auara fuit: i.e. *potuit tibi auara esse, sed non fuit*; she did not use her position, as she could have, to extort bribes or hush-money from Propertius.

75. cui nomen ab usu est: because her name is Greek for 'maidservant', and Latris as the next line shows was personal maid to Cynthia.

76. illa: either (a) resumptive, in the colloquial manner, without emphasis; or (b) emphatic: 'see that *she* doesn't...'.
78. ure mihi: either (a) 'burn as an offering to me'; or (b) 'I bid you burn'.

77. laudes desine habere meas: either (a) 'keep no more the poems that you wrote in my praise'; or (b) 'boast no more of your possession of me'; for cf. II, xxi, 9-10 *dispeream si quicquam aliud quam gloria de te quaeritur: has laudes ille maritus habet*.

79. pone hederam tumulo: 'plant ivy on my grave'.

[*pone* is Mr Sandbach's emendation for *pelle* of the MSS.; required because Cynthia's tomb cannot yet be overgrown, and still more because ivy for the ancients had good associations, not bad ones; cf. the epigram quoted on line 80 below. Ivy is mentioned repeatedly in Propertius (e.g. IV, i, 62; IV, vi, 3) as a symbol of poetic inspiration; and Cynthia wrote poetry too, as appears from I, ii, 27 and II, iii, 21. *praegnante* also is an emendation, for *pugnante* of the MSS.]

80. mollis: 'gently', with what follows; or perhaps 'gently spreading', with *praegnante corymbo*. With this description cf. *Anth. Pal.* VII, 22 (Simmias) ἡρέμ' ὑπὲρ τύμβοιο Σοφοκλέος, ἡρέμα, κισσέ, ἐρπύζοις, χλοερούς ἐκπροχέων πλοκάμους . καὶ πεταλὸν πάντη θάλλοι ῥόδου, ἢ τε φιλορρώξ ἄμπελος ὑγρὰ πέριξ κλήματα χευαμένη.

[In this line *alliget* is an emendation, for the MS. *alligat*, consequent on the adoption of *pone* in the previous line. *mollis* is an old emendation for the MS. *mollis*; some prefer instead of it *mollia* = (presumably) 'crumbling', for which sense cf. perhaps Lucan IX, 627 where (*non*) *mollia sulco* is said of *arua*.]

81. incubat: as this word describes how the Anio fertilizes (cf. *pomifer*) the orchards (*ramosis . . . aruis*) of Tibur, it must here mean either 'spreads over (with its waters)' or 'descends on (to water)', by irrigation in either case. Regarding the waterfall and the irrigated orchards cf. III, xvi, 4 *cadit in patulos nymphae Aniena lacus*; Ov. *Am.* III, vi, 45-6 *qui per caua saxa uolutans Tiburis Argei pomifer arua rigas*; Hor. *Od.* I, vii, 13-14 *uda mobilibus pomaria riuus*.

82. et numquam Herculeo numine pallet ebur: 'and ivory, by the grace of Hercules, never loses its brightness'. For some reason, ivory kept its colour better at Tibur than elsewhere; cf. Mart. IV, lxii and VIII, xxviii. Hercules was the patron god of Tibur. As ivory usually darkens with age, turning yellow, one can see from this line that the basic meaning of *palleo* is different from that of the English 'pale'; cf. on line 36 above.

83. media . . . columna: the reference is to a columnar grave-stone. The inscription might well be at half height, and would no doubt be centred from the point of view normally intended. But in such phrases *medius* often does duty for a simple preposition, with some extra value, slight or strong, arising from the context. Thus IV, iv, 16 *medium . . . caput* = '(balanced) on her head'; Ov. *Met.* v, 138 *media . . . nare* = '(right) through his nose'; Ov. *Met.* VII, 319 *auditur medio balatus aeno* = 'from (in) the pot', etc. Here, I think, the value of *media* is 'write on my tombstone (plain to see)'.

84. uector: 'traveller' (on horse or in vehicle).

86. Aniene: the spirit of the Anio would be called *Anienus*, as the spirit of the Tiber was called *Tiberinus*.

87. piis . . . portis: 'the gate of truth'. The conception of the two gates through which come respectively true and false dreams (cf. *Odyssey* XIX, 562 and Virg. *Aen.* VI, 894) is really distinct from that of the division of the inhabitants of the underworld into the good (*pui*) and bad which Propertius has alluded to in lines 55-70 above. Here he seems to be blending the two; but the word *pui* is not inappropriate to the authors of 'true'

NOTES: VII, 87-VIII

dreams, because 'true' in the sense of 'faithful' is one of its dominant meanings. (It is of course in any case not to be supposed that an agreed standard picture of the underworld existed. Rather, each poet gives his own picture, itself not necessarily or even probably a fixed one, based on literary recollections as modified by his own imagination at the time of writing.)

90. **abiecta...sera**: the *sera* is the bar that is fixed across a door to keep it closed. Here the bar is cast off, and the watchdog (who, it appears from IV, xi, 26, was sometimes chained to the bar) is free to wander.

91. **Lethaea...stagna**: as the next line shows, the idea here is not of the water of forgetfulness, but of a river such as Styx which marks the frontier of the underworld, and 'waters of Lethe' must stand for infernal waters generally.

92. **nauta**: Charon, ferryman of the Styx.

93. **nunc te possideant aliae**: the jussive-permissive subjunctive, meaning 'never mind if...' or 'let them, if they will...'. The choice of *possidere* may be deliberate, to suggest temporary tenure as opposed to absolute ownership.

94. **mixtis ossibus ossa teram**: the word *ossa* at IV, xi, 20 and 102 below appears to mean simply the 'shade' of a dead person, without any insistence on the original meaning of *ossa* and the thought of a skeleton that it suggests. Likewise *pectore mixto* is used at line 19 above of two living human forms; and *tero* at IV, ii, 62 above must mean 'press hard' without any suggestion of friction. Thus the sentence as a whole perhaps is meant to say only that her shade will hold his in a tight embrace. But the primary meanings of the words composing it are hard to escape from.

95. **querula...sub lite**: 'to the accompaniment of bitter complaining'; for this use of *sub* cf. II, xxviii, 35 *magico torti sub carmine rhombi*.

4.8

disce, quid Esquilias hac nocte fugarit aquosas,
cum uicina nouis turba cucurrit agris.
Lanuuium annosi uetus est tutela draconis,
hic, ubi tam rarae non perit hora morae,
qua sacer abripitur caeco descensus hiatu,
qua penetrat (uirgo, tale iter omne caue!)
ieiuni serpentis honos, cum pabula poscit
annua et ex ima sibila torquet humo.
talia demissae pallent ad sacra puellae,
cum temere anguino creditur ore manus.
ille sibi admotas a uirgine corripit escas:
uirginis in palmis ipsa canistra tremunt.
si fuerint castae, redeunt in colla parentum,
clamantque agricolae "fertilis annus erit."
huc mea detonsis auecta est Cynthia mannis:
causa fuit Iuno, sed mage causa Venus.
Appia, dic quaeso, quantum te teste triumphum
egerit effusis per tua saxa rotis!
[turpis in arcana sonuit cum rixa taberna;
si sine me, famae non sine labe meae.]
spectaclum ipsa sedens primo temone pependit,
ausa per impuros frena mouere locos.
serica nam taceo uulsi carpenta nepotis
atque armillatos colla Molossa canis,
qui dabit immundae uenalia fata saginae,
uincet ubi erasas barba pudenda genas.
cum fieret nostro totiens iniuria lecto,
mutato uolui castra mouere toro.
Phyllis Auentinae quaedam est uicina Dianae,
sobria grata parum: cum bibit, omne decet.
altera Tarpeios est inter Teia lucos,
candida, sed potae non satis unus erit.
his ego constitui noctem lenire uocatis,
et Venere ignota furta nouare mea.
unus erat tribus in secreta lectulus herba.
quaeris concubitus? inter utramque fui.
Lygdamus ad cyathos, uitriue aestiua supellex
et Methymnaei Graeca saliuua meri.
Nile, tuus tibicen erat, crotalistris phyllis,
haec facilis spargi munda sine arte rosa,
nanus et ipse suos breuiter concretus in artus
iactabat truncas ad caua buxa manus.
sed neque suppletis constabat flamma lucernis,

reccidit inque suos mensa supina pedes.
me quoque per talos Venerem quaerente secundos
semper damnosi subsiluisse canes.
cantabant surdo, nudabant pectora caeco:
Lanuuii ad portas, ei mihi, solus eram;
cum subito rauci sonuerunt cardine postes,
et leuia ad primos murmura facta Laris.
nec mora, cum totas resupinat Cynthia ualuas,
non operosa comis, sed furibunda decens.
pocula mi digitos inter cecidere remissos,
palluerantque ipso labra soluta mero.
fulminat illa oculis et quantum femina saeuit,
spectaclum capta nec minus urbe fuit.
Phyllidos iratos in uultum conicit unguis:
territa uicinas Teia clamat aquas.
lumina sopitos turbant elata Quiritis,
omnis et insana semita nocte sonat.
illas direptisque comis tunicisque solutis
excipit obscurae prima taberna uiae.
Cynthia gaudet in exuuiis uictrixque recurrit
et mea peruersa sauciat ora manu,
imponitque notam collo morsuque cruentat,
praecipueque oculos, qui meruere, ferit.
atque ubi iam nostris lassauit brachia plagis,
Lygdamus ad plutei fulcra sinistra latens
eruitur, geniumque meum protractus adorat.
Lygdame, nil potui: tecum ego captus eram.
supplicibus palmis tum demum ad foedera ueni,
cum uix tangendos praebuit illa pedes,
atque ait "admissae si uis me ignoscere culpae,
accipe, quae nostrae formula legis erit.
tu neque Pompeia spatia habere cultus in umbra,
nec cum lasciuum sternit harena Forum.
colla caue inflectas ad summum obliqua theatrum,
aut lectica tuae se det aperta morae.
Lygdamus in primis, omnis mihi causa querelae,
ueneat et pedibus uincula bina trahat."
indixit leges: respondi ego "legibus utar".
riserat imperio facta superba dato.
dein, quemcumque locum externae tetigere puellae,
suffiit, at pura limina tergit aqua,
imperat et totas iterum mutare lucernas,
terque meum tetigit sulphuris igne caput.

atque ita mutato per singula pallia lecto
respondi, et toto soluimus arma toro.

VIII

This elegy recounts an anecdote (presumably real, but very likely embellished) of Propertius' association with Cynthia. She was on an excursion to Lanuvium with another admirer, and he decided to console himself with the company of two other women at table at his house. It proved a disappointment; and worse, for Cynthia returned unexpectedly and created a formidable scene.

NOTES: VIII, 1-3

But after the women had been driven out, and Propertius sufficiently humbled, peace was restored between the two.

The piece begins with four lines which state the subject. Next come twenty-two lines which elaborate the circumstances of Cynthia's absence; of these, twelve describe a rite at Lanuvium which was the object of her excursion, and ten describe the figure cut on the occasion by herself and her escort. A further twenty-two lines then describe Propertius' unsuccessful party, the guests, entertainment, and proceedings. The remainder of the elegy, forty lines, relates Cynthia's reappearance and the subsequent scene and reconciliation.

Though the piece purports (cf. *hac nocte* in the first line) to be written just after the event, there is no reason to take this as fact rather than literary artifice.

1. Esquilias...aquosas: we know from III, xxiii, 24 that Propertius lived on the Esquiline, and it will be seen presently that the episode about to be narrated in lines 27-88 takes place at his house. The adjective *aquosas* refers to the fact that on the Esquiline were many fountains.

hac nocte: 'last night'. But this may be a pretence, part of the 'manner' in which the anecdote is told.

fugarit: 'scared'.

2. cum uicina nouis...agris: 'when the people who live near the new gardens all came running' (to see what the commotion was about). The *noui agri* are presumably the *horti Maecenatis*—the gardens laid out by Maecenas on the Esquiline—called *noui horti* by Horace, *Sat.* I, viii, 7 and 14.

19-20. turpis...meae: these lines are obviously misplaced in the MS. tradition, and are welcome between lines 2 and 3 of the tradition, as the introductory couplet 1-2 is too light in content to stand unamplified so far ahead of the story it introduces. The *taberna* is evidently the *taberna* of line 62, into which Cynthia chases her evicted rivals; and though the poet does not say that she goes into the *taberna* after them, he likewise does not say that she does not: and in any case, the *taberna* will certainly have 'rung' with their account of the fight.

3. Lanuuium: here begins (and continues to line 14) an explanatory statement preliminary to the narrative; for the manner of this cf. line 29 below, also IV, iv, 3 and IV, vi, 15. Lanuvium, object of Cynthia's excursion (see line 15), was a

Latin town on the via Appia about fifteen miles south-east of Rome.

uetus est tutela draconis: this might mean either that the town is custodian of the snake (as Vesta is *Iliacae tutela fauillae* in IV, iv, 69 above), or that it is under the protection of the (sacred) snake (as, in a different sense, the garden of the Hesperides is *insopiti tutela draconis* in Lucan IX, 357). And in fact the relationship would be reciprocal.

4. **sicubi, tam rarae non perit hora morae:** i.e. 'here, if anywhere, the time spent on a visit is not wasted, so uncommonly curious a sight is there to see'. For the use of *sicubi* cf. Ov. *A.A.* II, 15 *nunc mihi, si quando, puer et Cytherea, fauete*; also in this book IV, xi, 29 *si cui fama fuit*. The construction seems to involve giving *morae* two of its recognized meanings at the same time: the time (*hora*) of a visit (*mora*) is not wasted, as the *mora* (object of the visit) is remarkable. [*sicubi* here is Mr Lee's conjecture for the MS. reading *hic ubi*.]

5. **qua sacer...hiatu:** i.e. where there is a steep descent into the sacred cavern with its dark and yawning mouth.

6. **qua:** 'by which way'; i.e. the cavern's mouth just described.

(**uirgo, tale inter omne caue!**): the point of this is mysterious. (?) the girl who carries the offering must tread carefully all the way. (?) young girls should never be taken to see this awful rite.

7. **honos:** the offering with which he is honoured.

8. **ex ima...humo:** 'from his lair deep underground'.

10. **anguino creditur ore:** we should expect the dative; the locative ablative is used instead with much the same effect as if in English one said 'hazarded in...'

12. **uirginis in palmis ipsa canistra tremunt:** i.e. 'the basket quivers in the hand of the trembling girl'. The effect of *ipsa* (= even the...) can be rendered by repeating the idea of the verb.

15. **detonsis...mannis:** i.e. in a vehicle drawn by ponies with clipped manes. The clipped manes are an elegance; as we shall see presently, the vehicle belongs to a fashionable and extravagant young man.

16. **causa fuit Iuno, sed mage causa Venus:** the (professed) object of the excursion was to visit the temple of Juno Sospita (and perhaps also witness the rite just described) at Lanuvium; but the real object was love-making.

17. **Appia**: the via Appia, the great road running south from Rome, on which Lanuvium lay.

triumphum: 'triumphal progress'; the term is used ironically, and *agere* is the technically proper verb with *triumphum*.

18. **effusis...rotis**: a variant on the common combination *effusae habenae*.

21. **spectaclum ipsa sedens...**: 'a fine sight to see she was, as...'

primo temone pependit: 'she bent forward from (i.e. over) the front of the gig'. *primus* can indicate the edge of anything; and here the construction seems to be as in Lucan VIII, 590 *prima pendet...anxia puppe* (of a woman leaning forward over the side or end of a ship); *temone* must then be taken as standing by metonymy (part for whole) in the sense of 'vehicle', as it appears to do in Ov. *Met.* XI, 257-8 *Titan...inclinato...tenebat Hesperium temone fretum*, the metonymy being facilitated in both passages by the fact that the front of the vehicle is in question. (Some may prefer to take *temone* in its normal sense of 'yoke-pole', and construe it as a rather odd sort of local ablative, understanding that Cynthia leans 'right forward over the pole'.)

22. **per impuros...locos**: i.e. amid the bumps and pot-holes; for the meaning of *impuros* required here cf. *purus* = 'free from obstacles' (e.g. Virg. *Aen.* XII, 771 where the Trojans have cut down a tree *puro ut possent concurrere campo*), and the expression *purgare uiam* = 'level a road'.

frena mouere: i.e. steer her course, by manipulating the reins, etc.; for *mouere* of using an instrument cf. IV, i, 76.

23. **serica**: this here must indicate 'with silken upholstery (or hood)'.

carpenta: a *carpentum* was a kind of two-wheeled covered vehicle, used by women and luxurious persons. (The plural here is poetic.)

uulsi: 'smooth'. The smoothness (of any normally hairy exposed surface of the person) was achieved by plucking rather than shaving; it was a practice of the super-elegant, and was regarded by ordinary people as degenerate.

24. **armillatos colla Molossa canes**: Molossian dogs, from Epirus, were a famous breed. The transference of the epithet is worth noting. *armillae* elsewhere are (a) armlets, or (b), by metaphor, metal rings used in construction, machinery, etc. The fact that they are here mentioned specially shows that what

is meant is something less ordinary to a Roman than a dog's collar is to us.

25. **qui dabit immundae uenalia fata saginae**: i.e. who will sell himself to risk his life and eat the coarse mash of a gladiator. *fata* can mean both 'death' (as destined end of all) and 'life' (as our allotted span); the meaning here of the curious phrase *dabit uenalia fata* is fixed by the context. *sagina* is the diet of gladiators, a nutritious but unappetizing mash; here it connotes also the gladiators' 'school' to which the man sells himself, and in this connotation is construed as dative after *dabit*.

26. **uincet ubi...genas**: 'when to his shame the beard overruns (*literally* conquers) those carefully (*erasas*) shaven cheeks'. Presumably this means, when he has run through his money and can play the fop no more. (Or does *ubi* mean 'where', and the sentence refer to what will happen to him in the gladiators' school?)

28. **castra mouere**: the military term 'move camp' is here used of the man who transfers his attentions from one woman to another. Military metaphors abound in erotic elegy, a fact illustrated and exploited by Ov. *Am.* I, ix.

29. **Auentinae...Dianae**: i.e. the temple of Diana on the Aventine.

30. **omne decet**: 'everything (about her) is charming'.

31. **Tarpeios...inter...lucos**: i.e. living in the area called *inter duos lucos* in the depression between the Capitol and the Arx. The word order is remarkable, for *est altera, Teia, inter Tarpeios lucos*.

Teia: the adjective ('from Teos' in Asia Minor) is here used as a proper name, as its recurrence at line 58 below shows.

33. **noctem lenire**: i.e. to make the night more bearable for me.

34. **et Venere ignota furta nouare mea**: 'and vary my amours with a new adventure'.

35. **herba**: 'lawn', in a court of the house.

36. **concubitus**: this word usually means sexual intercourse; but here it means the order in which the members of the party recline at table; cf. on IV, i, 4.

37. **Lygdamus**: personal servant of Propertius: cf. also IV, vii, 35.

ad cyathos: regular, for the person in charge of serving the wine. The *cyathus* was the vessel used for drawing the wine

from the mixing bowl; cf. Porph. on Hor. *Epod.* ix, 36 *cyathohauriebatur ex cratere uinum*.

utrique aestiua supellex: cf. *Copa* 29 *aestiua te proluet uitro*; from this and the present passage it appears that cups, etc., of glass were used in summer. *supellex* here means table-ware.

38. Methymnaei Graeca saliuu meri: Methymna was a town in Lesbos, and Lesbian wine was well known. *saliua* frequently means 'flavour'. So the whole phrase can be translated 'a fine-flavoured Greek wine of Methymna'.

39. Nile, tuus tibicen erat: i.e. 'there was a flute-player from the banks of the Nile'. (There is no need to reproduce the vocative form of the expression in English, which does not readily use this kind of 'figure'.)

crotalistris Phyllis: i.e. Phyllis had brought her castanets. (Phyllis may well be a performer as well as a guest at table on such an occasion; and a *crotalistris* may herself dance, or accompany another.)

40. et facilis spargi munda sine arte rosa: 'and there were roses, in their natural grace, (ready) for strewing'. Roses are part of the provision for a dinner-party; cf. Hor. *Od.* III, xxix, 2-3 *non ante uerso lene merum cado cum flore, Maecenas, rosarum...*, etc., and *passim*. These might be made up into wreaths and chaplets. But they might also be strewn or thrown around in sport, loose blooms in their natural state. This appears to be the point of *munda sine arte* in the present passage. For the practice of strewing roses, cf. Hor. *Od.* III, xix, 21-2 (where a festive party is being described) *parcentis ego dexteris odisparge rosas*; also Ov. *Fast.* v, 336 and 360. *facilis* with the infinitive can mean 'ready to', 'able to', etc.; for instance at Sil. It. VII, 199 *nec facilis laeto certasse saporis* is said of a man who cannot stand his wine. For the handy supply of roses thus put ready, cf. Ov. *Am.* I, ii, 40 *adpositas* (from a heap by her side) *sparget... rosas*.

41. Magnus et ipse suos breuiter concretus in artus...: 'and Magnus my mannikin' (*literally* 'shrunk in frame'). *ipse* need not be rendered in English: it coheres with and strengthens the following *suos*.

[*Magnus* might be a proper name given in irony to a dwarf. On the other hand *nanus* ('dwarf') might be corrupted into *magnus* in transmission; and many prefer to read *nanus* here.]

42. caua buxa: the castanets of line 39 could be boxwood;

but it is more likely that the *tibia* is meant here, for cf. Ov. *Fast.* VI, 667 *caua tibia* and 697 (of the same instrument) *terebrato buxo*. The plural *buxa* may be simply a poetic plural, but it could refer to a double pipe, or to pipe and castanets.

truncas...manus: 'his stumps of arms'.

43. **sed neque suppletis constabat flamma lucernis:** the unsteady burning of the lamp, though it has recently been filled up with oil, is an omen, evidently here unfavourable, as the context shows; see also note on IV, iii, 60.

44. **reccidit inque suos mensa supina pedes:** the collapse of the table is evidently another bad omen. As at line 51 below the verb *resupinat* is used of flinging back doors, it seems that *reccidit...supina* here describes a table with its top hinged on a central support, or with a hinged flap, which falls into a vertical position through a failure of a catch or supporting bracket. But we cannot be certain.

45. **Venerem...secundam:** this means both (a) that he was trying for a throw which would be an omen of Venus' favour for his love-making; and (b) that he was trying for the highest throw, called the 'Venus'. This occurred when all four *tali*—four-sided, unlike the six-sided *tesserae*—turned up showing different numbers. [*secundam* is an emendation for *secundo* of the MSS. It fits well with (a) above; but some may prefer to read *secundos*.]

46. **canes:** the worst throw, called *canis*; it occurred when all four *tali* turned up showing the figure 1. In gaming it would be a losing throw; in omen-taking it would be an unlucky one.

48. **Lanuuii...solus eram:** i.e. for all he knew, the women might not have been there; his mind was far away, at the gates of Lanuvium, looking for Cynthia.

49. **rauci sonuerunt cardine postes:** 'there was a grating noise, as the house door turned on its hinges'. These doors had projections at top and bottom which turned in sockets in the lintel and threshold; this arrangement served the same purpose as the hinging of our doors; *cardo* includes both peg and socket.

50. **et leuia ad primos murmura facta Lares:** 'and low voices were heard at the entrance of the house'.

murmura could refer to any muffled noises, but suits very well voices muffled by distance so as not to be intelligible; Cynthia speaking to the porter, saying goodbye to her escort, etc.

Ovid uses the word of the *inarticulate* animal sounds uttered by victims of metamorphosis. For *primos Lares* cf. Ov. *Met.* v, 284 *primas intrauimus aedes*. Here *Lares* (as often) = house.

51. totas resupinat Cynthia ualuas: she flings the double doors (leading into the court where Propertius is holding his party) wide (*totas*) open, so that they lie flat back against the wall, as it were with their backs to it.

52. non operosa comis: 'her hair still in disarray'; in III, ii, 14 *operosa antra* are artificial grottoes: Cynthia had had no chance to have her hair done after her journey.

sed furibunda decens: 'but lovely in her wrath'.

54. palluerant: the pluperfect may stand for a preterite, as in line 82 below (*riserat*) and sometimes elsewhere in Propertius; or it may describe a state ('had turned' = 'was' or 'were'). For the meaning of *palleo* cf. on IV, vii, 36 and 82.

palluerant ipso labra soluta mero: 'drunk as I was, my mouth hung open, and I went grey (or went white to the lips) with fright'. One cannot feel much confidence in one's ability to analyse this sentence.

ora soluere is quite common for opening the mouth, and an open mouth suits the context. *uino solutus* is common for a person who is drunk to the point of losing full control of his movements, etc. Combining these ideas we arrive at 'my mouth hung open'; and the sagging mouth of the fuddled man is well expressed by the word *labra*. In addition to having his mouth open, Propertius changed colour; and as the subject of *palluerant* is *labra* we must either understand that he went 'white to the lips' or we must extract from *labra* a meaning ('face') rather wider than its literal one. Such extension is not uncommon with related words like *os* and *genae*, and in Juv. III, 294 *ueruecis labra* stands for a sheep's chaps; moreover Propertius has a habit, after using a word in one sense in one part of a sentence, to extract a somewhat different sense from it in relation to another part (cf. notes on IV, iv, 83 and on line 25 of this elegy, above).

There seem to be two possible ways of taking *ipso*. Either (a) its attachment to *mero* is purely syntactical and its force really goes with *labra* ('even my lips'); for such treatment of *ipse* cf. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, p. 257 and for similar treatment of *primus* and *unus* cf. note on IV, ix, 30 below. Or (b) there is in this sentence a compression of two separate ideas, viz. (i) 'I turned pale, my mouth feebly agape because of the wine I'd

drunk'; and (ii) 'I turned pale *despite* (i.e. *flushed though I was with*) the wine I'd drunk'. On this supposition the idea 'flushed' (given the usual associations of wine) is provided by the contrast with *palluerant* which juxtaposed *ipso* notifies; and *mero* is ambiguous—as is the opening phrase 'drunk as I was', in the rendering suggested at the beginning of this note.

55. **fulminat...quantum femina saeuit**: 'her eyes shot looks that blasted like thunderbolts, and her fury was such as only a woman's can be'.

58. **uicinas Teia clamat aquas**: to shout 'triumph!' in Latin is *clamare triumphum*, and so to shout 'water!' is *clamare aquam*; the adjective *uicinas* is added because she is calling for water from the neighbours; the plural *aquas* suits the fact that it is 'the neighbours' (plural) to whom she is calling. She acts as if a fire had broken out, hoping thereby to bring others on the scene, or distract Cynthia from her onslaught; cf. Seneca, *Ir.* III, XLIII *saepe rixam conclamatum in uicinia incendium soluit*.

59. **lumina sopitos turbant elata Quiritis**: i.e. carrying torches, they, or some neighbours, rush out (into the street) and the glare wakes and alarms other citizens of the neighbourhood.

60. **semita**: 'alley'.

insana...nocte: 'with the fury of the nocturnal brawl'. One of the common secondary meanings of *nox* is a night with a woman: here is another, for which cf. Mart. x, lxxxvii, 11 *pugnorum reus ebriaeque noctis*.

64. **peruersa**: as the first meaning of *peruersus* is 'back-to-front', it seems that Cynthia turns her hand and gives him a backhanded slash with her nails.

67. **nostris...plagis**: 'with striking me'.

68. **ad plutei fulcra sinistra**: the *fulcrum* is the raised end of the couch or bed; cf. IV, vii, 3 and note; there might be a *fulcrum* at one end or at both. *pluteus* strictly means the 'back' of the couch; here as sometimes elsewhere it may stand for the couch itself. Lygdamus is crouching under the raised *fulcrum* at one end.

69. **geniumque meum...adorat**: a servant would swear by or appeal to the *genius* of his master; the *genius*, being the divine spirit supposed to attend each individual, could be an object of worship in a way that the mortal man himself could not be.

71. **tum demum**: i.e. then I gave in and....

ad foedera ueni: 'I made submission, suing for peace' cf. I, ix, 3 *supplexque uenis ad iura puellae*.

72. cum: this is (I think) an example of the 'inverted' construction of *cum*, which accordingly here means 'whereupon'. For this variety of the inverted *cum* cf. Kühner-Stegmann II (2), pp. 340-1 (section 204, 2).

uix: i.e. but only after much entreaty.

75. Pompeia...in umbra: the portico of Pompey, in the Campus Martius. Such places of public resort, as also places of public entertainment (see lines 76-7), are later specified by Ovid (*A.A.* I, 67 ff. and 89 ff. and 163 ff.) as ones where prowling flirts of either sex might strike up an acquaintance. Hence Cynthia's veto.

76. lascium...Forum: gladiatorial shows were given in the Forum on occasion; when it would need to be sanded. The epithet *lascium* refers proleptically to the nature of these occasions: 'when the Forum is sanded for holiday-time'.

77. summum...theatrum: where the women sat; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 44, and Ov. *Am.* II, vii, 3 *siue...respexi summa theatri*.

78. aut lectica tuae sudet aperta morae: this means in effect *sit tibi morae* = 'engage your attention', or, giving more value to *morae*, 'keep you dallying in conversation'. The verb *sudet* serves as a verb of motion, appropriate to a litter because the men carrying it were normally sweating, in the hot Italian sun: cf. Mart. ix, xxii, 9 *ut canusinatus nostro Syrus assere sudet*. The use of a word of such apparently strong colour in a context where English would use a verb of neutral colour (for these litter-bearers are not hurrying, rather the reverse) surprises at first, but it is in fact in the Latin manner; thus in Juv. VIII, 103-4 *cum Parrhasii tabulis signisque Myronis Phidiacum uiuebat ebur* means essentially that (in the provinces in days gone by) there used still to be works of Parrhasius and Myron and Phidias, and the verb *uiuebat* only notes parenthetically the familiar fact that the works of Phidias are lifelike; *sudet* here is used in just the same way. For the situation cf. Mart. v, lxi, 3-4 *nescioquid dominae teneram qui garrit in aurem, et sellam cubito dexteriore premit*.

80. ueneat: 'must be put on sale', and chained until the sale actually takes place; for the meaning of *ueneat* here cf. Fronto, *ad Am.* I, xvi *numquam uenierit, ueneat semper*.

82. riserat: pluperfect for preterite, as, e.g. at I, xix, 10 *uenerat*, II, ii, 13 *uiderat*.

NOTES: VIII, 82-IX

imperio...dato: '(exulting) in the power I had given her over me'.

85. totas iterum mutare lucernas: 'to change the oil in the lamps completely'. For *mutare lucernas* = 'change the oil in the lamps' cf. 87 below where *mutare lectum* = 'change the covers on the bed'. *totas* has here adverbial force and means 'completely'. *iterum* is probably pleonastic, as in II, xviii, 12 *iterum...redire* and many examples with *rursus* quoted by Kühner-Stegmann II (2), p. 575; for *suppletis* in line 43 does not in itself indicate that there had been a previous change, and Cynthia's proceedings are evidently exceptional. The lamps have been contaminated by the presence of the other women.

87. mutato per singula pallia lecto: i.e. when every single cover on the bed had been changed.

88. respondi: i.e. he functioned normally again, in regard to sex, after the phase of frigidity implied in line 47; *respondere* is used thus of bodily functions generally, for cf. Petron. *Sat.* 47 *multis iam diebus uenter mihi non respondet*.

et toto soluimus arma toro: the incongruity is deliberate. They make peace, and their peacemaking leads to (almost, consists in) affectionate exchanges which take place *toto toro*; for the metaphor here played on cf. III, xx, 19-20 *ante...dulcia quam nobis concitet arma Venus*.