

Sextus Propertius, *Praeceptor Amoris*:

Teaching Love, Loving Poetry

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Abstract

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Propertius has been known to teach for as long as he has been read. Modern scholarship, however, has tended to privilege discussion of other aspects of his poetry, or to view him as an incidental contributor to a didactic trend among Roman love elegists that culminates in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris*. This thesis, therefore, turns the spotlight squarely onto Propertius, and provides a reading of his collection that centres around his role as a *praeceptor*.

My approach is four-pronged, and derives from the themes and rhetoric common to the works of poets generally agreed to form part of the Greco-Roman didactic tradition. In the first chapter, I consider how Propertius develops his authority as a poet and teacher, and mediates it by establishing common ground with his addressee(s) through the use of the first-person plural in poems 1.1 and 1.7-9. In the second, I read Propertius' teaching of Gallus in poems 1.5, 1.10, 1.13, and 1.20 as a single cycle to see how the addressee's progress becomes a commentary on the instructive capabilities of the poet's work. In the third, I examine the way in which Propertius plays with the theme of sight in the didactic narratives of poems 2.1, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.25, and 2.34 to indicate that he teaches from, and about, a world of our collective imagination. In the fourth, my attention turns to the poet's articulation of his (and his work's) trustworthiness in poems 3.1-6, 3.23-5, 4.1a/b, 4.2, and 4.5 as he reveals that his collection is shifting away from its prior focus on love.

In so doing, I seek neither to argue for Propertius to be viewed as one of the didactic poets nor to gauge the validity of his instruction. My concern, rather, is to show that Propertius makes teaching a fundamental characteristic of his collection by using it as a narrative device that shows his control over, and the changeability of, the elegiac world written up in his *Cynthia*.

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Introduction

Teaching is one of the most recognizable characteristics of Roman love elegy, and has been viewed as such by scholars since at least the beginning of the twentieth century. Between 1910 and 1911, Arthur L. Wheeler published three articles in which he declared that '[e]rotic teaching is ... of importance to all who would understand the nature of Roman elegy'.¹ In the first of these, he examined Propertius' self-characterisation as a *praeceptor amoris* in order to show how Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* expanded and developed 'an element already present in Roman elegy';² in the second and third, he expanded this analysis to a wider array of Greco-Roman literature 'to compare the Roman with the Greek and determine, if possible, the Greek source of each precept'.³ Categorising 'precepts' by theme, such as 'indifference begets love', and 'loyalty unto death',⁴ Wheeler drew upon Friedrich Leo's conclusion that Greek New Comedy 'is the ultimate source of the comic motives in Roman elegy' to argue that 'New Comedy [is] the ultimate source of the erotic teaching which appears in Roman elegy' too.⁵ For Wheeler, 'erotic teaching is a striking characteristic of Augustan elegy and served ... to distinguish that elegy from the work of the Alexandrians as well as from that of Catullus and his contemporaries', creating 'a genre that had not existed before'.⁶

It is telling that Wheeler's articles, particularly the one on Propertius, remain oft-cited even though the rigid *Quellenforschung* he employed may now appear dated.⁷ Perhaps inevitably it is Ovid, with his explicitly didactic *Ars* and *Remedia*, who has since been most studied as *praeceptor amoris*,⁸ leaving Propertius and Tibullus to receive relatively scant attention in

¹ Wheeler (1910b) 440.

² Wheeler (1910a) 26.

³ Wheeler (1911) 56.

⁴ Wheeler (1911) 56-8; 59-65.

⁵ Wheeler (1910b) 442, referring to the arguments of Leo (1895) 126-41; Wheeler (1911) 73.

⁶ Wheeler (1911) 77.

⁷ On the scholarly tradition of *Quellenforschung*, see Most (2016).

⁸ See Durling (1958), the title of whose article on Ovid is specifically meant to recall Wheeler's on Propertius. Durling's analysis is centred exclusively on the *Ars* and *Remedia*; Colakis (1987) examined the Ovidian *praeceptor amoris* in *Ex Ponto* 3.1, and Davis (1995) read that of the *Ars* in light of the poet's comments at *Tristia* 2.53-60; cf. Conte (1994) 55-6, Sharrock (1994, 3) and Dalzell (1996, 140-44) who noted the *Amores* as essential context, and Armstrong (2005, 21-48), who traces the development of the Ovidian narrator from the *Amores* to the *Ars*. For the contrasting views on the sincerity of the *praeceptor amoris* in the *Ars* and *Remedia*, see Fyler (1971), Blodgett (1973), Wright (1984), Myerowitz (1985), and Watson (2007), who stress his ineffectiveness, and

comparison;⁹ Wheeler considered them secondary to Ovid as elegiac teachers, and so they have remained. This thesis is an attempt to balance the scales by returning to Propertius, the poet with whom Wheeler had begun his influential study, but without reducing him to a mere cog of poetic development whose main innovation comprises regurgitation of familiar themes in elegiac form.

Here Propertius' teaching will be examined not as a collection of themes but as a narrative device, a means with which Propertius not only tells the story of his affair but also of its evolution across his collection. That Roman elegy does not offer a window into the author's reality has been well-established since the middle of the twentieth century, when first Fränkel,¹⁰ and then Boucher and Veyne,¹¹ dismissed the notion that these collections offer a chronological account of a relationship. But while '[t]ime does not pass at all' in elegy in the sense that each poem is independent of time's passage in the extra-textual world and therefore precludes any possibility of biographical reading,¹² Butrica has been right to argue that 'Propertius' elegies are not discrete entities but are meant to be read together in a linear progression for cumulative meaning'.¹³ Thus, for instance, 1.8b is enriched by the context of 1.8a, as is 1.9 by 1.7: while these poems have been considered 'snapshots, frozen states with weak links between them',¹⁴ the development that occurs from one to the next readily lends itself to analysis from a narratological perspective, as Walde has done with 1.16-18 within a volume applying it to Roman elegy more broadly.¹⁵ In this thesis, however, a purely narratological approach is eschewed in favour of one which derives from Propertius' very pose of *praeceptor amoris*, with the development from one poem – and book – to the next viewed in terms of his interpretation of four themes common to the works of the Greco-Roman didactic poets. The analytical

Downing (1993) and Volk (2002), who argue that he makes himself and his work out as success; see also Fulkerson (2004), who sees the *Remedia* to be no different from the *Ars* in proposing a totalitarian world where escape from love elegy is impossible. For a metapoetic reading of the *Ars*, see Giusti (2019).

⁹ On Propertius, see Maltby (2002) 147-53; on Tibullus, see Lee-Stecum (1998) 227-45.

¹⁰ Fränkel (1945) 26.

¹¹ Boucher (1965) 401; Veyne (1988) 50-66.

¹² Veyne (1988) 50.

¹³ Butrica (1996) 98. See also Oliensis (2019), who takes a similar approach to Ovid's *Amores*.

¹⁴ Salzman-Mitchell (2008) 47.

¹⁵ Walde (2008) 123-141. The volume is that of Liveley and Salzman-Mitchell (2008); for a further introduction to the narratology of Roman love elegy, see also Liveley (2012) 410-25 and the works cited at 423.

instrument is therefore a broad intertextuality, whose application to poems in which Propertius adopts a didactic tone helps to reveal his role in, and control over, the elegiac world he writes.

The first step involves a consideration of the way in which Propertius constructs his poetic and didactic authority in Book 1,¹⁶ particularly through his use of the first-person plural to associate or dissociate himself from his addressee in 1.1 and 1.7-9. This draws on a number of similar observations concerning the rhetoric of the didactic poets. Semanoff, for example, has pointed out the different distances Hesiod and Aratus establish between themselves and their students in the openings to their respective *Works and Days* and *Phaenomena*: while Hesiod presents an intimate relationship between himself, Zeus, and the Muses to establish his ‘supreme authority’ over Perses,¹⁷ Aratus ‘eradicates the distance between speaker and addressee ... upon which the *Works and Days* is predicated’ by using three first-person plural verbs from the beginning (ἀρχώμεσθα ... ἔωμεν, 1; κεχήμεθα, 4).¹⁸ It has likewise been noted that Callimachus uses the first-person plural to associate himself with Apollo (ἄείδομεν, *Aetia* fr. 1.29 Harder),¹⁹ and that Virgil does so in the *Georgics* both to create a ‘more vivid or dramatized scene’ and to ‘stress the sympathetic collaboration of the poet’.²⁰ More recently Taylor has examined Lucretius’ use of such rhetoric to establish ‘common ground’ with his explicit and implicit addressees,²¹ stressing not only the empathetic tone thereby generated, but

¹⁶ Authority is here viewed from a literary perspective similarly to Marincola (1997, 1), who, in his study of the literary authority of ancient historiography, defines it as ‘the rhetorical means by which the ancient historian claims the competence to narrate and explain the past, and simultaneously constructs a persona that the audience will find persuasive and believable.’

¹⁷ Semanoff (2006) 306. Hesiod uses the first-person plural three times in the *Works and Days* (διακρινώμεθα, 35; ἔδασσάμεθ’, 37; ἡμετέρης ... ἐφετμῆς, 298). The first two clearly include Perses, and the last does not; however, it could be read as prospectively inclusive – for if Perses becomes a δῖον γένος (299) by following Hesiod’s divine instructions, he comes to share in them even if his brother is their original recipient. See also Clay (1993, 26-33) on Perses’ transformation from a μέγα νήπιος to a δῖον γένος.

¹⁸ Semanoff (2006) 7. He also notes that Aratus’ opening evokes that of the *Theogony* (ἀρχώμεθ’ ἀείδειν, 1), which ‘Hesiod is able to open ... with similar inclusivity ... since the poem’s context lacks the adversarial relationship central to the *Works and Days*’ (307 n.12), and that the inclusivity of Aratus’ opening is distinctive from that of the *Homeric Hymns*, many of which begin with a first-person singular verb (307 n.11).

¹⁹ Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2002) 244 n.27. See also Harder (1990), who discusses how Callimachus emphasises his own role as narrator by using the first person (295-303), noting his use of the first-person plural in the story of Acontius and Cydippe (ἀποπεμπόμεθα, *Aetia* fr. 75.13 Harder) as an example of ‘shared knowledge’ between the worlds of the narrator and implied reader (299).

²⁰ Rutherford (2008) 85-6. For a further examination of Virgil’s authorial voice in the *Georgics*, see Wilk (2011); for a narratological approach to the second-person address in the poem, see Cowan (2018).

²¹ Taylor (2020).

also the possibility of one's gradual inclusion within the Epicurean world-view as the poem unfolds and its lessons are learned.

Taylor thus views Lucretius' first-person plurals as an extension of Fowler's notion of the 'didactic plot',²² the story of progress encoded into any instructional text even if it is not explicitly expressed – and this correspondingly acts as the second thematic lens through which the Propertian *praeceptor amoris* can be considered. For Fowler, the 'didactic plot' is multiform, both intra- and extra-textual: it may be conceptualised in terms of certain linguistic markers (such as the metaphor of the path),²³ an addressee's progress,²⁴ or a reader's evolving (dis-) identification with this addressee, which need not be the same from one reading to the next.²⁵ In turn, this broad approach to didactic story-telling has been variously adopted in treatments of Hesiod,²⁶ Empedocles,²⁷ Aratus,²⁸ Lucretius,²⁹ and Virgil,³⁰ as well as by Volk in her formulation of the generic boundaries of ancient didactic poetry.³¹ In this thesis the 'didactic plot' becomes a means to consider the development of Propertius' teaching of Gallus in 1.5, 1.10, 1.13, and 1.20 – whether in the way it invokes Lucretian intertexts, helps to draw a narrative thread through these poems, or makes the cycle which they form a comment on the limits of success one can hope to gain from Propertius' instruction.

In the third chapter, the focus turns to sight – an important epistemological tool employed by the didactic poets both to enhance their teaching and to amplify the tension between the poem's instructive intent and the knowledge it conveys. Hesiod's universe is 'like a surveillance society' watched over by a 'far-seeing Zeus' (εὐρύοπα Ζεύς),³² but is also one where the '[t]he

²² Fowler (2000). His argument is outlined in greater detail at the beginning of chapter 2.

²³ Fowler (2000) 208–11; Fowler notes the metaphor in the *Georgics* (1.41; 1.121–3; 3.8; and 4.562) and Lucretius (esp. 1.398–409; 1.1115–8; 3.1–4; and 6.26–8).

²⁴ Fowler (2000) 211–2, with reference to Mitsis (1993).

²⁵ Fowler (2000) 211.

²⁶ Trépanier (2007) 255–6; Van Noorden (2015) 17–22; 261–304.

²⁷ Trépanier (2007) 256–60.

²⁸ Van Noorden (2015) 199.

²⁹ Gale (2004); Trépanier (2007); Taylor (2020).

³⁰ Nappa (2005) 4.

³¹ Volk (2002) 39–41. She views the 'didactic plot' in terms of her own concept of 'poetic simultaneity', a poet's comments about the poem's progress which tell the 'story of its own coming into being as a poem... [and] at the same time the story of the teacher's instructing the student.' (41).

³² Lovatt (2013) 143. Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 514, 884; *Op.* 229, 239.

theme of deception, revelation, and concealment' frequently recurs and '[v]ision ... is often suspect',³³ with sight crucial to the stories of primordial strife between the divine and human realms.³⁴ Aratus, in turn, casts readers of his *Phaenomena* as its viewers; his 'ecphrastic language ... blurs the boundaries between reality and representation', making 'writing itself ... an object of ecphrasis':³⁵ the concordance between celestial and written σήματα extends to that between interpretation and creation, leading Aratus to suggest his readers as ποιῆται.³⁶ Callimachus, meanwhile, ties sight to the danger of possessing too much knowledge as he breaks off from narrating the ἱερὸς γάμος of Hera and Zeus;³⁷ Lucretius is 'unique among ancient scientific authors' in 'so prominently' making sight the basis of collective experience as he encourages his student to see what cannot be seen;³⁸ and Virgil bases his account of the old Corycian on empirical evidence seemingly gathered from his mind.³⁹ As concerns Propertius, an emphasis on sight in the didactic contexts of 'Book 2' will reveal the way in which he teaches from, and about, an elegiac world that exists solely in his and his reader's imagination – making it a pliable source of instruction that is no more constant than the love on which it depends.

The final chapter builds on this approach by examining the Propertian *praeceptor amoris* in Books 3 and 4 from the perspective of trustworthiness (and in particular, *fides*), a theme which was fundamental to didactic poetry ever since Hesiod's Muses claimed to be able 'to say many

³³ Lovatt (2013) 145-6, 159.

³⁴ See Lovatt (2013) 146-8. On the whole, however, Hesiod's instructions are presented in terms of speech, not sight: he 'versifies' divine truths to Perses (ἐγὼ δέ κε Πέρση ἐτήτυμα μῦθησαίμην, *Op.* 10) on which he encourages him to ruminate (Ἦ Πέρση, σὺ δὲ ταῦτα τεῶ ἐνικάτθεο θυμῷ, *Op.* 27; cf. φράζεσθαι, 283, 404, 367, 448, 688). Furthermore, when outlining the times of the year and celestial phenomena to note, instruction frequently takes the form of description (see Slatkin 2003, 30), rather than an appeal to observation. The only instance in which Hesiod presents his instruction as something he can 'show' is arguably at *Op.* 648-9 (δείξω δὴ τοι μέτρα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης, | οὔτε τι ναυτιλίας σεσοφισμένος οὔτε τι νηῶν), where elucidation would stand jarringly juxtaposed with an admission of the poet's ignorance. West (1996, 318) reads it as essentially equivalent to Latin *dicere*, however.

³⁵ Volk (2012) 217. See also Chalkedas (2017) 3-6.

³⁶ See Volk (2012) 221 (and also n.40), citing *Phaen.* 776-77: τὰ δέ τοι καὶ ἀπ' ἄλλων ἔσσεται ἄλλα | σήματα καὶ περὶ νυκτὶ καὶ ἡματι ποιήσασθαι.

³⁷ *Aetia* fr. 75.4-9 Harder; with the sequence ἴδες ... | ... ἱστορίην | ἧ πολυιδρεΐη (6-8), Callimachus appears to posit a linguistic, as well as a thematic, connection between sight, inquiry, and excessive knowledge. See Kidder (2018) 152-4.

³⁸ Lehoux (2013) 134, 139. See also Classen (1968) 87-8, and Hedrick (2015) 174-200.

³⁹ Verg. *G.* 4.125-7: *memini me ... Corycium uidisse senem*. See also Perkell (1981) 177; Thomas (1988b, 170) and (1992, 36).

lies similar to truths’ as well as truths themselves.⁴⁰ Aratus, for instance, ends his poem by suggesting the unreliability of individual weather signs.⁴¹ As for Callimachus, it has been argued that over the course of the *Aetia* he forces ‘the Muse to abandon her former position as provider of divine knowledge and [turns] her into a mediator of human knowledge who no longer participates in the construction of the factual information the poem includes’, setting up ‘a discourse on the quality of the knowledge transmitted.’⁴² Lucretius, meanwhile, twice likens his poem to honey deceptively smeared on the rim of a cup of medicine;⁴³ and Virgil tells obvious falsehoods.⁴⁴ For his part, Propertius develops the untrustworthiness of his didactic *persona* together with that of his elegiac medium as his collection begins to shift away from the affair with which it began – suggesting both that this poetic evolution is a natural consequence of the world he writes, and that our knowledge of its direction is to remain uncertain until the very end.

This four-pronged approach to Propertius’ teaching does not have as its focus the way in which his affair responds specifically to the treatments of love offered by the didactic poets⁴⁵ – and it

⁴⁰ Hes. *Theog.* 27-8: ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, | ἴδμεν δ’ εὖτ’ ἐθέλωμεν ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι. For a summary of scholarship on these lines, see Katz and Volk (2000) 122-3; for more recent treatments, see Heiden (2007) and Franek (2018). See also Belfiore (1985), who considers Plato’s reading of these lines at *Rep.* 382d 2-3.

⁴¹ Arat. *Phaen.* 1142-54. Aratus emphasises the need to consider all signs together (ἄμυδις, 1153; cf. Kidd 1997, *ad loc.*), but does not guarantee that one’s forecast will be certain, only that it will thus never be ‘random’ (σχεδῖως, 1154).

⁴² Kaesser (2005) 109, drawing on Callimachus’ reference to Xenomedes (fr. 75.53-4 Harder) and his subordination of Calliope to this prose source (fr. 75.76-7 Harder). See also Bing (1988) 27-8, and Harder (2012) 657.

⁴³ Lucr. 1.936-50; 4.11-25; for recent treatments of this analogy, see Gruber (2009) and Nethercut (2018). Repetition of this kind in Lucretius has been viewed as a clear sign of interpolation: see Butterfield (2014) 16-17 (with references) for a brief overview of editorial approaches since the nineteenth century. Deufert (1996, 81-96) considers the verses at 4.1-25 to have been interpolated before the end of the first century AD; he marks them as such in his recent (2019) Teubner edition.

⁴⁴ Those arising in Virgil’s discussion of grafting (*G.* 2.47-82), for instance, have been seen as emblematic of humanity’s violence against the natural world: cf. Ross (1980) 68-9, and (1987) 104-9; Thomas (1988a) 20-21, 161, 167, 170, and (1988b) 270-2. However, Henkel (2014) proposes a metapoetic reading, arguing that arboriculture ‘shows poets how to cultivate and refine literary genres, and in particular how intertextual allusion can help them to deal with the literary influence of their predecessors’ (33).

⁴⁵ On love in Hesiod, see Marquardt (1982), duBois (1992), and Most (2013); on the Acontius and Cydippe episode of the *Aetia*, see Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 61-6, with a summary of scholarship cited at n.68, and Rynearson (2009); on love in Lucretius, see e.g. Betensky (1980), Fitzgerald (1984), and Brown (1987); and in the *Georgics*, e.g. Thomas (1988b) 79-95, Kronenberg (2000) 346-8, and Gale (2000) 173-9, 221-4.

likewise does not seek to establish him as one, either.⁴⁶ At the same time, it regrettably falls outside the scope of this thesis to consider in detail how these four themes are, in turn, developed in Ovid's teaching, although foundations for such a study have already been laid.⁴⁷ I am concerned rather with building upon Stroh's view of elegy as having a practical function;⁴⁸ but while he examines it as a means for Propertius to charm Cynthia, I view it as a means for him to show his control over *Cynthia*. In other words, when Propertius teaches about conduct in love, about the nature of his beloved, or about his poetic development, the lessons I seek to draw out concern the way in which Propertius exposes his relationship with the very elegiac reality that he composes. In focussing on Propertius as *praeceptor amoris*, therefore, I propose neither to discover the precise models from which his teaching is drawn, nor to query the validity of its application to an extra-textual reality. Instead, I apply modes of reading inspired by the works of the didactic poets to suggest a new perspective on how 'Propertian poetics refuses to bridge the gap between reality and fiction, preferring rather to interweave them in creative but tricky tension'.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Cf. Effe (1977), Toohey (1996), and Volk (2002), who formulate different frameworks for the didactic 'genre'. Effe divides didactic into three permeable categories: 'sachbezogen' (explicitly instructional); 'transparent' (indirectly instructional); and 'formal' (ornamental); Toohey sees didactic as having undergone 'six phrases of development' (7); Volk's study concerns Latin didactic and defines the genre according to four tenets (36-40), which, in addition to 'poetic simultaneity', include 'explicit didactic intent', the 'teacher-student constellation', and 'poetic self-consciousness'. While Toohey 'would disqualify [the *Aetia*] from the didactic subgenre' (75), he considers the *Works and Days* an unproblematic proponent of it; Volk argues that the *Works and Days* 'just about qualifies as a didactic poem' (49), but disqualifies the *Fasti* (42); while for Effe, the *Works and Days* belongs to none of his categories because 'die "fachwissenschaftliche" Lehre ... vielmehr eingebettet ist in eine allgemeine moralische Paränese' (24 n.35). However, Heath (1985) considers the *Works and Days* in light of Effe's own framework (254 n.31). For a review of Effe, see Kenney (1979) and Schrijvers (1982).

⁴⁷ See Semanoff (2002, 180-2), who briefly discusses Ovid's use of the first-person plural in the *Ars*, and Sharrock (2005, 261-2), who compares his self-deprecation to Horace's use of the first-person plural at *Ars P.* 24-7; Volk (2002, 173-88) who argues that Ovid develops a unique version of 'poetic simultaneity', a term Sharrock (2003, 306) in her review dubs a 'plot'; Claassen (2013, 39-43) who compares the role of sight in *Am.* 3.2 and *Ars* 1.135-70; and Allen (1993) 15-37, Dalzell (1996) 145, Kennedy (2000) 174, and Armstrong (2004) 543 on Ovid's didactic *fides*.

⁴⁸ See Stroh (1971). He analyses elegy as *werbende Dichtung*, arguing 'daß die Dichtung im Leben eine Funktion hat', adding that '[e]r [sc. der Elegiker] schreibt nicht eigentlich über sich, sondern für sich' (2); his concern thus lies with what he calls an elegist's 'Nützlichkeitstopik' (3).

⁴⁹ Sharrock (2000) 268.

You, Me, We, She: Authority and ‘Common Ground’ in Book 1

I. 1.1

This chapter begins with a consideration of the way in which Propertius characterises himself as a teacher in 1.1.⁵⁰ Following a brief overview of the poem’s structure, the discussion primarily revolves around Propertius’ claims to, and intertwining of, didactic and poetic authority, along with their expression through three instances of the first-person plural in the second half of the poem. Like the didactic poets discussed in the introduction, Propertius is an instructor who finds common ground with his students; at the same time, he not only makes himself out as one who needs to undergo his own teaching by writing verse, but also, paradoxically, suggests that to continue reading his verse is to risk the misery against which he warns his audience. This analysis, in turn, serves as the foundation for that of 1.7, 1.8a/b, and 1.9 – poems in which Propertius writes the epicist Ponticus into the amatory torment he also urges him to fear, before showing the success to be gained from writing elegy, and then returning to teach Ponticus to do the same.

i. The ‘passive’ and ‘active’ halves of 1.1

When considering the poem’s structure, scholarly focus has primarily been laid on its ‘articulation of ... thought’ or ‘movement of thought’,⁵¹ resulting in division according to logical sequence and discursive flow, and leading to various proposals by Hubbard, Stahl, Goold, Baker, and Butler and Barber.⁵² Others have divided it in yet other ways while accepting Housman’s conjecture of a lacuna between 1.1.11 and 1.1.12.⁵³ The plethora of possibilities produced lend truth to Hubbard’s statement that ‘there is pleasure to be derived from the supple organisation of a Propertian elegy’;⁵⁴ but it may also be said that these subjective judgements

⁵⁰ The text is Heyworth’s OCT (2007a). All translations are my own.

⁵¹ Hubbard (1974) 19; Stahl (1985) 47.

⁵² Hubbard (1974) 14-15: 8+8+2+6+6+8; Stahl (1985) 47: 8+8+2+6+6+4+4; Goold (1990) 38-40 (Loeb edition): 8+8+8+6+8; Baker, (1990) 63: 8+8+8+8+6; Butler and Barber (1933) 153: 8+10+6+6+4+4.

⁵³ Richmond (1928) and Enk (1936) 151-2: 8+6+6+6+8.

⁵⁴ Hubbard (1974) 19.

about his poetic aesthetics do not necessarily equate to uncovering ‘an important means for Propertius to present his thoughts clearly’.⁵⁵

An alternative approach may be to view the structure through the lens of the poet’s voice,⁵⁶ which reveals it to be of a rather more simple – and binary – kind.⁵⁷ Until the change of tone in 1.1.19, Propertius presents himself passively, whether literally in the passive voice (*cogor*, 8), or as the object in the sentence (e.g. *me cepit*, 1; *mihi ... lumina deiecit*, 3; *me docuit*, 5). The poet only breaks his passivity for a brief exclamation to Tullus (*Tulle*, 9). The introduction of Propertius’ active voice (*tunc ego crediderim*, 23) coincides with his use of verbs in the imperative mood, addressing magicians (*conuertite*, 21), his friends (*quaerite*, 26; *ferite*, 29), and lovers more successful than he (*remanete*, 31). It also triggers the appearance of first-person plurals, where one deponent verb (*patiemur*, 27) is paralleled by two possessive pronouns (*nostrae*, 21; *nostra* 33). Propertius saves his only active indicative first-person verb of the poem (*moneo*, 35) for the end, in which he warns unmindful listeners to pay attention to his plight⁵⁸ – a verb which expresses the poet’s didactic intention. Viewed in this way, 1.1 becomes a tale of two voices.

In turn, a noticeable shift at the poem’s midpoint encourages a consideration of the way in which these two halves form a single poetic unit. One way to do so is to examine how Propertius builds up to the unmistakably didactic address with which he ends the poem, and in order to do so, one must begin at the start:

⁵⁵ Stahl (1985) 47.

⁵⁶ Fedeli (1980, 61) divides the poem according to stylistic changes (8+10+6+14).

⁵⁷ Exactly so if the postulated lacuna is correct after 1.1.11. See Housman (1888), followed by Heyworth (2007b).

⁵⁸ *monere* is not used in the *DRN* or *Georgics*, but Hesiod repeatedly warns Perses throughout the *Works and Days*. Varro links the word to *memoria* (*Ling.* 6.49; cf. Maltby 1991, s.vv.), and Ovid (*Fast.* 3.261-2) plays on its sound to evoke the Muses (Heyworth 2019, *ad loc.*). In the *Fasti*, Ovid also uses the word to show his divinely-claimed didactic authority (3.167), and to mean ‘divine instruction’ elsewhere (1.227, 1.261, 1.313, 1.467, 4.247, 5.447; cf. Heyworth 2019, *ad* 3.167-8).

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
contactum nullis ante Cupidinibus.
tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus
et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus

1.1.1-4

The poem's passive beginning is an example of *seruitium amoris*,⁵⁹ 'an expression of the lover's humility and abasement',⁶⁰ and his 'state or sense of degradation' resulting from being 'seized' (*cepit*, 1) by Cynthia's gaze.⁶¹ This initial capture also constitutes the poet's first experience with Cupid (2), who subsequently oppresses the poet and pushes down on his head with his feet (4). With *Amor* delayed to the fourth line, the subject of *deiecit* (3) could well be Cynthia until the god emerges as a possible subject,⁶² playing at the inseparable connection between Propertius' two oppressors. At the same time, the three instrumental ablatives that mark out each successive step in the poet's enslavement (*ocellis*, 1; *Cupidinibus*, 2; *pedibus*, 4) carry the poet from emotional to physical submission and also from lived experience to poetic composition,⁶³ presenting his verse as the actualization of subjugation.

The sense of passivity established at the start also recurs at the end of the first *exemplum* as Propertius draws a contrast between himself and his mythological counterpart, Milanion:

ergo uelocem potuit domuisse puellam:
tantum in amore preces et benefacta ualent.
in me tardus Amor non ullas cogitat artes
nec meminit notas, ut prius, ire uias.

1.1.15-18

⁵⁹ While Propertius does not explicitly call himself a slave, he implies it (cf. 1.1.27-8). Lyne (1979, 127) argues that *seruitium amoris* 'is basically the invention of Propertius'. However, the discovery of the Gallus fragment may now suggest otherwise. Gallus refers to Lycoris as *domina*, and as Stroh (1983, 221) notes, 'das ist keine bloÙe faon de parler.' Other instances of this trope in Book 1 include 1.4.4, 1.5.19, and 1.12.18.

⁶⁰ Copley (1947) 285.

⁶¹ Lyne (1979) 117.

⁶² Commager (1974) 23.

⁶³ For *pes* as a metrical foot, see *OLD* s.v. 11.

Until 1.1.17, the story of Milanion and Atalanta is one of hard work yielding success, told as part of an address to Tullus (9). Milanion shirked no task (*nullos fugiendo ... labores*, 9) and won his prize beloved.⁶⁴ Yet, while the logical sequence of the *exemplum* seems complete by 1.1.16 (*ergo*, 15),⁶⁵ Propertius has not yet made clear the relevance of Milanion's story. He therefore turns the focus back on himself, renewing the depiction of his torment he had paused earlier; and although he does not present his enslavement to *Amor* in the same stark terms, he nonetheless foregrounds the deity's power by making him the subject of these lines. And with his *Amor* unable to think of old ploys (*non ullas cogitat artes*, 17) or to remember paths previously trodden (*meminit ... uias*, 18), the terms of Propertius' subservience now revert from the physical back to the mental without losing their connection to poetic composition,⁶⁶ again presenting his elegy as the unavoidable culmination of complete dedication to his amatory predicament – as well as re-establishing him as a bewildered prey hunted down by his beloved. Propertius passivity thus develops still further as he recedes from view, first in favour of

⁶⁴ That Propertius characterises Milanion's entreaties as *labores* is significant, both because of the word's strong didactic connotations and its appearance in *Eclogues* 10, an important intertext for this *exemplum* on account of its apparent connection to Gallus (10.50-69; see Ross 1975, and below). The notion of *labor* is naturally crucial to Hesiod's *Works and Days*, where it is closely connected to an understanding of Zeus' justice; the notion is used by Lucretius to stress the pointless toils of the ignorant and serves as a contrast to the Epicurean ideal of ἀταραξία (e.g. 2.2, 2.12, 3.62, 3.943, 3.999, 4.1099, 4.1121, 5.1430). Yet it is most controversial in the *Georgics*, where the statement *labor omnia uicit | improbus* has drawn endless interpretations, whether (relatively) positively (Wilkinson 1969, 141 and Jenkyns 1993, 248; the latter's term for such a view is 'progressive', 243); or negatively (Otis 1964, 157; Thomas 1988, *ad loc.*); or as 'strong words' (Mynors 1990, *ad loc.*); or as a 'necessary evil' (Gale 2000, 66). The concept is also a poetic one: both Lucretius (1.141; 2.730; 3.419) and Virgil (2.39; 4.6) call their poem a *labor*; on the relationship between the two, see Gale (2000) 185-95. This parallels *Eclogues* 10, which Virgil begins by asking Arethusa to vouchsafe his poetic *labor* (10.1; cf. 10.64), and in which Gallus' proclamation that *omnia uincit Amor* (10.69) looks ahead to Virgil's statement in the *Georgics* that *labor omnia uicit | improbus* (1.145-6): a clear allusion, though one which belies neat explanation (Thomas 1988, *ad loc.* and Jenkyns 1993, 244). If, as Ross argues, Propertius' story of Milanion contrasts a programmatic *exemplum* in Gallus' own poetry, it is notable that he uses a term with such didactic connotations to do so: the manner of Gallus' 'initiation' in *Eclogues* 6 reveals him to have composed poetry in the Orphic-Hesiodic tradition, although of precisely what kind will be contested until more verse is discovered (see Ross 1975, 20-38; Zetzel 1977, 254-5; and Heyworth 1992, 48-52). By framing Milanion's struggle against unrequited love as a *labor*, Propertius may be nodding to the didactic tendencies of Gallus' poetry, and implying that his elegy will also flirt with elements of this tradition (as he does explicitly at e.g. 2.10.1-2, 25-6; 2.13.1-8) while exploring untrodden paths of his own. See also discussion in chapter 3, 130-6, for the way in which Propertius draws connections in 2.13 to (Virgil's) Gallus and Hesiod via the *Eclogues*.

⁶⁵ For *ergo* used to close an argument, see *OLD* s.v. 5b. See also Rothstein (1920) *ad loc.*

⁶⁶ See Myerowitz (1985) 87-90 for the journey of a didactic poet, and Knox (1999) who outlines the possible sources (prose and poetic) for the metaphor of the path used by Lucretius (1.921-30; 4.1-9) and argues against a singular allusion to Callimachus' *Aetia* (fr. 1.25-8 Harder).

Milanion and then of *Amor*,⁶⁷ with the shift in focus suggesting that the true contrast lies not between Propertius and his counterpart but between Propertius' *Amor* and that of his *exemplum*. If *Amor* could once win a girl through speed and guile, the deity is different. He is *tardus*: not just slow, but slow-witted.⁶⁸

The switch from physical to mental subjugation, however, does not occur unprompted in lines 17-18 but comes expressed in the context of, and as a consequence of, *Amor*'s role as Propertius' educator.⁶⁹ The deity's oppressive feet are only a means to an end:

donec me docuit castas odisse puellas⁷⁰
 improbus et nullo uiuere consilio.
 ei mihi, iam toto furor hic non deficit anno,
 cum tamen aduersos cogor habere deos.

1.1.5-8

If Propertius hints that *Amor*'s oppression extends to the mind by forcing him to write elegiac poetry in line 4, then in lines 5-6 he states it explicitly. As in 1.1.7-18, however, he remains capable of offering an objective analysis of these effects: he calls Cupid *improbus*,⁷¹ terms the

⁶⁷ This can perhaps also be seen from the apparent conflation of Milanion with Hippomenes (through reference to the *uelocem puellam*), in addition to the already implicit allusion to Meleager, the namesake of the epigrammatist Propertius adapts in lines 1-4 (*AP*12.101): as Propertius gives way to *Amor*, so his failures become accentuated through the lack of clarity surrounding his purported successful counter-examples. See Ovid *Ars* 2.185-96, *Met.* 10.560-707, *Met.* 8.262-546 for the stories of Milanion, Hippomenes, and Meleager, respectively.

⁶⁸ Cf. *OLD* s.v. 5 and 5b: the latter cites 1.1.37 (*tardus ... aures*). The connection between the two instances of *tardus* adds an extra force to Propertius' warning.

⁶⁹ Maltby (2006, 148) stresses *Amor*'s role in Propertius' education.

⁷⁰ Here I deviate from Heyworth (2007a), who prints *Puellas* because he takes it to refer to the Muses (see 2007b, *ad loc.*). While I agree with this reading, I disagree with his view that *puellae* cannot mean 'girls' and therefore consider this to be the primary sense of this ambiguous line – even if the poet's didactic authority is ultimately secondary to his poetic authority (see discussion below).

⁷¹ This is another word that weaves Propertius' poetry into the matrix of Virgil, Gallus, teaching, and love. Beside allusion to *Georgics* 1.145-6 (cf. n.64 above), it echoes *Eclogues* 8, where Damon rues Love's influence over his unrequited love, describing how a 'savage Love taught' Medea (*saeuus Amor docuit ... matrem*, 8.47) and holding them jointly culpable for her actions (*crudelis mater magis, an puer improbus ille? / improbus ille puer; crudelis tu quoque, mater*, 8.49-50). *Amor*'s powers of domination and teaching in 1.1.3-6 thus allude to the deity's characterisation in *Eclogues* 8.47-50 and 10.69. He may be further acknowledging his debt to a Gallan poetics that apparently explored didactic and elegiac topics, while also having affinity to the *DRN* and the *Georgics*, in which Love's overpowering influence serves both as instructional material (e.g. *Lucr.* 4.1058-1287; *G.* 3.209-83)

consequence of this instruction a *furor* (7), and knows that he is affected by ‘hostile gods’ (8). But while it is striking that Propertius’ oppression should be expressed in didactic terms, what *Amor* has taught Propertius is not immediately clear:⁷² to say who these *castae puellae* are is certainly not ‘fairly straightforward’, and there is indeed good reason for scholars’ ‘over-subtle interpretation’.⁷³ Yet if Propertius uses an instructional tone at the end of the poem to articulate his ‘Philosophy of Love’,⁷⁴ and if he thereby presents himself as a *praeceptor amoris*,⁷⁵ then it is also important to establish first of all what he claims to have been taught.

ii. Propertius’ *castae puellae*: didactic authority in 1.1

To begin, I paraphrase Sullivan’s summary of the five possible readings of 1.1.5:⁷⁶

1. Scorning these *puellae*, Propertius has turned to prostitutes ‘in despair’.⁷⁷
2. The *puellae* are the Muses.⁷⁸
3. The *puellae* ‘are virtuous women of some sort’.⁷⁹ Cynthia is not one of them.
4. The *puellae* are those faithful to their lovers. Cynthia is one of them as she has another lover.
5. The *puellae* ‘are women who (for whatever reason) deny sexual favours to their suitors’.⁸⁰ Cynthia is one of them.

To put my cards on the table: I favour the second and third readings. These are viewed not as mutually exclusive, but simultaneously possible. Sullivan rightly dismisses the first outright, for nothing in the first book suggests that Propertius wishes to express his desire – sexually or

and an expression of devotion to writing verse (Lucr. 3.5; *G.* 2.476, 3.285, 3.291-2; cf. *Ecl.* 6.9-10). Mynors (1990, n.145-6) draws a parallel with Hesiod’s ‘evil’ Strife (σχετλίη, *Op.* 15; cf. σχέτλια ἔργα, 124, 238, 254).

⁷² Cf. Hus (1965, 132), who suggests possible meanings for *docere* at 1.1.5: *suggérer à quelqu’un de; le persuader de faire quelque chose; le pousser à, l’amener à.*

⁷³ Shackleton Bailey (1956) 1.

⁷⁴ Hodge and Buttimore (1977) 63.

⁷⁵ Boucher (1965) 350.

⁷⁶ See Sullivan (1961) 106-7 for the summary of views, broadly reprinted at Sullivan (1976) 101-6.

⁷⁷ Sullivan (1976) 102. Suggested by Lachmann (1816) xxviii, and approved by e.g. Postgate (1894) 47.

⁷⁸ As Heyworth (2007b), following Vulpius (1775) and Barth (1777).

⁷⁹ Sullivan (1976) 102; followed by Foster, cited in Barber and Butler (1933) 153.

⁸⁰ Sullivan (1976) 103.

otherwise – for Cynthia with anyone other than her.⁸¹ And while the second reading is attractive, it is best to return to it following a consideration of the third, fourth, and fifth.

These three readings depend upon whether Cynthia can be one of those whom *Amor* has taught Propertius to hate.⁸² Catullus may have set a precedent for loving and hating the same woman (*odi et amo*, 85.1) for Roman elegy,⁸³ but Propertius here refers to multiple *puellae* – and Cynthia must either be regarded as part of, or contrasted with, them. If Cynthia is one of many (readings four and five), then Propertius undercuts Catullus’ poignancy; and two other aspects make these options difficult. The fourth reading sees Cynthia as *casta* and devoted to another, but as, for instance, the reversal of the poet’s fortune in 1.8a/b indicates, Cynthia is at the very least inconsistent in her fidelity. The fifth reading takes *castitas* very specifically, but this cannot stand either: ‘*casta* cannot mean simply a woman who says no in a particular case to a particular suitor’.⁸⁴ The word used in that case is *dura* – and they are not synonyms.⁸⁵ For Propertius, *castitas* is explicitly associated with two kinds of women: virgins (2.32.60, 3.20.7, 4.8.13) or faithful wives (3.12.15, 3.12.37).⁸⁶ *castitas*, then, is devotion of either sort, a socio-political and moral concept whose value is determined by adherence to the same Roman *mores* it helps to define.⁸⁷ Cynthia does not display this.

This leaves the third reading, with *castae puellae* and Cynthia as different entities. On this reading, Cupid has taught Propertius to despise virtuous women as a consequence of Propertius’ capture by Cynthia’s eyes. This accords with the exceptionality of the poet’s amatory torment: posturing as a hater of *castae*, Propertius marks himself off from the social mainstream of the contemporary, aristocratic Rome to which he would be expected to belong, and presents himself instead as a unique follower of *Amor*. This also resonates with the passive tone, since *castitas* represents the Roman ideal of female behaviour, of passive adherence to the demands

⁸¹ Cf. Shackleton-Bailey (1956) 1-2.

⁸² *odisse* is perhaps less emphatic than it seems; see Fedeli (1980, *ad loc.*)

⁸³ Fordyce (1961, *ad loc.*) notes that ‘the sheer simplicity of the words ... is worlds away from convention’, but see Bishop (1971, 636-8) who discusses Hellenistic models.

⁸⁴ Sullivan (1976) 103. See also Shackleton-Bailey (1956) 1-2.

⁸⁵ See Sullivan (1976) 103, and Heyworth (2007b) *ad* 1.1.5-6.

⁸⁶ The meaning of *casta ... domo* (2.6.28) perhaps bridges the meaning of the two. Propertius discusses the immoral behaviour of wives-to-be.

⁸⁷ On social and moral ambivalence in Propertius, see Langlands (2006) 196-204.

of a society governed by men.⁸⁸ Hating *castae* therefore suggests a lack of interest in exerting the social power granted to Propertius as a male, and shows instead a desire to play enslaved lover to his domineering mistress.⁸⁹

This reading, however, has not been universally accepted. It has been thought that if Propertius hates *castae puellae*, he loves *incestae puellae* – and since he ostensibly loves Cynthia, she must be *incesta* too.⁹⁰ But such a conclusion is based on a false choice. Propertius makes use of the opposition between love and hate, but women who do not fall into the category of *castitas* should not be automatically designated as *incestae*. Propertius uses the term only once, when calling Cleopatra *incesti meretrix regina Canopi* (3.11.39) – and there, *incesti* refers to the locale with which Cleopatra is associated and stresses the literally incestuous practices of Egyptian rulers. Furthermore, *incestus* is above all a religious term,⁹¹ and while striking, it would nevertheless be quite the oxymoron for the god of love to have taught Propertius something profane. Such complete irreligiousness is, moreover, unlikely to serve as part of Propertius' broader self-characterisation given that he treads a fine line between uniqueness and ostracism. For while he is a unique follower of *Amor*, his poetry nonetheless presents his love for Cynthia through the prism of contemporary Roman life: the tropes of *seruitium* and *militia amoris* push the boundaries of traditional Roman values into an elegiac context, where these values are 'translated and relocated',⁹² not abolished. Propertius therefore does not reject the overarching social values within which his poetry operates.⁹³

So while Propertius may tempt the prudish reader to view Cynthia as *incesta*, the temptation is unfounded. The poet, after all, compares her to goddesses (e.g. 1.3.1-4) and extols her charms (e.g. 1.4.11-14). Rather, Propertius loves a *dura puella*, as his mythological *exemplum* shows:

⁸⁸ Wyke (2002) 38-9.

⁸⁹ On Roman masculinity in elegy, see Edwards (1993) 23 and Wyke (2002) 173-4.

⁹⁰ Heyworth (2007b) *ad* 1.1.5-6.

⁹¹ Cf. Klingmüller (1916) in *RE*, s.v. *incestus*: '*incestus* ... ist ein aus dem Gebiete des *fās* herstammender Begriff und bedeutet dort ein den religiösen Satzungen zuwiderlaufendes unzüchtiges Verhalten'.

⁹² Conte (1994) 38.

⁹³ Cf. Gale (1997) 85 on Lucretius: '[The poet] poses as an anti-establishment figure but is only able to express himself in the language of the society he claims to distance himself from'.

Milanion nullos fugiendo, Tulle, labores
saeuitiam durae contudit Iasidos.

1.1.9-10

It was noted above that *dura* and *casta* are not synonyms, and this semantic difference allows Propertius to have his cake and eat it by claiming aversion to women of a particular character while maintaining that this has been taught to him by Cupid. The key difference is that while *castae* reject additional lovers on the basis of proper behaviour, whether abstinence or marriage, *durae* have no such qualms – they leave their lover in perpetual misery because they choose not to adhere to traditional *mores*. On this account, Atalanta reflects Cynthia well. If *castitas* signifies a life of celibacy or a marriage in accordance with traditional *mores*, then Atalanta's mythological tradition binds her in a paradox: against her father's wishes, she did not wish to live a married life;⁹⁴ yet by becoming married to Milanion, she could not keep her previous vow of virginity. As a result, Atalanta is not quite *casta* according to Roman expectations; nor, however, is she *incesta*. Instead, Atalanta is *dura* – and we may expect Cynthia to be so as well.⁹⁵ In this way too, then, Propertius positions himself in opposition to Roman ideals without ostracising himself entirely from them.

This reading is also supported by the final lines of 1.1 in which Propertius warns others to heed his advice – naturally so, for his own teaching can be expected to stem from what he has been taught. Sullivan, who also favours the third reading but is concerned more with Propertius' 'psychological orientation',⁹⁶ likewise holds these final lines to be an important part of his own argument but examines only 1.1.31-2 and 1.1.35-6. It is best to view the final passage in its entirety:⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ps.-Appollodorus, *Bibl.* 3.9.2; Ps.-Hyginus *Fab.* 185.

⁹⁵ It is true that Cynthia is implicitly *casta* at 1.11.29-30, which we should perhaps see as a focalized address: it is surely more persuasive to call Cynthia *casta* than *dura* or *incesta* where Propertius tries to stop her from being desired by others (see Lyne 1999, 164). 1.8a/b also raises hopes that Cynthia is on the path to *castitas*.

⁹⁶ Sullivan (1976) 104.

⁹⁷ I would therefore disagree with the premise that the final grouping comprises 6 lines.

uos remanete quibus facili deus annuit aure
 sitis et in tuto semper amore pares.
 nam me nostra Venus noctes exercet amaras,
 et nullo uacuis tempore deficit Amor.
 hoc, moneo, uitate malum: sua quemque moretur 35
 cura, neque assueto mutet amore locum.
 quod si quis monitis tardas aduertit aures,
 heu, referet quanto uerba dolore mea.

1.1.31-8

Propertius draws a series of contrasts between himself and successful lovers. There are three pairs of contrasts between persons: *uos* (31) and *me* (33); the *ego* and *uos* implied by *moneo* and *uitate* in line 35; and *si quis* (37) and *mea* (38). These also correspond to a progression in time (*annuit ... exercet ... moneo ... referet*).⁹⁸

The first pair lays the foundations. Fortunate couples should stay together ‘forever as equals in a safe love’ (1.1.32); not in a social sense but rather as lovers whose feelings for each other are mutual. Propertius and Cynthia, meanwhile, are hardly (yet) *pares*: while he is caught by her, she seems uncatchable; the only consistency to his love is that it is ‘forever unrequited’ (1.1.34; in the next poem, however, the situation is different). Propertius and his addressees thus stand far apart, and the final four lines develop this distinction further. There are two warnings: one for the student to heed immediately, another to bear in mind for the future – with their importance being emphasised by the polyptoton *moneo ... monitis*. The poet neatly frames this exhortation in the first person (*moneo ... mea*), and so twice draws the reader’s eye to the difference between his own situation and the advice he expects his addressee to follow. His own love is a *malum*: he again implies the fickleness that permeates it as he urges his student to keep his romantic feelings constant (1.1.35-6), repeating his call for a relationship governed by a ‘safe love’ (*tuto amore*). An open condition, implying Propertius’ certainty, shows the dangers of acting otherwise, while the phrase *tardas aures* recalls Propertius’ subservience to a *tardus Amor* (17) and equates an addressee’s future tribulations with those suffered presently

⁹⁸ With *exercet* being a present-tense verb whose action originated in the past, and *moneo* being a performative present.

by the poet. If Propertius' addressee is going to wonder at the cost of his disobedience (*quanto ... dolore*, 38) he need only look at the state of his teacher.

Figured in terms of an opposition between romantic success and failure, and consequently, happiness and misery, these contrasts are clearly conducive to the third reading. Propertius' addressees are successful and encouraged to maintain this way of life on the very basis that to do otherwise would be to become like him. They should not change their ways, and they should not learn whatever knowledge Propertius has learnt from *Amor*: their love is safe (*tuto*, 32) and long-lasting (*semper*, 32; *moretur*, 35; *assueto ... amore*, 36); this emphasis on longevity alludes to marriage, and thus to the notion of *castitas* too. These lovers do – and must – love *castae puellae* in order to have a reciprocal and lasting relationship. Propertius, meanwhile, serves as the counter-example to their fortune, whose tormented love for Cynthia goes hand-in-hand with a dislike of *castae*.⁹⁹

Thus, understanding what *Amor* has taught Propertius can be supported by looking at how he teaches others – and this, in turn, helps to define the similarities and differences between Propertius and other didactic poets. Like them, Propertius establishes a tripartite relationship between the source of knowledge, the teacher, and the student; but this relationship is also turned on its head.¹⁰⁰ While the addressees of didactic poets are encouraged to follow the instructor's example, Propertius' are implored to do the opposite,¹⁰¹ and while those of the former may have already been victims of false instruction, those of the latter are already no less – and happier – lovers than he (*nostra Venus*, 33). This inversion, moreover, is in keeping with Propertius' passivity: he is not only an unwilling teacher with no choice over his education, but also a social outcast who has fallen prey to a woman. Yet just as Propertius moderates his ostracism by making his *Amor* Roman and his *puella* not *incesta* but *dura*, so his passivity

⁹⁹ Cf. Ov. *Met.* 1.463–80, where Cupid possesses two arrows: one inciting attraction, the other aversion.

¹⁰⁰ In the *Ars*, Ovid turns this relationship on its head still further by making himself *Amor*'s teacher (*ego sum praeceptor Amoris*, 1.17; cf. *et mihi cedet Amor*, 1.21), and deriving didactic authority from *usus* (1.29); see Miller (1986).

¹⁰¹ Propertius thus sets himself up similarly to Ovid in the *Ars*, who 'admits to failure in order to encourage his students, to draw them closer into a sympathetic and didactically effective relationship with him, but he does so in a way which somehow leaves his authority as a lover intact' (Sharrock 2005, 257).

remains a paradoxical means towards didactic authority – for he continues to endorse the traditional values (however superficially) as he warns fortunate lovers from his elegiac own.

iii. Propertius' *castae Puellae*: poetic authority in 1.1

However, the relationship between Propertius and other didactic poets can be considered in another way too: the ambiguity of Propertius' language means that *Amor* can also be understood to have taught this poet to hate the Muses. Such a reading of *castae Puellae*, which has been revived in order to cut the Gordian knot of the third, fourth, and fifth readings,¹⁰² remains valuable even if recourse to it is ultimately unnecessary given that the knot is no knot at all.

Above all, this reading means that Propertius characterises himself as a poet in a more explicit way than by simply versifying his love. It is certainly true that as a claim to poetic authority this ambiguous statement is more surreptitious than that of the didactic poets, who clearly and self-assuredly speak of their instruction as poetic production and therefore 'stake their right to teach ... on their poetics'.¹⁰³ As noted in the introduction,¹⁰⁴ Volk has argued that such 'poetic self-consciousness' can be a means of identifying works belonging to the tradition of didactic poetry; she makes 1.1 the defining counter-example of poems 'that try to give themselves the semblance of spontaneous real-life utterances and thus avoid drawing attention to their status as poetry'.¹⁰⁵ Yet with the *castae Puellae* as the Muses, Propertius becomes no less 'self-conscious' – building upon the poetic associations of *pedibus* in line 4 and anticipating other such expressions in Book 1,¹⁰⁶ to say nothing of the clearly poetic insinuations of *Cynthia's* Apolline name.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Heyworth (2007b) *ad loc.*

¹⁰³ Sharrock (2005) 245. For her, their authority derives 'primarily' from their status as poets, citing evidence from Lucretius, Virgil, and Manilius; Hesiod and Callimachus would not be teachers without their Muses either. On Lucretius' poetry as 'clearer' than prose, see Gale (1994) 144-5.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. n.46.

¹⁰⁵ Volk (2002) 12; cf. 6-24.

¹⁰⁶ E.g. 1.8.41-2, 1.10.13-14, 1.11.7-8; Propertius' poetic self-consciousness becomes clearer after Book 1, and Cynthia is revealed as a poetic creation at 3.24.3-4.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Butrica (1996, 102-4) who dismisses the possibility that the name *Cynthia* constitutes a strict allusion to Callimachus, as posited by Clausen (1976 and 1977).

But Propertius does not differ from the didactic poets simply because his poetic authority is tacitly claimed. While the Muses become inextricably connected to the knowledge the poet has acquired, they are here neither its source nor a clear means towards its versification. Rather, his particular relationship with them is precisely what he has been taught; and in being also based on hate, it is strikingly antithetical as much to the relationships with Muses constructed by the didactic poets as to the nature of his educator in this poem and, indeed, the topic of his verse. For its part, the hate appears to have its origins in Propertius' subjugation,¹⁰⁸ just as a life lived *nullo consilio* (6) accords with the senseless wandering he is forced to experience (17-18), and the *furor* (7) that has not left him for a year is a conflation of this anger with both love and the madness of poetic composition that he now undertakes.¹⁰⁹ Propertius writes, but does so with a grudge. And as for making poetic production the taught consequence of his amatory experience, Propertius is hinting at two major components of his elegiac conceit: that the inspiration for his poetry is his *puella* (2.1.3-4); and that she is to be charmed through elegiac verse (1.9.11-12). The significance of the former will be discussed in due course, but for now it may be noted that Cynthia is also *Cynthia*, as much his beloved as the verse that he writes – ‘an allegory for poetry itself’ which Propertius establishes by opening the collection with the beloved’s name and making her its title ‘according to ancient practice’, something he then exploits a number of times thereafter.¹¹⁰ Both the beloved and Propertius’ love for her therefore belong not to an extra-textual, but to an intra-textual, reality: Propertius writes as a poet within a world of, and about, his beloved that he himself also writes.¹¹¹ The second component, in turn, would build upon the first in presenting this versified world as changeable through verse alone; but more importantly for this opening poem, it helps to complete Propertius’ self-characterisation as a *praeceptor amoris* by anticipating the teaching that is to come.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Caesar, *BGall.* 3.10.3: *itaque cum intellexeret ... omnes autem homines natura libertati studere et condicionem seruitutis odisse...* Alternatively, Propertius may be thought to hate the Muses because he suffers from writer’s block: cf. Horace *Epod.* 11.1-4 on that caused by love and Catull. 65.1-4 on that caused by grief (and note the use of *cura* by both poets). Writing about not being able to write, however, only further entwines lived experience with poetic composition, a crucial component of Propertius’ elegiac conceit – as discussed below.

¹⁰⁹ For *furor* as *odium*, see Cicero, *Flac.* 2.14; for *furor* as *amor*, see e.g. Cicero, *Tusc.* 4.75.1; for a poet’s *furor*, see e.g. Seneca, *De Breuitate Vitae* 16.5.

¹¹⁰ See *Rem.* 764 and *Mart.* 14.189 for *Cynthia* as the title of Propertius’ collection. See Veyne (1988) 3; Wyke (1989) 35; Kennedy (1993) 50-1; Gold (2002) 443-4; and Miller (2004) 63.

¹¹¹ Though this intra-textual reality is nevertheless capable of presenting both sides of the beloved: as Gold (2002, 444) argues, ‘[s]he is ... both an internal object (an element in the poetry) and an external object (an objectification of the poetry book and separable from it), forming an important part of Propertius’s “plot”’.

One line thus yields two simultaneous readings and projects Propertius as a two-fold teacher: with the *castae puellae* as women, Propertius looks to his instruction of fortunate lovers at the end of 1.1; with the *castae Puellae* as the Muses, Propertius looks to his instruction of wretched lovers like Ponticus in 1.9. And if Propertius alludes to the notion that his life and his beloved's existence are inextricable from the poetic world he composes, he also makes his didactic authority secondary to the poetic authority he receives from *Amor*: the amatory experience from which he can warn fortunate lovers can, for Propertius, be expressed solely through verse; the same goes for showing the efficacy of elegiac composition in charming a *puella*. As instruction by *Amor* serves as a means to highlight Propertius' unique passivity in the first half of the poem, so the instruction Propertius offers becomes a means to show the power that elegy allows him to wield.

While this will all come to be considered in more detail later, it may, for now, be added that the Milanion *exemplum* appears to be apt in this regard. As noted above,¹¹² it has been argued by Ross and others that the Milanion *exemplum* may recall one used by Gallus to portray his own love. For now, this remains no more than a deductive – if plausible – assumption, but one where Milanion and Atalanta may be read as standing for Gallus and Lycoris, presumably in line with the *exemplum's* use by Gallus. If this is so, Propertius inverts the point of that *exemplum*, where it perhaps referred to the poet's success in 'taming' (*domuisse*, 15) Lycoris by following the correct *artes* and *uias* with the guidance of *Amor*, overcoming his unrequited love while acceding to the social demands of Roman masculinity. With Propertius unable to do so, he may be read as claiming poetic supremacy over Gallus not despite his social debasement, but because of it, portraying himself as a follower in his tradition while innovating to make himself into a uniquely wretched lover too. As a result, such play would foreshadow that which is to come in poems where Gallus becomes an explicit part of Propertius' elegiac world – poems in which Propertius shows his poetic prowess in the guise of *praeceptor amoris*.

¹¹² See nn.64 and 71, above.

iv. Propertius' 'common ground' in 1.1

Apart from laying claim to poetic and didactic authority, however, Propertius also establishes 'common ground' with his students by using the first-person plural in the course of each of the three addresses that comprise the second half of the poem.¹¹³ This, in a way, continues a pattern of inversion seen in the first half, where supremacy comes in the end from passivity – for just as Propertius finds his own voice in this active half, he immediately shares it with others. Furthermore, while such rhetorical play looks to that employed by the didactic poets, for Propertius it nevertheless constitutes a means to develop the idiosyncrasy of his elegiac teaching and to hint at the way in which it serves less as valuable instruction than an expression of his poetic power.

The three addresses – and uses of the first-person plural – are as follows. The first is to the witches,¹¹⁴ whom Propertius challenges to 'change the mind of [his]/our mistress, and to make it paler than [his] face' – that is, to make her love him as he loves her:

en agedum, dominae mentem conuertite nostrae
et facite illa meo palleat ore magis.

1.1.21-2

In the second, Propertius asks his *amici* (25) to find treatments for his 'sick heart' (26), asserting that '[he]/we will endure (or suffer)' through them:

fortiter et ferrum saeuos patiemur et ignes,
sit modo libertas quae uelit ira loqui.

1.1.27-8

¹¹³ On 'common ground', see introduction, 3-4.

¹¹⁴ Once again, their abilities are described as a *labor* (20), which looks back at Milanion's *labores* (9) and suggests a further link to the Gallan-Virgilian interplay of elegy and didactic. On *deductae ... fallacia lunae* (19), see Shackleton-Bailey (1956) 4, and Cairns (1974) 99-102.

Finally, Propertius contrasts himself with the fortunate lovers ‘whom the god has approved with a favourable ear’ (31), while ‘our Venus administers bitter nights’:

nam me nostra Venus noctes exercet amaras,
et nullo uacuis tempore deficit Amor.

33 nam Heyworth] in Ω

1.1.33-4

As is often the case, the first-person plural in each of the couplets above allows itself to be read as a singular, but in the final instance a plural reading is undoubtedly effective. Propertius is a lover and addresses other lovers: their love-lives may be different, but Venus affects them all.¹¹⁵ And while Propertius finds common ground with such lovers, he continues to stress his unique romantic woes through the juxtaposition of *me nostra* (33) and the emphatic litotes which recalls his total subjection to the deity that spurs this proclamation (*nullo ... tempore deficit Amor*, 34).

The other cases are different, for *dominae nostrae* and *patiemur* do not seem to refer to the witches or to the *amici* in the same way as *nostra Venus* refers to Propertius and fortunate lovers. There is no reason why Cynthia should belong to the witches, even if they are asked to guide her into Propertius’ arms; and it is strange for the *amici* to be told that they will also ‘bravely endure [or suffer]’ the treatments Propertius asks them to provide. Yet it is still possible to read them as plurals: they can stand for Propertius’ readers, especially those suffering from the same unrequited love as his own. Propertius has already laid the foundations for their presence by addressing Tullus and making him a partner in his amatory struggles. While he is nothing more than a mere name in 1.1 nor a lover when he appears in later poems,¹¹⁶ he can still be read into the plurals at lines 21 and 27 as someone who shares in Propertius’ woes as an addressee and witness to his love – and once written into this role, he can also serve as a template for a larger audience of explicitly unrequited lovers who do so too.

¹¹⁵ Heyworth (1984) 394; see also Booth (2001) 340-2.

¹¹⁶ Heyworth (2007c) 96. Tullus appears in four more poems (1.6, 1.14, 1.22, 3.22) and has been interpreted variously: as a politically useful patron, see du Quesnay (1992) and Stahl (1985) 79-80; as a literary device, see Griffin (1985) 56-7 and Zetzel (1982) 87-102.

These first two first-person plurals might, then, be seen as a means for Propertius to build up to the explicitly instructive pose adopted at the end of this poem and to foreshadow his role as an instructor to wretched lovers like himself later in the collection.¹¹⁷ He may be said to share his *domina* with his readers (21) not only because they read (about) her, but because she also constitutes a paradigm familiar to them in their own lives; and they may, no less, be said to endure (and suffer) with him (27) because they already try to do so themselves. If so, however, Propertius also retains his authoritative stance and reaffirms the power of his elegy: firstly, by returning the focus to himself each time (*meo ... | ... ego crediderim*, 22-3; *meum*, 30); and secondly, by dismissing the efficacy of the treatments he seeks.¹¹⁸ He calls the witches' professed abilities *fallacia*, and uses the subjunctive mood (*crediderim*, 23) to express his trust in their success,¹¹⁹ before asking for help from his friends, and yet admitting that he has 'fallen' (*lapsus*, 25).¹²⁰ The only hope of salvation comes from the 'freedom to speak what the *ira* would wish'; and with the *ira* referring back to the earlier *furor* (7),¹²¹ the salvation comes to be nothing but self-expression through poetic composition. There is reason, then, for deriding specifically the witches' *carmina*,¹²² while even the plea for his journey to be a secret to any woman (30) may be read as a play on the trope of a poet's path.¹²³ Paradoxically, then, the only way out of love becomes submission to the unique, poetic frenzy with which Propertius is forced to express it – a paradox exemplified through the ambiguity of *ferrum* and *ignes*, as much the tools of torture as of surgery, and common in descriptions of passion, too.¹²⁴ Rightly, then, does Propertius use a form of *pati* to suggest he will suffer and endure: the cure is a means to both ends.

¹¹⁷ Aside from 1.7 and 1.9, see 2.34 and 3.3: in the former (discussed in chapter 3) Propertius advises Lynceus – who *insanit amores* (2.34.25) – to abandon philosophy and to take up poetry so as to appeal to his mistress (2.34.27-32); in the latter (discussed in Chapter 4) Calliope advises Propertius away from epic towards elegy, so that other lovers may learn how to charm out girls locked in by their husbands (3.3.49-50).

¹¹⁸ See Commager (1974) 30.

¹¹⁹ Shackleton-Bailey (1949) 22.

¹²⁰ Cairns (1974, 105-6) traces *lapsus* in medical texts.

¹²¹ Cairns (1974) 106; Heyworth (2007b) *ad* 1.25-8.

¹²² See Commager (1974, 33-4), for whom Cynthia's lunar associations means 'to draw down the moon ... would be equivalent to drawing the no less intransigent Cynthia to Propertius'. For *deducere* as a reference to Callimachean λεπτότης, see e.g. Van Tress (2004) 55-71 on Ovid's *deductum carmen* at *Met.* 1.4.

¹²³ See Kennedy (1993) 47-51 on an elegist's amatory journey, and Sharrock (1994) 99-103, for journeying in the *Ars* and *Remedia*. Fulkerson (2004, 219) argues that by insisting his reader travel away from his mistress to cure himself of his love (*Rem.* 213-24), Ovid is suggesting that he re-embark on the journey of the *Ars*.

¹²⁴ On their use in treating madness, see Cairns (1974) 106; as torture, e.g. 3.24.11; as standing for the pains of love, e.g. 1.9.17, 1.16.30, 2.34.44, 3.8.29. Note the Ovidian allusions to 1.1.27 at *Am.* 3.11.8; *Rem.* 229; *Her.* 20.183-4.

As a result, Propertius points not only to the teaching that is to come but also to the problematic nature of its curative power: it compels one further into submission to the love whose shackles one seeks to escape. So, it need not matter whether the wretched lovers are so before or after they read Propertius' poetry: as both a cure for and begetter of amatory torment, it has the potential not only to rid his readers of their misery but even to bring them to it too – just as Ponticus finds out between 1.7 and 1.9. This particular power of elegy, in turn, is likewise suggested at the poem's end. The interconnection between his amatory predicament and elegiac composition means that when Propertius asks fortunate lovers to avoid 'this evil' (*hoc, moneo, uitate malum*, 35), he is talking not only about his suffering but also about the poetry through which he now portrays it: they should remain in their happy love both through continued fidelity and by avoiding the love which Propertius writes.¹²⁵ Propertius thus expresses this final warning with a smile as he produces yet another paradox, using his verse to urge his readers to avoid it: leaving one's *cura* behind to follow Propertius' own will make his words a source of pain (38). Have his readers not already left it too late, then? Perhaps not, but one poem is all it takes. Having earlier hinted at the transformation of Ponticus to come, adding the same undertone of elegy's two-edged power to this particular instruction now hints at a different cycle of teaching to come – that of Gallus. Like these fortunate lovers, he too will be warned away from *mala* (1.5.4); like Ponticus, however, the warning will come too late. The final first-person plural (33) is, therefore, even more closely associative than it seems at first – Propertius' poetry will make their *Venus* one and the same.

Thus, while Propertius begins his collection by introducing the nature of his love, he also sets himself up as a *praeceptor amoris* and suggests an intricate relationship between teaching, love, and the poetry it engenders. Propertius ends the first poem with an emphatic appeal to lovers more fortunate than he, having established himself as a uniquely wretched lover who derives his authority as a poet and teacher from lessons taught to him by his *Amor*. In deriving both forms of authority from a common source, Propertius differs from the didactic poets and anticipates instruction that a beloved is best wooed with verse; yet having made his amatory existence inextricable from the process of poetic composition, verse also becomes a means to shape reality more broadly, and the guise of *praeceptor amoris* a means to show this

¹²⁵ On Ovid's seduction of his elegy's readers in the *Ars*, see Kennedy (2000) 174-5, and Sharrock (1994).

process in action. In 1.1, Propertius only plays with this possibility as he portrays himself as a poet looked to by lovers both miserable and fortunate, and suggests that his beloved, suffering, and infatuation can be theirs too. But it does not take long for Propertius to show that to teach elegy is to wield its power.

II. 1.7 to 1.9

Ponticus will now be considered first as part of analysis which extends over 1.7, 1.8a/b, and 1.9. In the first of these, Propertius warns Ponticus about the dangers of falling in love while developing his poetic and didactic authority over him; in the last, he cashes in this authority by assuming the guise of *praeceptor amoris* to advise him to write elegy to alleviate his new-found lovesickness. 1.7 thus ‘sets up the plot’ of 1.9,¹²⁶ and this two-fold narrative arc somewhat resembles the ‘passive’ and ‘active’ halves of 1.1 – yet in this case, it also frames another binary sequence, 1.8a/b, in which Propertius first fears Cynthia’s departure with another man and then celebrates his success in having convinced her to stay.¹²⁷ Suggesting that Cynthia’s decision is owed to his poetic skill, 1.8a/b may be read as a form of proof for the efficacy of the instruction Propertius goes on to give Ponticus in 1.9, and suggestive of a narrative continuity between all four poems.¹²⁸ However, with this proof coming in poetic form, it becomes not only a means for Propertius to point again at the interweaving of life and poetry, but also a hint at the dangers of believing his words: the poet’s existence within, and control over, his written reality means that the truth is whatever Propertius makes it out to be.

v. Ponticus

Propertius begins his address to Ponticus with a contrast. Ponticus is composing a Thebaid:

¹²⁶ Heslin (2018) 103.

¹²⁷ See Camps (1961) 10-11 for the structural resemblance of 1.7, 1.8, 1.9 and 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13.

¹²⁸ Hubbard (1974) 46. See also Oliensis (2019), who explores Ovid’s *Amores* ‘from within and on its own terms’ (3) by focussing on the narrative relationship fostered between individual poems in close proximity to each other.

Dum tibi Cadmeae dicuntur, Pontice, Thebae
armaque fraternae tristia militae,
atque, ita sim felix, primo contendis Homero
(sint modo fata tuis mollia carminibus),

1.7.1-4

Propertius, meanwhile, is preoccupied with the sorts of experiences he had outlined in 1.1:

nos, ut consuemus, nostros agitamus amores,
atque aliquid duram quaerimus in dominam.

1.7.5-6

Compared to himself, Propertius seems to give ‘the epic poet all the grandeur he can ask for’.¹²⁹ Yet the simplicity of the contrast is undermined by the first-person plurals.¹³⁰ They could easily be read as standing for the singular and thus refer to Propertius alone – but to do so would be to dampen their emphatic five-fold repetition in two lines and to flatten the transition towards the first-person singular that follows:

nec tantum ingenio quantum seruire dolori
cogor, et aetatis tempora dura queri.
hic mihi conteritur uitae modus, haec mea fama est,
hinc cupio nomen carminis ire mei.

1.7.7-10

Thus, the five first-person plurals in the couplet above are mirrored by five first-person singulars in these final four lines, and this neat verbal patterning may be no coincidence – for the contrast between epic and elegy is not what it seems.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Stahl (1985) 51.

¹³⁰ Not noticed by, e.g. Fedeli (1980) *ad* 1.8.5, who says of *nos*: ‘chiaramente contrapposto a *tibi*’.

¹³¹ Stahl (1985, 52) also sees equivocation in 1.7.1-10.

Noting that his lot is to lament *aetatis tempora dura*, Propertius could just as well be describing what Ponticus is doing with his song of Theban strife. The adjective *dura* can describe both his mistress (as implicitly at 1.1.10, where *Milanon ... durae contudit Iasidos*, so explicitly at 1.7.6) and overtly martial themes: the Perusine War (*duris ... temporibus*, 1.22.4) and epic verse (*duro ... uersu*, 2.1.41). Propertius likewise describes Ponticus' poetry with language he uses to characterise his own elegy. Three words in particular (*armaque ... tristia militae*, 1.7.2) are reminiscent of Propertius' troubled life: all appear for the first time in the previous poem to support Propertius' insistence that his elegiac life makes him unable to follow Tullus abroad. Propertius characterises Cynthia as a *tristis amica* (1.6.10), who threatens (*minatur*, 1.6.9) him lest he abandon her for Tullus,¹³² and then describes his relationship with Cynthia in terms of *militia amoris*, proclaiming that he must practise a different kind of warfare from the one that Tullus encourages:

non ego sum laudi, non natus idoneus armis:

hanc me militiam fata subire uolunt.

1.6.29-30

Propertius here appropriates the terminology of Roman military values for the first time in his collection, expanding upon *Amor's* oppressive stance in 1.1.¹³³ On the one hand, he lives a life of continued social degradation, rejecting ideals and giving in to Cynthia's demands; but on the other, Propertius translates these social virtues into elegiac ones and claims them for himself, becoming a kind of soldier – even if not the kind of soldier Tullus would have him be.¹³⁴ Although Propertius says he is not cut out for *laus* or *arma* at 1.6.29, he reconfigures the entire concept of *militia* at 1.6.30 to mean the amatory kind he shows himself to wage. There will be *laus* and *arma* in his life after all, as long as they are elegiac; and Propertius confirms as much in 1.7, where he expects praise from his reader (*me laudet*, 11), and wonders whether

¹³² *tristis* is ambiguous: Cynthia is both bitter that Propertius contemplates leaving her for Tullus, and the bitter cause of his continued romantic torment. Since she is the latter, Propertius could take the opportunity to escape – but since she is also the former, he must remain. This recalls the paradox underlying Propertius' poetry, namely that his lovesickness can only be cured if Cynthia remains the subject of his love.

¹³³ Which is different from Tibullus, who proclaims himself a romantic warrior immediately (*hic ego dux milesque bonus*, 1.1.75). On *militia amoris*, see e.g. Lyne (1980) 71-8 and Gale (1997) 78-83.

¹³⁴ Cf. Stahl (1985) 93-4.

Ponticus too shall feel the blow of Cupid's unerring bow (*si certo ... concusserit arcu*, 15).¹³⁵ So once again, Propertius shows that his servitude results not in a rejection, but a redefinition, of contemporary social values into elegiac terms. The differences between elegy and epic are therefore fewer than Ponticus might think.

As Propertius muddies the thematic opposition between elegy and epic, he opens another avenue for a contrast between Ponticus and himself: the interweaving of life and verse. With Ponticus, the focus is not so much on the life he leads as on the poetry he writes: while he 'narrates' (*dicuntur*, 1) his Thebaid,¹³⁶ he vies with Homer (3) in poetic composition (*carminibus*, 4). Propertius also eventually makes his status as a poet explicit (*hinc cupio nomen carminis ire mei*, 10) but first confounds it: rather than writing amatory poetry he leads a life of love (*agitamus amores*, 5) and searches 'for something against the harsh mistress' (*aliquid duram quaerimus in dominam*, 6).¹³⁷ Poetry also continues to be presented as life in line 9 (*hinc mihi conteritur uitae modus*): *uitae* points to the former but is described in a way that suggests adherence to Callimachean principles of the latter;¹³⁸ the subsequent clause (*haec mea fama est*) also leaves it unclear as to whether Propertius is to derive his fame from the very verses he writes or the experiences he undergoes. Propertius sums up his essential difference from Ponticus in 1.7.7-8: Ponticus composes through *ingenium* (7), relying solely on his mind for composition;¹³⁹ Propertius is forced to write on account of his pain (*seruire dolori | cogor*, 7-8), which, while mental not physical, results from the supposed life experience of falling in love.¹⁴⁰ For Ponticus, then, his life has no bearing on his poetic process – for Propertius, they are forever the same.

This difference between the two poets arises again in 1.9, where Propertius now stands as a teacher to a Ponticus humbled by his recent capture by *Amor*:

¹³⁵ Such imagery recalls the conquering *Amor* of 1.1.

¹³⁶ See Lowrie (2009, 177 and n.8) who views this verb as denoting a 'high-style utterance', noting its repetition at 1.9.1, 6, 9, 33.

¹³⁷ Stroh (1971) 10: 'Properz stellt sich auch hier nicht eigentlich als Dichter, sondern als Liebender vor.'

¹³⁸ Stahl (1985) 57; Keith (2008) 49. For links between Roman elegy and Callimachean *erotodidaxis*, see Puelma (1949) 255-64. Cf. 3.1.14-18.

¹³⁹ Stroh (1971, 10): '*ingenium* ist die geistige Kraft, mit der der Dichter sein Geschäft treibt, mit der er erfindet und ausführt.'

¹⁴⁰ Stroh (1971, 11): 'Seine Dichtung ist eine Klage über die *tempora dura* seines Lebens.'

non me Chaoniae uincant in amore columbae
 dicere quos iuuenes quaeque puella domet;
 me dolor et lacrimae merito fecere peritum:
 atque utinam posito dicar amore rudis!
 quid tibi nunc misero prodest graue dicere carmen
 aut Amphioniae moenia flere lyrae?

...

i quaeso et tristes istos sepone libellos
 et cane quod quaeuis nosse puella uelit.

10

1.9.5-10; 13-14

That the relationship between life and verse is of some importance is brought out by the repetition of subsequent misery at the same place in both poems (*dolori*, 1.7.7, *dolor*, 1.9.7). In each case, Propertius also expresses his servility to the overriding processes which govern his lived experience: first being the subject of a passive verb (*cogor*, 1.7.8); then, the object of an active one (*me ... fecere*, 1.9.7). Life's intrusion upon verse is precisely what gives Propertius the knowledge (*peritum*, 7) he can pass on to others, even if he would rather have never had it – and it becomes the reason why Ponticus suddenly stands as an eager member of his audience, his own poetic composition interrupted by romantic torment. Epic has no use in his life now (*quid ... prodest ...?*, 9); elegy, on the other hand, can aid Ponticus, because it can be read and reacted to by the *puella* that has necessitated Ponticus to turn to this genre. Propertius had hinted as much in the second half of 1.1: now he makes this explicit.

Yet before Ponticus' life is turned upside down in 1.9, Propertius sows the seeds for his transformation in 1.7 – and the path towards this evolution is laid at the poem's beginning. The first step may be said to be what has been noted above: collapsing the differences between elegy and epic. Propertius cannot claim poetic authority over Ponticus from the start: both may be poets, but it is Ponticus who writes what is traditionally more authoritative,¹⁴¹ glorifying the social values Propertius has shown himself to avoid. Just as Tullus may claim authority through

¹⁴¹ See Stahl (1985) 51: 'We should ... see ... in the compliment ... a reflection of the general contemporary esteem for epic.'

conquest (*accepti pars eris imperii*, 1.6.34),¹⁴² so Ponticus may claim poetic authority for describing battles of times gone by: it is this presumption that epic is superior to elegy that seems to have justified Ponticus' disdain for Propertius' work in the first place. Yet Propertius can subvert Ponticus' expected poetic authority by muddying the differences between elegy and epic, presenting each poet as engaged in similar pursuits and dissolving any grounds for Ponticus' presumed haughtiness – thereby mirroring the correspondence of Tullus' *militia* to his own *militia amoris* to reconfigure Tullus' perception of Propertius' *nequitia* (1.6.26). In short, Propertius parries the epicist's denigration of elegy by simultaneously equating the two genres and providing scope for subsequent poetic superiority.

Concurrently, Propertius shows Ponticus that poetry can be written as part of an interdependent relationship between life and composition – and here, the first-person plurals may well be significant. For aside from the interdependence proposed in lines 7-10, Propertius initially suggests it in lines 5-6, which as much constitute the hinge of these opening ten verses as they soften the transition from the second-person (*tuis*, 4) to the first-person singular (*cogor*, 8). If read as a plural, Propertius not only expresses his work as his love (*agitamus ... | ... quaerimus*) but both makes his affair the domain of others and equates his to theirs too: by this point in the collection, readers are certainly accustomed (*consuemus*, 5) to his *amores* just as they may well be accustomed to theirs; the *dura domina* (6) may likewise be their own or Propertius' Cynthia. The interdependence of life and verse in these lines is, then, also suggested in terms of leading one's affair to the tune of Propertian verse, and this relationship between author and reader is also coloured with a didactic hue. Presenting his written affair as a search for a 'something' (*aliquid ... quaerimus*, 6) against a harsh mistress, Propertius appears to allude to his hint in 1.1 that he composes elegy not just to express but also to cure his amatory torment;¹⁴³ and with his readers engaged in a similar search, his poetry becomes an example to be followed in one's own affair. So as Propertius turns the focus back on himself, he hints at elegy's ability to influence life – and his role as a teacher in making this happen. This does not just foreshadow the instruction to come in 1.9: it points to the process of re-characterisation to which Propertius will subject Ponticus in this very poem.

¹⁴² See Stahl (1985) 85-92 for a discussion of the politics this phrase.

¹⁴³ See MacLeod (1973) 304, and Fedeli (1980) *ad loc.*

Ponticus, after all, is already not just a poet but also a reader of Propertius' verse – and in explaining to him the nature of his own composition, Propertius also suggests him as his student. So, Ponticus is also positioned as one of those whose life can come under the influence of Propertius' elegy; but having also become written into it, he stands to feel the influence of Propertius' elegy whether he likes it or not. For Propertius, the 'life of love and writing about it amount to the same thing, since poetry has a practical function in ... softening the *puella*':¹⁴⁴ his existence is inextricable from his elegy, and words become the constituent parts of, as well as a means to shape, his reality – or of those who are made part of it. Far from a serendipitous occurrence, Ponticus' lovesickness in 1.9 is the result of Propertius' influence over his life within his elegiac world; and this begins in 1.7. It may be a while before Propertius will tell the poet who now seeks to rival Homer (*primo contendis Homero*, 1.7.3) that he should rather look up to Mimnermus (*plus in amore ualet Mimnermi uersus Homero*, 1.9.11), but he already hints at this future by wishing Ponticus' poetry *mollia fata* (4), a fate both 'kind' and 'elegiac'.¹⁴⁵ At the same time, the striking repetition of first-person plurals at the mid-point in the contrast between the two poets points at Ponticus' forthcoming transformation, even if he cannot be included among them for now.

So in concert with collapsing the distinction between epic and elegy, Propertius also suggests a similar relationship between life and verse for both poets through a common amatory fate: as Ponticus is written further into Propertius' poetry, he likewise becomes nothing more than the elegy which portrays his love. And having laid the foundations for Ponticus' inclusion within the coterie of instructed lovers with the first-person plurals in lines 5-6, Propertius continues to use these throughout the poem to play at the tension between Ponticus' role as a mere addressee and the elegiac student he explicitly becomes in 1.9. In the subsequent couplets, for instance, Propertius turns to openly stating his didactic credentials and uses a first-person plural again:

¹⁴⁴ Harrison (2013) 139.

¹⁴⁵ See Heyworth and Morwood (2011) 102 on Propertius' recurring contrast between *mollis* and *durus*.

me legat assidue post haec neglectus amator,	13
et prosint illi cognita <u>nostra</u> mala.	14
me laudet doctae solitum placuisse puellae,	11
Pontice, et iniustas saepe tulisse minas.	12

11-12 *post* 14 Heyworth¹⁴⁶

1.7.11-14

Propertius wishes that his elegy be read by a *neglectus amator*, who will learn (*cognita*, 14) from the *mala* he describes; and he also hopes that the knowledge will be useful (*prosint*, 14) to the lover, foreshadowing his later condemnation of epic's uselessness in love (*quid ... prodest ...?*, 1.9.9).¹⁴⁷ In being read and studied, Propertius characterises himself achieving poetic and didactic authority over his pupil; and this dual authority, in turn, will result in him being praised (*me laudet*, 11) as one who pleased a *docta puella* and suffered *iniustae minae*, which picks up on the sort of praise he had desired for his *militia amoris* in 1.6 while he fought against Cynthia's threats (*minatur*, 9). Tullus presumably expects to receive praise for stamping his authority on a Roman province; Propertius expects praise as an elegiac warrior, whose victories benefit those who do not yet know how to fight like him.

How Ponticus fits into these lines depends on the identity of this *neglectus amator*. In the simplest terms, it refers to a nameless, miserable lover;¹⁴⁸ and the *nostra mala* become those experienced by Propertius and his audience – both those mentioned in 1.7.5-6 as well as the *neglectus amator* himself, who, by reading and learning from Propertius' poetry, implicitly joins the coterie. On this reading, moreover, the first-person plural adds empathy to Propertius' authority: aligning himself with his students once more, Propertius shows that he is a teacher who too must suffer their fate; yet, since he is the one who (he hopes) will be read and praised (*me legat*, 13; *me laudet*, 11) as having regularly pleased his girl (*doctae solitum placuisse puellae*, 11), Propertius remains the only poet capable of teaching other lovers. Ponticus is thus merely encouraged to see that Propertius' life and poetry are intertwined, with his experiences

¹⁴⁶ See Heyworth (2007b) 26-7.

¹⁴⁷ On *prodesse*, see Solmsen (1965) 79-81, Stroh (1971) 13-14 n.19, and Stahl (1985) 54. His poetry provides emotional comfort as well as *praecepta* which the lover can find useful; in this he is perhaps similar to Lucretius, for whom knowledge and mental peace went hand-in-hand.

¹⁴⁸ So e.g. Maltby (2006) 149.

serving as the foundation for his poetic teachings, and that elegy too can receive praise through its own *militia*.

Yet the anonymity of the *neglectus amator* and the breadth of *nostra* offer other readings. The pointed repetition of Ponticus' name hints at his forthcoming transformation into just this sort of *neglectus amator*: as with Propertius' wish for *mollia fata* in 1.7.4, *post haec* may be read as referring to the romantic servitude in 1.9. Propertius would thus be suggesting to Ponticus that elegy will begin to play a role in his life as something to be read, understood, and applied – causing Propertius to display didactic authority not only over the readers who already look to him for advice but over Ponticus, too. On this reading, however, *nostra mala* would remain those suffered by Propertius and the lovers that read him – but while Propertius does not yet reveal quite in what way these *mala* will be useful to Ponticus, he at least hints at the key role that verse is soon to have in Ponticus' life by anticipating the role his own verse will now have over the life of his addressee.

Yet it is also possible to take Ponticus as included within the scope of *nostra mala* – and if so, then the conflation of life and verse is developed still further. Such a reading again looks ahead to Ponticus' transformation into a miserable lover in 1.9, but now the *neglectus amator* once more becomes an anonymous student of Propertius' verse, who engages with it after Ponticus' amatory servitude is realised. If Ponticus could certainly not (yet) be read as one of those referred to in lines 5–6, his inclusion here is slightly more possible: he could not be said to be accustomed (*consuemus*, 5) to *amores* before, but *post haec* (13) is sufficiently loose to be read as encompassing not just this address to Ponticus but even the complete story of his transformation across the two poems. On this reading, Propertius incorporates Ponticus' future *malum* (cf. 1.9.18) with his and his readers' current *mala*, and weaves his life and composition even closer together by now making their shared experiences as something to be read for the education of the *neglectus amator*. However, the poetic and didactic authority over his addressee would be maintained: it is Propertius alone (*me legat*, 13) that the *neglectus amator* will read, and he alone (*me laudet*, 11) will likewise be praised. Even when Propertius' verse transforms him into an elegist like himself, then, Ponticus is doomed to remain a step behind his master.

Ponticus' future thus begins to loom ever closer as Propertius continues to use a didactic tone to write his addressee into the life of amatory torment he is revealed as experiencing in 1.9. And while it may be said that three simultaneously possible and accruing readings remain a murky harbinger of the transformation to come, the next set of verses spell out Ponticus' forthcoming romantic torment with greater certainty:

te quoque si certo puer hic concusserit arcu
 (quam nolim nostros te uiolasse deos!),
 longe castra tibi, longe miser agmina septem
 flebis in aeterno surda iacere situ;
 et frustra cupies mollem componere uersum,
 nec tibi subiciet carmina serus Amor.

16 quam *Heinsius*] quod Ω: quo ζ

1.7.15-20

Although Propertius still presents this as a possible event (*si ... concusserit*, 15), the opportunity for Ponticus to escape his fate is diminished. Not only is this an open condition, suggesting a certain cause and effect, but Ponticus has already shown disregard for *Amor* (*uiolasse*, 16) and the god is close by (*hic*, 15),¹⁴⁹ wielding an unerring bow (*certo ... arcu*, 15). Even the way in which Propertius now addresses Ponticus (*te quoque*, 15) recalls the common sepulchral refrain, pointing to his addressee's forthcoming demise.¹⁵⁰ So while Ponticus still need not be definitively associated with the first-person plural used here (*nostros ... deos*, 16), the noose is certainly tightening – it is these verses that Propertius evokes when he tells Ponticus later that he was warned of the love he now feels (*Dicebam tibi uenturos ... Amores*, 1.9.1). At the same time, Ponticus' transformation is further foreshadowed by two inversions of the opening contrast. Firstly, it is now Ponticus who softens as his epic themes become desperate attempts to write *mollis uersus*, while Propertius hardens as he militarises *Amor* and implies that he alone can engage in battles of any sort. Secondly, in line 16, the sequence of persons established in the first ten lines now reverses as the focus now shifts from Propertius

¹⁴⁹ The plural *deos* looks back to 1.1.2 (*Cupidinibus*) and 1.1.8 (*adueros ... deos*), and ahead to 1.9.1 (*uenturos ... Amores*).

¹⁵⁰ On the epitaphic connotations καὶ σὺ and *tu/te quoque*, see e.g. Keith (2011) 12-18, and Dinter (2013).

(*nolim*) to the first-person plural (*nostros*), to Ponticus (*te*) – and with Ponticus now quite easily understood as included among those expressed by the first-person plural, the interlinked sequence binds the two poets ever more closely together.

So, if Ponticus could earlier leave his life far behind in telling the story of Theban strife in times gone by, it is now his *Thebaid* that is primed to disappear off into the distance (17-18): [d]er verliebte Epiker ist hilflos¹⁵¹ – at least until Propertius offers to help him later. But although the warning in these lines anticipates Propertius' expression of didactic authority in 1.9, it both stems from, and is subordinated to, his poetic authority – as one who is able to versify lived experience. Propertius will instruct Ponticus to write elegy both because this is what aids him in his love and because he has written Ponticus into a position as his pupil. As a result, when Ponticus turns to Propertius in the midst of his amatory torment, he will look up to him not as a teacher but as a poet:

tum me non humilem mirabere saepe poetam;
tunc ego Romanis praeferar ingeniis;

1.7.21-2

The humble Propertius is humble (*non humilem*, 21) no more, and no longer disdained but now admired (*mirabere*, 21).¹⁵² As Ponticus' haughtiness morphs into amatory torment, Propertius rises above him to take his place and to seize the poetic glory that Ponticus covets; and while Propertius had noted that he is enslaved more to *dolor* than to *ingenium* (7-8), it is for the latter that he will now be celebrated (22). This greatness stems from his ability to express life experience through poetic production:¹⁵³ with Ponticus stripped of his *carmina* by *Amor*, Propertius is left as the sole poet of the two; it is noteworthy that *poeta* should appear for the first time in a poem addressed to a poet about poetry just when one of them has ceased to compose. But this poetic power also extends over Ponticus too as Propertius writes his life into *dolor*, forcing elegy upon him before forcing him to take it up himself.¹⁵⁴ As a result, *poeta* (21)

¹⁵¹ Stroh (1971) 15.

¹⁵² Stahl (1985) 55.

¹⁵³ Cf. Stahl (1985) 57: 'it is by its human value ... that elegy proves its superiority to epic'.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Putnam (1963) 198: '[t]alent is important, but its conjunction with *dolor* ... is what raises him above Ponticus and ranks him among the chief poets of Rome'.

may refer as much to Propertius' poetic as his creative (i.e. ποιεῖν) skill in shaping his elegiac reality; and the same may be said for his *ingenium* (22) too, which may mean 'talent' or, as the *TLL* notes, '*facultas inueniendi, φαντασία, artificium*',¹⁵⁵ reflecting the word's fundamental association with creativity (*in-gignere*).¹⁵⁶

Propertius thus turns to close the poem, using three first-person plurals in the final four lines:¹⁵⁷

nec poterunt iuuenes nostro reticere sepulcro:

‘ardoris nostri magne poeta, iaces?’

tu caue nostra tuo contemnas carmina fastu:

saepe uenit magno faenore tardus honos.

26 honos (honor *iam Rossberg*) Heyworth] amor Ω, Flor. I

1.7.23-6

Propertius now embellishes his claim to poetic and didactic authority by expanding the readership of his poetry to all *iuuenes* and associating with them at every stage. Propertius points to his enduring fame after death, and this fame, in turn, derives from his universal subject matter. Having drawn a contrast between Ponticus' helplessness and his own celebrity (cf. *tibi*, 20; *tum me ... | tunc ego*, 21-2), Propertius now comments on his *sepulcrum* using a first-person plural (*nostro*, 23). Although Ponticus is drawn into an amatory death through Propertius' poetry, his own poetic tomb is ultimately his to write (*dicere quo pereas saepe in amore leuat*, 1.9.34).¹⁵⁸ Nonetheless, the venerated tomb described belongs both to Propertius and to the *iuuenes* that gather around it and keep the poet speaking from beyond the grave:

¹⁵⁵ *TLL* s.v. 2c.

¹⁵⁶ See the etymology provided by *TLL*; see also Cic. *Diu.* 1.79 and Sallust fr. 1.100M for play on *ingenium* and *gignere*. As I argue in chapter 3, 121, Propertius has this sense in mind when he later expresses his poetry's dependence upon life experience in 2.1.3-4 by attributing his *ingenium* not to Apollo or the Muses but to his *puella*, making her less a live recipient of his art than art made alive by his words.

¹⁵⁷ 1.7.23-4 have been contentious: they are transposed after 1.7.10 by Housman (1888), after 3.1.35 by Courtney (1968), and deleted by Günther (1997, 131). Shackleton-Bailey (1956, 23) argues that 'transposition is not absolutely necessary' and they are defended by Heyworth (2007b, *ad* 1.7.21-4), who, after questioning *nostr*i at 1.7.24, admits that any change would disrupt the continued identification between poet and reader seen by Solmsen (1965, 80).

¹⁵⁸ *leuat* is notably ambiguous: a poet both lessens the pains of love to which his work responds and is also raised up as an authority in it.

having appeared as a prospective *neglectus amator* before (13), Ponticus may be read as one of these *iuuenes* too; in line 24, he would even find himself not only using the word with which Propertius has systematically re-written his reality (*nostri*, 24), but doing so within a specifically elegiac metre. The circle of association proposed in lines 5-6 now more readily admits Ponticus at the end of the poem. The *ardor* – singular, like the *domina* (6) – is shared between them just like the poetic tomb: but Propertius is a *magnus poeta*, the grand figurehead of dainty elegy. Not only the versifier of their collective experience,¹⁵⁹ Propertius is also the creator of an elegiac universe of which Ponticus and the *iuuenes* become part, whether or not they decide to enter it by writing elegy in imitation of their master.

Ponticus, however, will soon be put in a position to do so. As the final couplet turns the focus back to him, there is again a play with the sequence of persons: having moved in the opening lines from the second-person singular, to the first-person plural, to the first-person singular, and then in reverse in line 16, Propertius now weaves the first-person plural within two second-person singulars (*tu caue nostra tu contempnas carmina*, 25). This pointed juxtaposition may be different in style, but no less informative of the fate to be revealed in 1.9. And though elegiac *carmina* are to be within the purview of both poets, one will still be greater than the other: it is to Propertius' poetic and didactic authority that Ponticus must first defer. Propertius' *honor* may be *tardus* (26) like his *Amor* – but the later it comes, the greater the interest (*magno faenore*, 20).

Thus, Propertius adopts an instructional tone to write Ponticus into a future soon to come, collapsing the distinction between epic and elegy and inverting their expected poetic hierarchy to present himself as the supreme poet. Two authors become one, and of these two *auctores*,¹⁶⁰ only the one who writes this elegiac world possesses *auctoritas*: his words not only enlarge his elegiac world,¹⁶¹ but sway it, too.¹⁶² And if Ponticus is to write the poetry required in love and to become an elegiac *auctor* himself, then Propertius is an *auctor* twice over: he both writes

¹⁵⁹ Stahl (1985) 58.

¹⁶⁰ For *auctor* as poet, see *TLL* s.v. V.D.

¹⁶¹ For the etymology of *auctor* from *augere*, see e.g. the *TLL* entry, and Maltby (1991) 64.

¹⁶² See Lowrie (2009) 285-6 citing Austin (1962, 6) on performative discourse, whose formulation rings true for Propertius' conceit: 'the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action'.

Ponticus into his elegy, and becomes the source of Ponticus' own.¹⁶³ An *auctor*, however, only gains his *auctoritas* by writing up one's amatory subjugation, and this power offers no unambiguous path to freedom. *Amor* continues to affect Propertius; as long as Propertius' verse remains, it will continue to affect Ponticus too.

vi. 1.8a/b

Before Propertius assumes his guise of *praeceptor amoris* once again, he turns back to the written reality of his affair. The confidence which grew over the course of 1.7 is suddenly shattered: 1.8a.1-8 contain five rhetorical questions as Propertius wonders whether Cynthia will truly leave him for a journey to *gelida Illyria* (2). Indeed, while Propertius appears to follow the conventional framework of a *propemptikon* by first trying to dissuade Cynthia before grudgingly wishing her a safe journey,¹⁶⁴ Propertius also inverts the way in which he has hitherto interacted with Cynthia. In 1.2, he had implored her to abandon make-up in favour of her natural appearance, his tone one of a lover careful not to provoke any retributive outbursts and fearful that her make-up shows her developing lack of interest in him (1.2.25-6). In 1.3, Propertius trod carefully once more – this time, quite literally – as he tried his best not to wake up a Cynthia who had fallen asleep while waiting for him to return; having woken her up nonetheless, he was chastised for abandoning her (1.3.35-46). And then in 1.6, Propertius refused Tullus on the grounds that he could not 'bear [Cynthia's] complaints for an hour' (1.6.11). Now, he exchanges the caution of 1.2 and 1.3 for defiance (he likewise opens dismissive addresses to Bassus in 1.4 and Gallus in 1.5 with rhetorical questions) and inverts the conceit of 1.6 now to portray himself, rather than Cynthia, as an indignant, Ariadne-type figure.

¹⁶³ Propertius may be regarded as an *auctor* of Ponticus' poetry both because he acts as his teacher (cf. *OLD* s.v. 6) and because he imparts *Amor*'s divine inspiration upon him and serves as its higher origin (cf. *per uos, auctores huius carminis, oro*, Tib. 3.1.15; *Phoebus erit nostri princeps et carminis auctor, Culex* 12; *sum [sc. Minerua] ... inuentrix auctorque ego carminis huius, Fast.* 6.709).

¹⁶⁴ Cf. *Rhet.* 3.396-7 Spengel; see Freeman (2013) 163; and Quinn (1963) 239-73, who draws a parallel with Hor. *Carm.* 3.27 and Ov. *Am.* 2.11.

As has been noted, moreover, Propertius appears to be alluding in his *propemptikon* to one written by Gallus.¹⁶⁵ The evidence for this comes from a clear echo of Gallus' plea to Lycoris in Virgil's tenth *Eclogue*, along with Propertius' playing on Virgil's name when referring to the Pleiades:¹⁶⁶

tu pedibus teneris positas calcare pruinas
 tu potes insolitas, Cynthia, ferre niues?
 o utinam hibernae duplicentur tempora brumae,
 et sit iners tardis nauita Vergiliis,

7 calcare *Passerat*] fulcire Ω | pruinas ζ] ruinas Ω

1.8a.7-10

tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere tantum)
 Alpinas, a! dura, niues et frigora Rheni
 me sine sola uides. a, te ne frigora laedant!
 a, tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!

Verg. *Ecl.* 10.46-9

Equally noteworthy has been seen to be Servius' comment on *Eclogue* 10.46 that *hi autem omnes uersus Galli, sunt de ipsius translati carminibus*,¹⁶⁷ as Conte argues, 'the obvious resemblances between this elegy and *Eclogue* 10.46-9 leave no doubt that Propertius wrote it on the model of the elegy by Gallus that Virgil is reproducing to some extent'.¹⁶⁸ No matter what Servius says, the absence of Gallus' poetry makes the precise nature of Propertius' play on his original obscure,¹⁶⁹ but what appears clear is that Propertius' imitation, at least of Virgil's Gallus, 'is more than a mere compliment'.¹⁷⁰ For, while the pleas of this Gallus appear to fall on deaf ears, those of Propertius result in success – and when Propertius rewrites the elegiac reality of his predecessor(s), he portrays himself in control of his own.

¹⁶⁵ Pasoli (1977).

¹⁶⁶ See Hubaux (1957) 38; Pasoli (1977) 587; and Stachon (2014) 129-30.

¹⁶⁷ See Clausen (1994) 291-2.

¹⁶⁸ Conte (1986) 109 n.14.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Heslin (2018) 141.

¹⁷⁰ Freeman (2013) 163.

As Gold has noted, moreover, ‘Cynthia becomes ... less a flesh-and-blood woman than a poetic figure and an important theme of Propertius’ poem ... [b]y a very ingenious device’:¹⁷¹ a play on persons. In lines 1-8, the second-person singular is expressed eleven times (seven times as a pronoun), while Propertius uses the first-person singular just twice (*mea cura*, 1; *sine me*, 4). But in the rest of the poem, the balance reverses: there are now six second-person singulars (five pronouns) to eleven first-person singulars (nine pronouns); and in the final section where Propertius imagines himself asking sailors for Cynthia’s whereabouts, she is relegated to the third person (*illa*, 26) – with which she continues to be portrayed in 1.8b (*illa*, 28). In so doing, Propertius ‘makes Cynthia both the object and subject ... removing her from him and placing her in the fabric of his poem’.¹⁷² So, given the intertextual play with Virgil/Gallus and the possibility that the poem’s water imagery may be an allegory for poetic composition,¹⁷³ this two-part sequence encourages itself to be read in metapoetic terms: while Propertius addresses Cynthia first as a *periura* (17) and then as a *uita* (22), what seems to be really at stake are the principles of his written reality.

1.8b appears no less in conversation with other poetic models. Freeman has argued that Propertius’ celebration, especially in its reference to Hippodamia and Elis (35-6), draws upon Pindar’s *Olympian* 1.¹⁷⁴ Gold has noted the Callimachean aesthetic suggested by the narrow bed (*angusto ... lecto*, 33) upon which Propertius will now lie with his beloved,¹⁷⁵ and has drawn attention to the multiple intertexts brought out by Propertius’ smug remark that he can now touch the stars with his palms:¹⁷⁶

nunc mihi summa licet contingere sidera palmis,

43 palmis Scaliger] plantis Ω

1.8b.43

¹⁷¹ Gold (1985-6) 153.

¹⁷² Gold (1985-6) 154.

¹⁷³ Cf. Gold (1985-6) 152-3 and chapter 2, 94-97. See also Murgatroyd (1995) for a comprehensive discussion of the ‘sea of love’ metaphor.

¹⁷⁴ Freeman (2013) 164. He also proposes concordances between 1.8b.43-4 and *Ol.* 1.115-6, and 1.8b.46 and *Ol.* 1.83-4. For possible further play between Propertius and Pindar, see chapter 3, 124-5.

¹⁷⁵ Gold (1985-6) 154. Cf. 2.1.39-40, 2.1.45, and 2.34.32.

¹⁷⁶ Gold (1985-6, 151-2) also cites Catull. 66.69 (*sed quamquam me nocte premunt uestigia diuum*) – another fitting parallel if reading *plantis* of Ω. See also Heyworth (2007b, *ad* 1.8b.43) for further parallels when reading *palmis*.

sub pedibusque uidet nubes et sidera Daphnis.

Verg. *Ecl.* 5.57

sublimi feriam sidera uertice

Hor. *Carm.* 1.1.36

And in addition to these intertextual links, Propertius states that the cause of his success is not gold or pearls, but simply elegy:

hanc ego non auro, non Indis flectere conchis
sed potui blandi carminis obsequio.
sunt igitur Musae, neque amanti tardus Apollo;
quis ego fretus amo; Cynthia rara mea est.

1.8b.39-42

Propertius is not the first to propose poetry as a means to charm his *puella*: as he encouraged the reader to recall in 1.8a (*sit Galatea tuae non aliena uiae*, 18), Theocritus' Polyphemus had tried just the same in *Idylls* 11.¹⁷⁷ But unlike Polyphemus and Virgil's Gallus, Propertius succeeds; and so, while the *tardus Amor* that oppresses Propertius forgets to follow the paths trodden before (1.1.17-18), the poetry he engenders can also bring him the swift success (*neque ... tardus Apollo*, 1.8b.41) seemingly unavailable to his predecessors – bringing Propertius down novel elegiac paths while, ironically, stopping Cynthia from journeying along novel ones of her own (*destitit ire nouas ... uias*, 30).

It may be said, then, that in addition to the pair of 1.8a/b presenting itself as a form of evidence for the efficacy of the teaching proposed to Ponticus in 1.9, it also serves as an echo of 1.7, for Propertius again shows his control over his written reality by adapting that of another. It could well be that just such poetic supremacy is what the earlier reference to Virgil is supposed to recall. At 1.8a.10, *tardis* occurs as part of the allusion to unhappy fate suffered by Virgil's Gallus, the departure of whose beloved was slowed down neither by Virgil nor *Vergiliae*, but

¹⁷⁷ See Heslin (2018) 142-3.

these also pointedly play no part in Propertius' success, who uses *tardus* at 1.8b.41 to celebrate the efficacy of his own verse (even if he is ultimately constrained by a *tardus Amor*; cf. 1.1.17).¹⁷⁸ But as concerns the relationship between 1.8a/b and 1.7, it also stands enriched by the depiction of elegy as not simply a means to please a girl but also as the path to celebrity through conquest (*nec mihi riualis certos subducet amores: | ista meam norit gloria canitiem*, 1.8b.45-6). As before, this claim to poetic authority is enhanced by the inclusion of readers in this success (*uicimus*, 28; *Cynthia nostra*, 30), while Propertius' outburst against 'desirous Envy' (*falsa licet cupidus deponat gaudia Liuor*, 1.8b.29) is possibly a double echo of Callimachus that recalls both Propertius' rejection of the epicist's haughtiness (cf. *contemnas ... fastu*, 1.7.25) and again contextualises the claim to poetic authority in didactic terms. Apollo spurns an Envy that 'does not love a poet who does not sing even as much as the sea' (οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ' ὄσα πόντος ἀεΐδει, *Hymn* 2.106) by praising poetry which resembles a refined stream (2.107-13); and Callimachus rails against the 'envious race' of the Telchines (ἔλλετε Βασκανίης ὀλοὸν γένος, *Aetia* fr. 1.17 Harder), who judge poetry by its size rather than by its art – in contravention to the principles of his didactic elegy, which also depends on the expertise offered by Apollo and the Muses.

This connection to 1.7 not only tightens the broader poetic grouping stretching to 1.9, but also encourages consideration of Propertius' relationship to the reality he writes. As 1.8a/b develops, Cynthia begins to appear less as the *puella* charmed by Propertius' verse than a written construct associated with the verse itself: she is to remain in his lap like a writing tablet (*non ... illa meos fugit ... sinus*, 38),¹⁷⁹ and lie with him on his narrow, Callimachean-sized bed (*angusto ... lecto*, 33), the place for sex and composition alike.¹⁸⁰ Yet the same may also be said for Propertius. Although poetry has taken the place of expensive luxuries (1.8b.39-40) it is, pointedly, Propertius and Rome that the potentially greedy (*auara*, 38) Cynthia now finds dear (*illi carus ego, et per me carissima Roma | dicitur*, 1.8b.31-2). The line between the seducer

¹⁷⁸ See Heslin (2018, 142 and n.12), who argues that 'The play on the two poets' names may include the adjective *tardis*, which is the opposite of the meaning of the word embedded in Propertius' own name, for the Umbrian poet was fond of playing upon its link with *properare*'. Cf. 1.5.4, 1.21.1, and 4.2.59.

¹⁷⁹ See Hartman (2020) 40-1.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Sen. *Ep.* 72.2 (*quaedam ... sunt quae possis et in cisio scribere, quaedam lectum et otium et secretum desiderant*); Pers. 1.52-3 (*non quidquid denique lectis | scribitur in citreis?*). By itself, of course, *lecto* is also evocative of 'reading'. See also chapter 3, 157.

and the means of seduction becomes blurred: Rome may be said to be dearest *per* (31) Propertius both because of the poetry he has written to change Cynthia's mind and because of the poetry he writes now to celebrate its efficacy: it may be said to be dearest both 'thanks to' him as a seducer and 'through' him as his verse.¹⁸¹ Thus, while Cynthia is his *uita* (1.8a.22) not only as his beloved but also as his poetry, his own *uita* is no less written than hers because it is lived through elegy. A pointed juxtaposition may again be of note: having earlier played at Ponticus' forthcoming elegiac similarity to himself (*quam nolim nostros te uiolasse deos*, 1.7.16), Propertius uses the same kind of effect to suggest he is as textual as his written beloved (*quin ego, uita, tuo limine fata querar*, 1.8a.22). She is his life – and so he is to lament his fate, as an elegist inherently does.¹⁸²

The interconnection between art and reality that Propertius sets up in 1.8a/b might also be viewed in the following way. To use Volk's term, Propertius shows a hybrid sort of 'poetic self-consciousness' in these poems:¹⁸³ he does not explicitly point to his authorial control over 1.8a as a piece of poetic production in that poem, doing so only in 1.8b by making it to be the 'charming song' (1.8b.40) with which Cynthia was won over; but at the same time, Propertius does not cast himself explicitly as an author of 1.8b either. So the poet adopts the same perspective on 1.8a as the reader, but does not acknowledge doing so as a written self: he may appear to stand side-by-side with us, and yet he remains in a reality portrayed by his text. It might be said, then, that Propertius presents a fiction that resynthesizes the distinction drawn by Volk with regard to Ovid's *Amores* when she argues that that 'first-person speakers who present themselves as poets and their speech as poetry must be considered rather more responsible for the implications and effects of their words than speakers whose words are presented – all within the fiction of the poem, of course – as actual, unmediated speech'.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Cf. Tib. 2.4.19: *ad dominam faciles aditus per carmina quaero: | ite procul, Musae, si nihil ista ualent.*

¹⁸² On elegy as lament, cf. Hor. *Ars P.* 75; Ov. *Am.* 3.9.3-4.

¹⁸³ On poetic self-consciousness, see 19 and n.46.

¹⁸⁴ Volk (2005) 94. Volk applies her notion of 'poetic self-consciousness' to Ovid's *Amores* to argue that the *persona* in poems that exhibit self-consciousness and those that do not ought to be seen as the same one; she concludes that 'we can no longer ever consider this character an unself-conscious protagonist who acts on a stage put up by someone else, but instead have to suspect that wherever he appears, he himself is consciously fashioning his speech as a poem and is thus not only "speaking", but also "has the say"' (94). In so doing, she pursues a two-fold argument. Firstly, Volk militates against those who would have it that the *persona* of the *Ars* or that of *Amores* 1.13 – in which the lover naively hopes for a delay to daybreak – 'is a deficient character who has been "set up" by the author to unknowingly betray his failings to the reader' (88) since, in this case, the hitherto banished

One might propose, then, that Propertius' elegiac world comprises two layers of reality, bound by the same poetic medium through which it is presented to the reader. The first comprises the generation of representation, the other the representation itself. With the first layer imitative of a process by which fiction is created and portraying an action that precedes the creation of fiction, it appears tantalizingly closer to the reality it represents than the second layer – for it is in the real world that one puts fiction into existence. The second layer, meanwhile, seems to be an unmediated, versified representation of reality. And, crucially, if the second layer follows the first just as fiction follows the generation of fiction, then the second layer is representative less of the reality in which the reader receives the work than of the reality which gives rise to that work – the reality which is the fiction represented by the first layer. Such a two-layered model would accord with the world Propertius portrays: so easy to believe in, and yet beholden to no truth other than that which poet writes.¹⁸⁵

1.8a/b therefore helps to elucidate the way in which Propertius is as much a lover as the art that represents him, existing within – and writing himself into – a world built up from his words: if the didactic poets use the poetic medium to educate their student about a reality they

author 'has slyly made a comeback', (89) threatening to upend our attempts to steer clear of the intentional fallacy. Secondly, she argues that poetic self-consciousness can free one from the need to construct an 'implied author' (a term proposed by Booth 1961, 71; he derived it from the term 'second self' revived by Tillotson 1959, 22; see also 71 n.8) in an attempt to avoid the intentional fallacy (91-4). Yet Volk runs the risk of misrepresenting the essence of Booth's concept: the implied author is not merely an intermediary between the *persona* and author that stops us falling headlong into the intentional fallacy, but a term for the broad range of deductions the text entices the reader to make about the author; and Booth highlights self-consciousness as a means to see most clearly how a single author can express 'different ideal combinations of norms' across different works (71). Furthermore, the intentional fallacy is itself open to the accusation of fallaciousness; see Hirsch (1967).

¹⁸⁵ Another model for understanding Propertius' fictionality has been proposed by Childree (2007, 33-4), who has argued that Propertius adopts the ancient rhetorical technique of *prosopopoeia* – whereby an orator adopts the character of another person or thing – to speak as a written avatar of himself in his verse; see Lausberg (1998) §820-9 and Quint. *Inst.* 11.1.39. This tool was considered useful training for poets and historians (*Inst.* 3.8.49) and could be persuasive (*Inst.* 9.2.30). Cicero adopts it to speak as Appius Claudius at *Cael.* 33, and it is also used by Lucretius to portray *Natura* berating a *senex* who refuses to let go of life (Lucr. 3.931-71); see Reinhardt (2002) and Wallach (1976) 61-83 for the relationship between Lucretius' passage and Bion's speech of Πενία (fr. 17 Kindstrand). Quintilian also counts as *prosopopoeiae* Virgil's *Fama* at *Aen.* 4.173-8, Prodicus' *Voluptas* and *Virtus*, and Ennius' *Mors* and *Vita* (*Inst.* 9.2.36). Nonetheless, the particular nature of a *prosopopoeia* means that Childree has to argue that 'Propertius (like Catullus before him) builds up one consistent character [and that] [t]here are no drastic changes in Propertius' personality in the poems' (18) for the equation to hold; and this is simply not the case. Furthermore, Propertius displays an awareness of his poetic medium – and of his fictionality – which *prosopopoeiae* cannot do if they are to remain convincing. For the ancient concept of a *persona*, see Mayer (2003), esp. 62-6; his article is a response to, and development of, Clay's (1998).

share with him, Propertius exists as a teacher of, and within, a reality he himself creates. Yet in teaching that elegy charms a *puella*, Propertius becomes a different kind of *praeceptor* still further. Hesiod, for example, can instruct Perses how to build a plough of correct proportions (*Op.* 422-40), but its physical nature does not permit him to build one directly in his verse. For Propertius, on the other hand, his reality is inextricable from the poetic medium which both constitutes the knowledge he transmits and the means by which he transmits it to the reader: he is therefore able to show evidence for the efficacy of his teaching without stepping beyond the confines of his verse. 1.8a shows his instruction in action; 1.8b returns him to that first layer of elegiac reality from which he can celebrate its success.¹⁸⁶

To be sure, the very pair of poems that appear to guarantee Propertius' poetic and didactic authority also show that it derives from a reality that bends to the poet's whim. His instruction is to be followed at one's own risk: if composing elegy to charm the *puella*, one might have more success by writing her acquiescence into being than having it occur in reality; even this victory will not be long-lasting, for a *rara* Cynthia (1.8b.42) means that she is both one of a kind and inconstant. In showing that he can influence Cynthia with *Cynthia*, he rather recalls and foreshadows the way in which he has shaped Ponticus' elegiac reality; and with 1.8a/b seemingly rewriting the fate suffered by (Virgil's) Gallus, Propertius also sets up a connection to the poems in which he himself addresses a Gallus and likewise espouses control over his elegiac reality as his *praeceptor*. The relationship between Propertius and his Gallus is, therefore, what is to be considered in the next chapter.

¹⁸⁶ Volk (2002, 182-8) argues that *Ars* 1 and 2 show what she terms 'mimetic simultaneity': 'the evolving of the poem is ... simultaneous not only to its own composition ... but also to an 'external' chain of events (the development of the love affairs of the young men)' (182). Thus, 'the conceit of mimetic simultaneity, by integrating into the poem itself the imagined audience's reception of and reaction to the poem ... produces a kind of text that is quite unparalleled: the speaker's art of love for young men is what we might call a self-fulfilling didactic poem' (185-6) where the taught *amor* becomes 'a fait accompli' (187); this reading, she argues, is not possible for the *DRN*, in which we are never told about Memmius' progress. Volk argues that this constitutes a 'perfection of the didactic genre' as 'the first ... and only didactic poem that verifiably "works"' (187-8). There may be a case, then, for arguing that Ovid's proof of his instruction's efficacy draws upon Propertius' in 1.8a/b – or, at least, from the two-layered elegiac world they both write.

Propertius' Gallus

To undertake a study of Propertius' Gallus, it is worthwhile to begin by briefly returning to Ponticus and considering how his transformation from haughty epicist to desperate elegist over the instructive cycle of 1.7 and 1.9 encourages us to view it against Fowler's notion of the 'didactic plot'.

i. The 'Didactic Plot'

Fowler begins by categorizing didactic poetry as discourse but examining its 'story patterns or plots',¹⁸⁷ aspects more straightforwardly pertaining to narrative: he thereby adopts, and subverts, Benveniste's structural opposition between discourse – an 'utterance assuming a speaker and a hearer, and in the speaker, the intention of influencing the other in some way'¹⁸⁸ – and (historical) narrative – an utterance of '[e]vents that took place at a certain moment of time ... presented without any intervention of the speaker in the narration'.¹⁸⁹ For Fowler, these plots concern both the representation of didactic material and its relationship to the literary form: he sees a connection between the metaphor of the path of knowledge, used to represent a student's progress, and the path set out through the text, 'the path onto which reader and author are setting out together'.¹⁹⁰ Yet he also points to 'an undoubted tension between the rhetorical drive ... [to] the end, the achievement of knowledge ... and the claims of a didactic poem as a poem to be reread and reinterpreted'.¹⁹¹ And given that a reader's path will not be limited to 'a following of the track already laid down by the poet but ... also involve the acquisition of the ability to read and act independently',¹⁹² the two plots may even operate in opposition. Thus, Fowler argues, the terrors at the end of *De Rerum Natura* 6 become a means to Epicurean initiation through 'the process of rereading' because they constitute a repetition of terrors already dealt with in *DRN* 3: although the work moves from the light of Venus' spring-time arrival to the darkness of death, 'the darkness of the end ... becomes like the

¹⁸⁷ Fowler (2000) 206.

¹⁸⁸ Benveniste (1971) 209.

¹⁸⁹ Benveniste (1971) 206.

¹⁹⁰ Fowler (2000) 208.

¹⁹¹ Fowler (2000) 211.

¹⁹² Fowler (2000) 210.

preliminaries of initiation, after which ... we see only the model of divine happiness',¹⁹³ characterised by the light of Epicurean understanding at the start of *DRN* 3. In turn, an enlightened Epicurean would perhaps begin to see the introductory light of Venus as rather more representative of the darkness of ignorance, which leads to the anxious death that Lucretius later bewails.

As far as concerns Propertius and Ponticus, re-reading becomes instrumental to generate the meaning outlined in the previous chapter: the knowledge of Ponticus' transformation in 1.9, and Propertius' characterisation of 1.7 as its prophecy (*dicebam tibi uenturos ... Amores*, 1), are precisely what expose Propertius' tacit construction of Ponticus' elegiac reality in the earlier poem. This circularity stands enriched – and complicated – by the paths of change and learning that Ponticus undertakes. 1.7 begins with a comparison of the poets' different *militiae*, serving as the grounds for Ponticus' amalgamation into the elegiac world; yet the emerging didactic tone also makes it an echo of the martial characterisation of the struggle for knowledge in Lucretius and Virgil,¹⁹⁴ plotting Ponticus' path to enlightenment from the start. Just as Lucretius and Virgil present themselves as having risen above the ignorance they conquer, so Propertius presents himself in motion through composition (*hic mihi conteritur uitae modus ... | hinc cupio nomen carminis ire mei*, 1.7.9-10). Elegy becomes an active process by which Ponticus is transformed and a *puella* is pleased, and Ponticus will follow Propertius' compositional path by becoming a kind of elegiac *praeceptor* himself (*i quaeso ... | et cane quod quaeuis nosse puella uelit*, 1.9.14); but before he does, he will need to stop and start again on a different path (*longe miser agmina septem | flebis in aeterno surda iacere situ*, 1.7.18; *ecce taces supplexque uenis ad iura puellae*, 1.9.2). Ponticus' path to enlightenment may therefore be direct, but it is also circular, turning as he does from one sort of poet to another. In this way, it resembles not only the process of rereading outlined above, but even Propertius' own elegiac predicament, who follows his own instruction but is brought no respite by it: his *puella* is never fully pleased by his Sisyphian task.¹⁹⁵ For his part, Ponticus risks falling into the same trap –

¹⁹³ Fowler (2000) 210-11, having compared the process of Epicurean initiation to that described by Plutarch fr. 178 Sandbach.

¹⁹⁴ E.g. Lucr. 1.62-79; *G.* 2.490-93. See Fowler (2000) 216-18.

¹⁹⁵ See Fowler (2000) 215-16 who cites Lucretius' demythification of the story of Sisyphus (3.995-1002) as part of a discussion on the relationship between the didactic plot and Lyne's (1987, 139-44) notion of the 'implicit myth', a 'particular canonical story, which can be seen as present even when not explicitly signalled' (215). For

his elegiac *Amor* may give him wings, but they will hardly let him ascend to freedom (*nullus Amor cuiquam faciles ita praebuilt alas | ut non alterna presserit ille manu*, 1.9.23-4).

A similar approach may be applied to the poems securely addressed to a Gallus (1.5, 1.10, 1.13, 1.20).¹⁹⁶ In all of these, Propertius adopts a didactic tone to urge him towards a particular mode of love – and while their conceits evolve, this continuity nonetheless allows them to be viewed in terms of an overarching plot of amatory instruction. Moreover, while this Gallus – unlike Ponticus – is not made out to be a poet, his naming in Propertius’ elegy and characterisation as a lover nevertheless encourages him to be read as C. Cornelius Gallus, renowned elegist and *praefectus* of Egypt under Octavian until his suicide around 27/6 BC.¹⁹⁷ In that regard, Propertius’ teaching continues to revolve around composition; and as we shall see, composition continues to drive Gallus’ development over the course of these poems. In the meantime, however, it will be useful to briefly outline the tradition of arguments for – and against – reading Propertius’ Gallus as the elegist C. Cornelius.

ii. C. Cornelius

Following the initial study of Gallus by Franz Skutsch,¹⁹⁸ and then those by Alfonsi and Tränkle,¹⁹⁹ the next significant step was undertaken by Ross, who went searching for Gallus in the poetry of Virgil and Propertius (and faced his share of criticism).²⁰⁰ Speculating no less

Lucretius, however, Sisyphus represents those endlessly seeking *imperium* (3.998); to chastise lovers forever smitten by desire, he adduces the story of Tityos, which directly precedes that of Sisyphus (3.984-97).

¹⁹⁶ For the Gallus of 1.21, see discussion below in this section.

¹⁹⁷ For further details on the life of this Gallus, see Boucher (1966) 5-65; Manzoni (1995) 3-55; and Cairns (2006) 72-7.

¹⁹⁸ Skutsch (1901; 1906). These began with the claim that Virgil’s *Eclogue* 10 has as its ‘Mittelpunkt’ C. Cornelius Gallus, ‘mit dem Vergil von der Schulzeit her bekannt, dem er seit zwei Jahren tief verpflichtet war für seine Vermittlung bei Octavian’ (1901, 2); while he thus contextualises the connection in historical terms, he proceeds rather to posit the literary question of whether ‘Vergil sich hier in noch erkennbarer Weise an Gallus angelehnt haben möge’ (1901, 3). Ultimately, Skutsch not only proposed that Virgil was, in *Ecl.* 10.55-60, responding to a Gallan ‘Jagdelegie’, but that the whole of *Eclogue* 10 provided ‘einen Überblick über die elegische-bukolische Poesie seines verehrten Gallus’ (1901, 18): this ‘Kataloggedicht’ hypothesis was quickly attacked, not least because it led him to argue that the *Ciris* was one of Gallus’ works (1901, 92; see *contra* Leo 1902, esp. 30-1; see also Conte 1986, 100-1). Skutsch (1906, 144-6) also proposed that the ‘Gallus’ of Propertius’ elegies was the eponymous elegist.

¹⁹⁹ Alfonsi (1943) 54; Tränkle (1960) 22-30.

²⁰⁰ MacLeod (1975), Zetzl (1977), Du Quesnay (1978), West (1978), Schmidt (1979).

broadly than Skutsch about the nature of Gallus' poetry, Ross argued that, on the basis of the initiation passage in *Eclogue* 6 and Propertius 2.13, 'both Propertius and Virgil derive their passages from a common source, and ... this source is Gallus';²⁰¹ more significantly, this triangulation led him to claim that 'Gallus had written Hesiodic-Callimachean poetry which he is being recognized and rewarded for' in *Eclogue* 6.²⁰² Concerning Propertius, Ross argued that the Milanion *exemplum* in 1.1 'must be derived from a similar Milanion *exemplum* which will have occurred in a programmatic context in Gallus' elegies',²⁰³ and that not only had Gallus himself 'very likely' adapted Callimachus' Acontius and Cydippe episode, but that the very setting of 1.18 'is ... derived primarily from Gallus and that the pastoral landscape suggested later comes through Gallus as well'.²⁰⁴ As for the identification of Propertius' Gallus with the poet, Ross' view is predictable: '[t]here is no reason why Cornelius Gallus should not be the addressee of four poems in the *Monobiblos*'.²⁰⁵

The greatest stumbling block for accepting Propertius' Gallus as the eponymous poet in Ross' time – and for the unconvinced since then – has been the following couplet in 1.5:

nec tibi nobilitas poterit succurrere amanti
nescit Amor priscis cedere imaginibus.

1.5.23-4

The historical and the literary approaches here clash. From the evidence about C. Cornelius that we have, he appears to have been an *eques*, and was thus neither *nobilis* nor in possession of *imagines*.²⁰⁶ For Ross, this problem could be solved by attributing the line to Gallus himself.²⁰⁷ Propertius would thereby be quoting – ironically? – the poet's own words back to him, and so identification with C. Cornelius remains in play. As Pincus notes, however, Ross'

²⁰¹ Ross (1975) 35.

²⁰² Ross (1975) 34.

²⁰³ Ross (1975) 69.

²⁰⁴ Ross (1975) 74.

²⁰⁵ Ross (1975) 83.

²⁰⁶ Syme (1978) 99-103. As Walbank (1957, 739) remarks, 'what constituted *nobilitas* is a vexed topic'. Badian (*OCD* s.v. *nobilitas*) notes that (possibly, in the 1st century BC) *nobilis* acquired the technical sense of 'descended from a consul' – though 'the general meaning "known" always coexists with it outside the political sphere'.

²⁰⁷ Ross (1975) 83; see Tränkle (1960) 23.

search for Gallus was founded upon ‘a certain circularity in his reasoning ... he both assumes the truth of poetic representations of Gallus [in Virgil and Propertius] and demonstrates why what is said about him may not be completely accurate’ by focussing on the ‘highly charged nature of Gallus’ role in the allusive systems of his successors’.²⁰⁸ Cairns’ approach was different, though no different in its result. While he assents to Ross’ view that the line is an allusion to Gallus’ poetry, he has also argued that, firstly, *imagines* need not refer specifically to Gallus’ own, since the connection between the hexameter and pentameter is looser than has been thought (especially if the latter is a quotation); and that, secondly, *nobilitas* is sufficiently broad in meaning to suggest ‘celebrity’ in a non-technical sense.²⁰⁹ For him, then, ‘*nobilitas* is ... in effect the same thing as his *tantum nomen*’, when Propertius two lines later tells Gallus *quam cito de tanto nomine rumor eris* (1.5.26).²¹⁰

My own argument will build upon that of Cairns without necessarily agreeing with him or Ross that there was originally a clear allusion to Gallus’ poetry. In uncovering what is now firmly lost to time,²¹¹ their methodology has obvious appeal, but they go too far down the road of speculation even if they are cognisant of the risks they take. Cairns not only sketches out a historical context for Propertius’ engagement with Gallus on the basis of the latter’s apparent patronage of the former, but extends Ross’ approach to suggest whole thematic and linguistic ‘complexes’, ranging from diction such as *imaginibus*,²¹² *medicina*,²¹³ and *mollis/durus/militia*,²¹⁴ to the more general concept of *erotodidaxis*,²¹⁵ and then to the even broader themes of ‘poetic initiation’, ‘caves, glades, and groves’, ‘wild surroundings’, and ‘hunting’.²¹⁶ Two whole chapters in his study are dedicated to ‘Gallan metrics’.²¹⁷ As Meyers quips in his review, ‘Cairns uncovers so much evidence of Gallus’ poetry ... that one wonders

²⁰⁸ Pincus (2004) 171.

²⁰⁹ Cairns (1983) 85; Cairns (2006) 79.

²¹⁰ Cairns (2006) 79.

²¹¹ The discovery of a papyrus containing parts of ten lines of Gallus’ poetry constitutes our most significant, albeit still fleeting glimpse, of the poet’s work. See Anderson, Parsons, and Nisbet (1979).

²¹² Cairns (2006) 79-80.

²¹³ Cairns (2006) 111. See also Tränkle (1960) 22-3.

²¹⁴ Cairns (2006) 111.

²¹⁵ Cairns (2006) 116.

²¹⁶ Cairns (2006) 120-45

²¹⁷ Cairns (2006) 146-218.

whether his criteria for discerning Gallan features ought to be narrowed'.²¹⁸ But the foundation of Cairns' approach, which holds C. Cornelius to be *the* Propertian Gallus, is surely sound. As Cairns notes himself, certain scholars who see C. Cornelius in 1.20, addressed to Gallus and 'replete with hellenizing language, content, and ethos',²¹⁹ do not extend this identification to other poems addressed to someone of the same name.²²⁰ In so doing, they are being unduly careful. There is one Gallus in particular who is bound to come to the mind of Propertius' audience, modern or ancient – and that is the poet. This view has steadily gained ground.²²¹ Whether his portrayal accurately reflects reality or the reality he presented in his poetry is another matter. Ponticus (1.7, 1.9) and Bassus (1.4) were poets;²²² later in the collection, Gallus (and Lycoris; 2.34.91-2) is named as the culmination of a sequence that includes Virgil (61-82), Varro (85-6), Catullus (87-8), and Calvus (89-90). We can read him as an elegist without demanding to know the specifics of his verse any more than we seek the lost content of the works of Ponticus and Bassus.

This is not to say that the Propertian text makes this identification straightforward. The problem of 1.5.23-4 aside, if we believe the transmitted text of 1.21, a Gallus appears there who speaks as a corpse to a passing soldier at the siege of Etruria and is clearly not C. Cornelius. But there are ways around this. One is emendation: Heyworth argues that *Gallum*, at the beginning of the line, 'has resulted from assimilation to the recurrent name ... [and] it will presumably have replaced another'.²²³ A different approach is to take the Galluses themselves as relatives,²²⁴ though 'it is odd then that Propertius does not bring out his familial closeness to the Gallus of previous poems'.²²⁵ Alternatively, we might propose that there are simply two Galluses in Book 1.²²⁶ Yet another way involves recourse to more narratological explanations. Cairns argues that when speaking of Gallus' poetry, Propertius employs the technique of

²¹⁸ Meyers (2008) 79.

²¹⁹ Cairns (2006) 219.

²²⁰ Citing Bramble (1974) 87; Monteleone (1979) 38-53; and Petrain (2000).

²²¹ See Thomas (1979); King (1980b); Gall (1999) 181-91; Nicholson (1998-9; see below); Janan (2001; see below); and Miller (2004).

²²² Cf. Ov. *Tr.* 4.1.47, and Hollis (2007) on Ponticus (426) and Bassus (421).

²²³ Heyworth (2007b) 99.

²²⁴ So Hutchinson (1984) 105, and Du Quesnay (1992) 72.

²²⁵ Heyworth (2007b) 99.

²²⁶ Cairns (1983) 83.

deformazione, ‘misrepresentation and assimilation’,²²⁷ in a similar vein to Horace (on Tibullus) or Virgil (on Gallus),²²⁸ though he does not pursue this observation into 1.21. Were one unhappy with emendation (which is, nonetheless, the solution I here adopt), one might propose that since Propertius is wont to be purposefully unreliable in his representation of Gallan poetry, then it may be simply an extension of this play to present the reader in 1.21 with a Gallus completely at odds with expectation.

A more theoretical approach to Propertius’ Gallus has led to similar conclusions. Nicholson saw in the Gallus of 1.21 (and its companion poem, 1.22) Riffaterre’s semiotic ‘ungrammaticality’, something that ‘disrupts a text’s appearance of mimesis’.²²⁹ The peculiar settings of 1.21-22 seemingly ‘offer direct access to the real world ... [and their appearance in the collection] exposes the apparently mimetic world of the earlier elegies as false’.²³⁰ But since ‘it is unclear who is referred to, what the relationships are between the characters, and even how many different characters are described’,²³¹ it even becomes too simplistic to view them as a window ‘to a reality more concrete’ than the mythological world of 1.20, as Hutchinson has proposed;²³² instead, ‘[s]uch confusion encourages the reader to see the descriptions of the characters as motivated by the internal logic ... [of Book 1] than by real people’,²³³ and in the end, ‘[r]eaders are thus left to balance a strong sense that the poems refer to real people against the strong reasons to deny this’.²³⁴ For Nicholson, then, Propertius’ Gallus is not only a reference to the eponymous poet, but a means by which to alert the reader to the irreality of his own narrative.

His approach not only agrees with the notion that C. Cornelius is the referent behind the name Gallus, but also moves discussion beyond simple identification with the historical character. For Nicholson, Propertius’ problematisation of Gallus’ identification with the eponymous poet is itself the issue to be explained in terms of Propertius’ narrative strategy. Thus he – following

²²⁷ Cairns (2006) 106.

²²⁸ Cairns (2006) 104-7.

²²⁹ Nicholson (1998-99) 144, citing Riffaterre (1978) 1-22.

²³⁰ Nicholson (1998-99) 144.

²³¹ Nicholson (1998-99) 104.

²³² Hutchinson (1984) 104.

²³³ Nicholson (1998-99) 104.

²³⁴ Nicholson (1998-99) 105.

Hutchinson²³⁵ – notes that ‘what seems more important is that, in comparison to Bassus, Ponticus, and Tullus, Gallus is hardly treated with any respect’.²³⁶ Janan, meanwhile, takes Gallus’ changing representation throughout Book 1 to be indicative of ‘a resistance to the promise of a coherent self with which ideology procures our institutional loyalty’,²³⁷ arguing that not only do the Galluses of Book 1 ‘obviate the possibility of drawing any coherent subject out of these poems [but] ... just as important is their deployment within a field defined by one of the chief political figures of the day (Cornelius Gallus) and one of his master's worst excesses (Octavian's siege of Perusia)’.²³⁸ While both of these approaches rely heavily on the possibility that the name in 1.21 is correctly preserved, they also view Propertius’ Gallus from a more useful perspective and ask a more nuanced question – why is he there, and what is his role in Propertius’ poetry?

The discussion of Gallus that follows will, like theirs, be based predominantly upon Propertius’ poetry. It will not make claims about the nature of Gallan verse, nor, for example, about whether Propertius is reading Virgil’s Gallus more than a lost source text, as Heslin has argued:²³⁹ Propertius’ play with Gallus as part of his self-characterisation as a *praeceptor amoris* can be understood without recourse to elegies we no longer have. The intertexts which will be adduced will stem, rather, from the tradition of Greco-Roman didactic poetry, and in particular, from Lucretius. The value of reading 1.10 and 1.13 against the background of his verse has already been recognized,²⁴⁰ but less has been said about adopting a similar approach to 1.5 – the first of Propertius’ Gallus poems, and the first, therefore, to be analysed in this chapter.

²³⁵ Hutchinson (1984) 105.

²³⁶ Nicholson (1998-99) 159 n.48.

²³⁷ Janan (2001, 18).

²³⁸ Janan (2001) 41.

²³⁹ Heslin (2018) is keen to avoid what he perceives as mistakes made by Skutsch, Ross, and Conte who rediscover Gallan poetry through its apparent representation in Virgil’s and Propertius’ works. Instead, he sees ‘Gallus’ as a battleground between the forces of Virgil’s bucolic and Propertius’ elegiac poetry – which, in the case of 1.20, is a reading that has also proved attractive to other scholars (Monteleone 1979; Petrain 2000; Heerink 2015). But Heslin risks overemphasizing the extent of the rivalry he uncovers – he frequently encourages us to pay attention to ‘the danger posed by Virgil to the existence of Latin elegy as an independent genre’ (161), even though, as Conte (1986, 123-4) shows, Virgil’s Gallus rejects the bucolic world offered to him in *Eclogues* 10. In addition, Heslin does not treat poems 1.5 and 1.10 given that ‘they do not make any significant use of myth’ (132).

²⁴⁰ See Arnold (1997); Fabre-Serris (2018); and King (1998).

iii. 1.5

Unlike the preceding poem, where Bassus' identity is made clear from the start (*Basse*, 1.4.1), this poem's addressee is revealed to be Gallus only at its end (1.5.31). The poem thus begins by sowing a degree of confusion, which Propertius develops by asking his addressee whether he is mad:²⁴¹

Quid tibi uis, insane? meos sentire furores?
infelix, properas ultima nosse mala,
et miser ignotos uestigia ferre per ignes,
et bibere e tota toxica Thessalia.

1.5.3 *nou. el. Heyworth seq. Hartman*] *cont. Ω*

1.5.3-6

Propertius' addressee hurries (*properas*, 4) to follow in the poet's footsteps (*uestigia*, 5).²⁴² Once more, Propertius adopts the metaphor of the path and ties it to an explicitly didactic context: by following it, his addressee will come 'to know the evils' and 'unknown fires' he suffers himself (*nosse ... mala | ... ignotos ... ignes*, 4-5).²⁴³ This poem – and the broader sequence – thus begins by inverting the typical didactic plot: the student hurries down the path unprompted, towards enlightenment that takes him away from the good he already has; the poet advises him to return to his former station. Propertius, in turn, matches this inversion with retrospective allusions to his own verse. Not only does he appear to be berating one who has disregarded his earlier advice (*hoc, moneo, uitate malum*, 1.1.35), but he looks back to his own self-characterisation in 1.1: *insane ≈ non sani pectoris* (1.1.26); *furores ≈ furor* (1.1.7); *mala ≈ hoc ... malum* (1.1.35); *miser ≈ miserum me* (1.1.1); *ignes = ignes* (1.1.27). While there may be no exact parallel for line 6, Thessaly was as known for its poisons as for its magic, and Fedeli's

²⁴¹ As Heyworth (1995, 173-5) has argued, 1.5.1-2 effectively summarises 1.4, and attributing the couplet to the preceding poem resolves the thorny issue of to whom *pares* (1.5.2) refer. As he notes, moreover, *inuide* (1.5.1) fits inadequately with the rest of 1.5, where 'Gallus is not treated as an envious rival, but with the condescending sympathy one feels for a fool' (174). See also Murgia (2000) 151-2. The poem divisions transmitted in the manuscripts cannot be viewed as secure: see Heyworth (1995) 172 n.23 and Murgia (2000) 148.

²⁴² See n.178 on the play between *properare* and Propertius.

²⁴³ See Cairns (2006, 79 and n.48) who views *nosse* and *ignotos* to be part of an etymological complex ultimately 'emblematic of Gallan elegy' (79).

citation from Aristophanes' *Clouds* (749-50) that illustrates this also contains a reference to drawing down the moon – which recalls the witches mentioned earlier too (*deductae ... lunae*, 1.1.19).²⁴⁴ But with neither witches (cf. *fallacia*, 1.1.19) nor medicine or torture (cf. *sero lapsus*, 25) being then useful to Propertius, he here warns his addressee of the same: the *toxica* (6), 'potions intended to cure or cause love',²⁴⁵ may bring him into his desired love but they will not snap him out of it. This is amatory enlightenment of a permanent kind.

In the next couplet, Propertius considers the subject of his addressee's love:

non est illa uagis similis collata puellis:
molliter irasci non solet illa tibi.

1.5.7-8

illa can refer to no-one other than Cynthia, but, she like Gallus, is unnamed until the penultimate verse. Her anonymity thus adds to the confusion wrought by the poem unfolding almost *in mediis rebus*, but equally striking is her description as *collata*, for *conferre* can also mean 'to arrange' into a book or a literary collection.²⁴⁶ The meaning of line 7 thus becomes two-fold: 'she is not similar to wandering girls, if compared to them' and 'being assembled as a collection, she is not similar to wandering girls [i.e. those that are not gathered together]'.²⁴⁷ In either case, there is a touch of naivety, or perhaps, disingenuousness:²⁴⁸ Cynthia is fickle, and in that sense, she is *uaga*,²⁴⁹ and though *Cynthia* is 'assembled', Propertius' celebrity depends on her exchanging the hands of his readers.²⁵⁰ So, both Cynthia and *Cynthia* can be shared

²⁴⁴ See Fedeli (1980) 157, citing Arist. *Nub.* 749-50: γυναῖκα φαρμακίδ' εἰ πριάμενος Θετταλῆν | καθέλομι νόκτωρ τὴν σελήνην. Cf. Fedeli (1980) 79-80.

²⁴⁵ Camps (1961) *ad* 1.5.6. Fedeli (1980, *ad loc.*) suggests *toxica* means the poisons are merely 'veri e propri'.

²⁴⁶ See *TLL* s.v. 2c.

²⁴⁷ Line 8 may therefore be read self-reflexively: as the striking opening and curt conclusion attest, Propertius' Cynthia is unable to be angry *molliter* even if she presents her anger through the *mollis* genre of elegy; as we shall see, when Propertius has a different cause of anger towards Gallus in 1.13, it is expressed in terms of *mollitia*'s opposite – amatory *duritia*.

²⁴⁸ Cf. the earlier rebuke to Bassus (1.4.15-16): *quo magis et nostros contendis soluere amores, | hoc magis accepta fallit uterque fide*.

²⁴⁹ See Fedeli (1980) 157-8, and *OLD* s.v. 8b.

²⁵⁰ See Oliensis (1995) 216-8 for a discussion of Hor. *Ep.* 1.20, where the wanderings of the poet's collection are equated to prostitution, and Fitzgerald (1995, 40-1) who argues that the pumice with which Catullus polishes his *libellus* (1.1-2) makes it a sexually attractive creation. For a discussion of the poet as a pimp, see Fear (2000).

between Propertius and his addressee²⁵¹ – and if Gallus is to be understood as having shown interest in Propertius’ beloved to the detriment of his own, then he is no less *uagus* than the *uaga* he now desires. The two are thus a fitting pair, and with one written into the other, their wandering journey through Book 1 can begin.

The ramifications of a relationship with Cynthia’s written form develop as Propertius outlines the consequences of going further down his elegiac path:

quod si forte tuis non est contraria uotis,
at tibi curarum milia quanta dabit!

9 tuis ζ] tuis Ω | uotis ζ] nostris Ω

1.5.9-10

Be careful what you wish for – but if Cynthia is as much poetry as she is a beloved, there is no better way to realise the acquaintance sought than to become part of the text itself. Gallus is being written into the poem as it unfolds, and his name will be stamped on its end: *Cynthia* (if not Cynthia) is already not being *contraria uotis* (9); *forte*, after all, concedes that such an outcome is possible. If so, *dabit* (10) becomes a marker of destiny already inescapable, with Gallus trapped by Propertius’ words no less than Ponticus. Certainly, Gallus is later shown to be suffering from various *curae* (1.13.7) – and even if they are not inflicted by Cynthia the *puella*, they are by *Cynthia* the book.

Gallus’ initiation into Propertius’ elegiac world continues in the verses that follow. Bound at the end by another hypothetical condition (*quod si*, 25), these develop the didactic tone hinted at the start of the poem:

non tibi iam somnos, non illa relinquet ocellos:
illa ferox animis alligat una uiros.
a, mea contemptus quotiens ad limina cures!
cum tibi singultu fortia uerba cadent,²⁵²

²⁵¹ Cf. Caston (2012) 121.

²⁵² Heyworth tells me he would now read *tum* for *cum*, following Liberman (2002) 66.

et tremulus maestis orietur fletibus horror, 15
 et timor informem ducet in ore notam,
 et quaecumque uoles fugient tibi uerba querenti,
 nec poteris, qui sis aut ubi, nosse miser,
 tum graue seruitium nostrae cogere puellae
 discere et exclusum quid sit abire domo. 20
 nec iam pallorem totiens mirabere nostrum,
 aut cur sim toto corpore nullus ego.
 nec tibi nobilitas poterit succurrere amanti:
 nescit Amor priscis cedere imaginibus.

12 ferox Luck] feros Ω

20 domo Heinsius] domum Ω

1.5.11-24

Gallus would do well to avoid pursuing his desire – though it is now too late. As in 1.7, where Propertius’ *mala, dei*, and *carmina* (1.7.14, 16, 25) stealthily became Ponticus’ too, first-person plurals here (*nostrae ... puellae*, 19; *pallorem ... nostrum*, 21) appear well chosen to foster affinity between Propertius and his addressee while hinting that the future outlined is already present. The *puella* can belong jointly to Propertius and his addressee without him having to be the kind of lover Propertius is to her (since the first-person plural can simply refer to her being under discussion between them) and the same can be said for their *pallor*, since, as the physical manifestation of lovesickness (cf. 1.1.22), it can be exhibited by one who shows interest in the *puella* similarly to the addressee in this poem. Equally, if the plurals hint that the future is closer than one believes, then they are strengthened by the claim at 1.5.12, where *uiros* is plural and *alligat* is in the present tense. The ambiguity is part of the play of this address, concurrently facilitating a conception of Cynthia as flesh-and-blood and work of art. In either case, a shared Cynthia need not mean that the addressee becomes Propertius’ equal: if they both show signs of *pallor* (21), it is only Propertius (*ego*, 22) who is completely *nullus* – and in this elegiac world of idealised servitude, being *nullus* confers authority.

Meanwhile, Gallus will go from hurrying after Propertius (*properas*, 4) to hurrying to his threshold (*a, mea contemptus quotiens ad limina cures*, 13), and the freedom he had to choose this path will become replaced by the servitude of his new-found enlightenment (*tum graue*

seruitium nostrae cogere puellae | discere, 19-20) – one which makes him bewildered even by himself (*nec poteris, qui sis aut ubi, nosse miser*, 18). As before (cf. *tardus Amor ... | nec meminit notas ... ire uias*, 1.1.17-18), love itself is marked by ignorance (*nescit Amor*, 24; see below), and Propertius, as its victim, will not be able to provide the remedy Gallus will seek (*non ... potero solacia ferre roganti | cum mihi nulla mei sit medicina mali*, 27-8). At the same time, however, it is Propertius' own words that take Gallus down this path: *insane* and *infelix* come to appear less as emotional outbursts than precise descriptions of Gallus' elegiac reality. Looking back to the self-characterisation of earlier verse and urging his addressee back whence he came, the unfolding poem nonetheless carries them both downstream to unescapable elegiac torment, an inverted sort of development to match Propertius' inverted didactic stance as a teacher whose knowledge is unhelpful to himself. And of course, if Gallus is C. Cornelius, he will have shown no less interest in Propertius' *Cynthia* than Propertius has in his *Lycoris*: it is this successor who was first smitten by the elegiac world of his addressed predecessor. Propertius, after all, may be hinting at Gallus' poetic credentials not only by repeating that *uerba* (14, 17) will fail him but also by making reference to the *informis nota* (16) to come,²⁵³ anticipating a predicament similar to the one which befell Ponticus in 1.7. As then, however, Propertius keeps under wraps the advice to be followed for one's convalescence, suggesting once more that poetic authority will be claimed before a cure can be offered.

Furthermore, by suffusing his admonition with a sense of inevitability, Propertius recalls a rhetoric and worldview common to the didactic poets. While Hesiod and Virgil preach the necessity of toil for humankind in the current Age,²⁵⁴ even more memorable and poignant is Lucretius' invective against the fear of death at the end of *DRN*3, a section of which Propertius appears to recall both linguistically and thematically:

tu uero dubitabis et indignabere obire?	1045
mortua cui uita est prope iam uiuo atque uidenti,	
qui somno partem maiorem conteris aeui,	

²⁵³ While the immediate picture is that of a face contorted by grief, cf. Tib. 1.6.20 (*mensae ducat in orbe notas*) and Ov. *Tr.* 2.454 (*et tacitam mensae duxit in orbe notam*) for elegiac parallels to refer to writing using the combination *ducere notam*, with both verb and substantive in the identical *sedes* in the pentameter.

²⁵⁴ Cf. Hes. *Op.* 176-8; Verg. *G.* 1.155-9 (adapting *Op.* 394-5).

et uigilans stertis nec somnia cernere cessas
 sollicitamque geris cassa formidine mentem
 nec reperire potes tibi quid sit saepe mali, cum 1050
 ebrius urgeris multis miser undique curis
 atque animo incerto fluitans errore uagaris.’

Lucr. 3.1045-52

Having listed famous dead personages of the past (3.1024-44), Lucretius’ *Natura* asks the addressee what there is to fear when he is already as good as dead. The paradox may have its roots in comedy,²⁵⁵ but for Lucretius, living as if asleep is quite literally the stuff of nightmares. Ignorance of the true nature of the world – to be understood through careful deduction following empirical observation – is coupled with a life filled with needless fears, and it is no coincidence that the false beliefs made up by proponents of *religio* are ‘dreams’ (*multa tibi iam fingere possunt | somnia*, 1.104-5). As Lucretius argues later, sleep clouds our senses so that ‘they cannot overcome the false with the true’ (*nec possunt falsum ueris conuincere rebus*, 4.764);²⁵⁶ consequently, that to which one is most bound to give attention (*quo quisque ... studio deuinctus adhaeret*, 4.962) is what one tends to dream of, even if that means ‘many meet their death’ (*multi mortem obeunt*, 4.1020) and they ‘hardly come to their senses after sleep, as if held captive by their minds’ (*ex somno quasi mentibus capti | uix ad se redeunt*, 4.1022-3). If the false fear of death permeates one’s wakeful hours, then it pursues him into his dreams: there becomes no difference between the two. Death, meanwhile, is also likened to sleep – but of a kind that provides a respite and which one hopes to be everlasting (*licet aeternum per nos sic esse soporem*, 3.921). No one raises himself from the sleep of death – but would one even want to if it means waking up in a cold sweat?

Gallus’s terror has much in common with that of the Lucretian *ignoramus*, and looks to other discussions of death in Propertius’ collection.²⁵⁷ Gallus will be left in peace neither in sleep nor in wakefulness (*qui somno partem maiorem conteris aevi | ... nec somnia cernere cessas*, 3.1047-8; cf. *non ... somnos, non illa reliquet ocellos*, 1.5.11); he will be wracked by anxiety

²⁵⁵ Cf. Bailey (1947) 1166, and *ad* 3.1048.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Diogenes of Oenoanda fr. 9 IV.7-VI.3 Smith (cited in the 1992 Loeb edition).

²⁵⁷ See seminal study by Papanghelis (1987); see also Baker (1970). For a comparison on the views of death in Lucretius and Propertius, see Michels (1955).

(*sollicitamque geris cassa formidine mentem*, 3.1049; cf. *tremulus ... horror | ... timor*, 1.5.15-16); he will lose sense of who he is (*nec reperire potes tibi quid sit ... mali*, 3.1050; cf. *nec poteris, qui sis aut ubi, nosse*, 1.5.18); he will be beset by cares (*urgeris multis ... curis*, 3.1051; cf. *tibi curarum milia quanta dabit*, 1.5.10); and he will wander with a troubled mind (*animo incerto fluitans errore uagaris*, 3.1052; cf. *illa ferox animis alligat una uiros. | a mea contemptus quotiens ad limina curres*, 1.5.12-13; *uagis ... puellis*, 1.5.7). He will, in short, be *miser* (3.1051; 1.5.18). Meanwhile, Gallus' failing powers of speech (1.5.14; 16-17) are paralleled by *ebrius* (3.1051), for Lucretius had earlier noted that thanks to wine:

... praepediuntur
 cura uacillanti, tardescit lingua, madet mens,
 nant oculi, clamor singultus iurgia gliscunt,
 et iam cetera de genere hoc quae cumque secuntur,

Lucr. 3.478-81

Loss of bodily functions is common both to drunkenness and fear, and both likewise cause the eventual loss of inhibition and descent into violence (cf. *iurgia gliscunt*, 3.480). At the beginning of *DRN* 3, Lucretius argues that 'avarice and blind desire for status' (*auarities et honorum caeca cupido*, 3.59) is nourished 'in no small part by the fear of the death' (*non minimam partem mortis formidine*, 3.64), and that those who desire such things are 'driven by false fear' (*falso terrore coacti*, 3.68). He continues:

sanguine ciuili rem conflant diuitiasque
 conduplicant auidi, caedem caede accumulantes,

Lucr. 3.70-1

The *auidi* are blinded from seeing the *rerum natura* because of their fear of death, which nourishes their *cupido* (3.59) for wealth that will do nothing but lead them further away from ἀταραξία. It is these that Lucretius encourages his addressee to look down on from the 'sanctuaries of the wise' (*sapientum templa*, 2.8) as they rush around in their Sisyphean task

(3.995-1002) having not climbed the path of enlightenment.²⁵⁸ Gallus will become like this too: ignorant of the *rerum natura* of Propertius' elegiac world, the path of enlightenment will bring him to see nothing but the subject of his desire whom he will be terrified to lose. With his own toil forever unfulfilled (*exclusum quid sit abire domo*, 1.5.20), Gallus, like Sisyphus – or Tityos – will be as good as dead, but never at peace.²⁵⁹ There may be no explicit *mors* in this poem either for Propertius or his addressee, but *pallor* (1.5.21) is a condition suffered both by lovers and corpses, and Propertius' description of himself as 'nothing in the whole body' is certainly apt (*toto corpore nullus ego*, 22).²⁶⁰ Ponticus, it may be noted, is also described in this way (*dicere quo pereas saepe in amore leuat*, 1.9.34) – where he is not even yet pale (*necdum etiam palles*, 1.9.17) – while Gallus' deadly lovesickness informs the advice he later receives too (*tu uero quoniam semel es periturus amore, | utere*, 1.13.33-4).

This Lucretian parallel may also help to explain the puzzling substance of the couplet briefly discussed earlier:

nec tibi nobilitas poterit succurrere amanti:
nescit Amor priscis cedere imaginibus.

1.5.23-4

This couplet is woven into the didactic narrative arising from the hypothetical situation drawn by Propertius, and linguistically connected (*nec ... nec*, 1.5.21, 23) with the preceding couplet outlining Propertius' complete amatory morbidity. As such, while it alone raises problems of identification with C. Cornelius Gallus on historical grounds, it does not lend itself to analysis detached from its immediate context, which continues to echo Lucretius' diatribe concerning the inevitability of death. It may be said that the personages Lucretius lists (3.1024-44) – Ancus, Xerxes, Scipio, Homer, Democritus, and Epicurus – are all *nobiles* according to its etymology from *noscere*, even if only one is *nobilis* in the technical sense of the word.²⁶¹ True, neither *nobilitas* nor its cognates occur in that passage, but Lucretius uses the word only twice,

²⁵⁸ Cf. Fowler (2000) 215-16 on the similarity between Lucr. 2.9-13 and 3.59-64, and its relationship to the myth of Sisyphus at 3.998-1002.

²⁵⁹ On Sisyphus and Tityos, see n.195.

²⁶⁰ Cf., e.g., 1.1.25; 1.4.11-12; 1.6.27-8; 1.9.17.

²⁶¹ Scipio's father was consul in 218 BC. See also n.206.

both early in *DRN* 2 (11, 38), and then specifically to decry the angst-driven actions of the unenlightened. So in urging his addressee to follow these *nobiles* into death with calm, Lucretius is also urging him to give up striving for *nobilitas*: the only renown worth fighting for is that of Epicurus, and he did so by breaking through the anxious dreams of *religio* with ἀταραξία. Propertius, meanwhile, has no such *nobilitas* to look to: his *Amor* follows a unique path (1.1.17-18) and leaves him in a dual *furor* of love and composition (1.1.7), blocking him from striving for the *nobilitas* that Lucretius deplors. The same fate awaits his addressee.

As for *imaginibus*, which have been taken to refer to the wax-portrait masks displayed in the familial shrines of the *nobiles*,²⁶² Lucretius continues to be a useful background. Using *simulacrum* and *imago* interchangeably,²⁶³ he proposes that mythological beasts and the dead exist in our imagination because ‘images of all sorts are carried about everywhere’ (*omnigenus quoniam passim simulacra feruntur*, 4.735) and ‘any one delicate image easily acts upon our mind with a single touch’ (*facile uno commouet ictu | quae libet una animum nobis subtilis imago*, 4.744-5). An Epicurean, then, will know that the famous dead listed are now nothing more than *priscae imagines*; Propertius’ *Amor* will not yield to such ancestors either. An artistic point may even be raised here too. As discussed in the next chapter, Propertius plays upon the relationship between sight and imagination to suggest himself a figment of the latter and to associate the former with composition.²⁶⁴ By writing Gallus into his world in 1.5, Propertius is also overriding the versified poetic imagination of his addressee with that of his own: his *Amor* will not yield to the elegiac reality thought up by this predecessor.²⁶⁵

In sum, then, it is possible to analyse the relationship between this couplet and the broader address without recourse to Gallus’ lost works – even if our understanding would be deepened by their presence. Lucretian diatribe appears transposed into the elegist’s own instruction, substantiating the connection between love and death frequently espoused throughout the collection and harmonising with the suggestion that Propertius is rewriting the elegiac life of

²⁶² Camps (1961) and Richardson (1977) *ad loc.*

²⁶³ Most notably at 2.112 (*simulacrum et imago*), for which Fowler (2002) *ad loc.* ‘it is hard to see any difference between the terms here’. See Bailey (1947) *ad* 4.30, noting also *effigies* and *figura*.

²⁶⁴ For *imagines* as φαντασίαι, see, e.g., Quint. *Inst.* 10.7.15 and chapter 3, 108-10. Cf. *Lucretius* 4.749-51 on the comparability of sight and imagination.

²⁶⁵ Cairns (2006, 79-81 and 202), attributes the verse-ending pentasyllable *imaginibus* to Gallan influence.

another. And unlike Lucretius, Propertius offers no consolation to the subject of instruction as the poem progresses. Having vividly described the *graue seruitium* his addressee will suffer (1.5.19), he adds that his own ability to help will be minimal:

quod si parua tuae dederis uestigia culpae,
 quam cito de tanto nomine rumor eris!
non ego tum potero solacia ferre roganti,
 cum mihi nulla mei sit medicina mali;
sed pariter miseri socio cogemur amore,
 alter in alterius mutua flere sinu.

1.5.25-30

Propertius returns to the metaphor of the path (*parua ... uestigia*, 25) and now expresses it in terms of revelation, which helps to show that though Gallus treads it conditionally (*quod si*, 25), he also comes to tread it for certain. The precise meaning of *culpa* is unclear, but whether it is ‘passion’, ‘irregularities’, or ‘affair’ – the possibilities suggested by Camps²⁶⁶ – it originates from the same desire that Gallus has already shown and to which Propertius forcefully responds with this poem. Again, then, Propertius is drawing the future (*dederis ... | ... eris*, 25-6) into the present, and he does so still further by making the fulfilment of the conditional dependent on revelation, and so, and by playing a joke: his poem reveals the *culpa* which he urges Gallus to keep to himself, in no time at all (*quam cito*, 26) leaving small traces (25) for all to see with the poetic feet of his dainty elegy. The warning thus primes Gallus to fall into disrepute and become a *rumor* – at least when the name hinted at by *tanto nomine* (26) is finally revealed (31). But it may also be added that the name which first appears is actually *Cynthia* (31), and that *de* can have a causal sense:²⁶⁷ one can become a *rumor* ‘because of *tantum nomen*.²⁶⁸ In

²⁶⁶ Camps (1961) *ad* 1.5.25. Although he struggles to find evidence for *culpa* meaning a ‘man’s passion’, Fedeli (1980, *ad loc.*) cites Tac. *Ann.* 3.24 where *culpa* is applied equally to both sexes.

²⁶⁷ See *OLD* s.v. 14 and *TLL* s.v. III; see also Apul. *Met.* 8.8 (*Thrasyllus, praeceps alioquin et de ipso nomine temerarius*) and Luraghi (2005, 614; 2010, 65).

²⁶⁸ Cf. Iacob (1827) 134 *ad* 1.5.26: *magnum nomen* propter amorem Cynthiae, non propter aliam aliquam gloriam interpretor fuisse; nunc rumor est quia exclusus.

Propertius' poetry, after all, it is her name that stands out, her name that is to be known²⁶⁹ – and just as she makes Propertius a *rumor* by giving her name to his verse, so she makes Gallus a *rumor* by including his name in her own.

It is no surprise, then, that Propertius tells his addressee that he will be unable to soothe him when he needs it (*solacia ferre*, 27). Not only does he have no *medicina* for his own *malum*, but he implicates him in the very relationship of which he warns him to steer clear. At this point it may be instructive to turn to Lucretius for his use of *solacium*, which appears only four times, but which is nonetheless fundamentally representative of his didactic project. The first instance concerns Epicurus, who first discovered the *ratio* now called *sapientia* (5.9-10):

at bene non poterat sine puro pectore uiui;
quo magis hic merito nobis deus esse uidetur,
ex quo nunc etiam per magnas didita gentis
dulcia permulcent animos solacia uitae.

Lucr. 5.18-21

The second, Lucretius:

qua prius adgrediar quam de re fundere fata
sanctius et multo certa ratione magis quam
Pythia quae tripode a Phoebi lauroque profatur,
multa tibi expediam doctis solacia dictis;

Lucr. 5.110-13

The third, the origins of song:

²⁶⁹ Propertius, however, denies Cynthia *nobilitas* because of her infidelity (1.15.23-4; though see Lucil. fr. 7.263 Marx and V. Max. 4.3 ext.3a for a Phryne who is *nobilis* for the opposite reason), and later rules out *nobilitas* for himself, too (2.24b.38).

et uigilantibus hinc aderant solacia somno
ducere multimodis uoces et flectere cantus
et supera calamos unco percurrere labro;

Lucr. 5.1405-7

The fourth, Epicurus again:

Primae frugiparos fetus mortalibus aegris
dididerunt quondam praeclaro nomine Athenae
et recreauerunt uitam legesque rogarunt
et primae dederunt solacia dulcia uitae,
cum genuere uirum tali cum corde repertum,

Lucr. 6.1-5

Within book 5 and the opening lines of book 6, Lucretius qualifies *solacium* as both Epicurean knowledge, without which ἀταραξία is not possible, and song, which combines it with the natural seductiveness of poetry to impart the sage's precepts upon the listener. It is, therefore, fitting for Lucretius to term his teaching *solacia* (5.113). Not only does Lucretius stress that the didactic authority for his 'learned utterances' (*doctis ... dictis*, 5.113) comes from neither Pythia nor Apollo – since his Epicurean source endows them with 'much more precise reasoning' (*multo certa ratione magis*, 5.111) – but he also suggests that song without such content is almost an equivalent – if not a substitute – for sleep (*solacia somno*, 5.1405), a state of mind which is loaded with connotations of ignorance and inability to live a peaceful life, and something which would have been experienced by all before Epicurus' birth (6.4). This idea of *solacium* as knowledgeable song recalls the memorable image of the poetry of the *DRN* as honey on the rim of a cup of medicine (1.936-50; 4.11-25): while the irrationality of poetry's captivating power stands at odds with the hard empirical logic of Epicurean philosophy, Lucretius' self-conscious emphasis on the effectiveness of the former at imparting the truth of the latter pre-empts accusations of hypocrisy from the reader and provides the kind of introspection into his own teaching process that he offers for the *rerum natura* as a whole. Lucretius' *solacium* is an extension of this metaphor, offering a blend of the scientific and seductive to produce a remedying effect upon the listener which quells his inner perturbation.

For Lucretius, Epicurus' *solacia* are *dulcia* already (5.21, 6.4) – his poetry will make them sweet for others.

In 1.5, Propertius' poetry offers no such remedy. Instead, Propertius draws a world that is rent by anxiety, where life appears hardly different from death, and where ignorance triumphs knowledge. It is closer to the world of the Athenians at the time of the plague, who stood no chance of curing themselves (mentally or physically) of its effects:

nec requies erat ulla mali: defessa iacebant
corpora, mussabat tacito medicina timore,
quippe patentia cum totiens ardentia morbis
lumina uersarent oculorum expertia somno.

Lucr. 6.1178-81

It is not, however, simply that Propertius turns Lucretius' healing power of poetry on its head and nullifies the role of the knowledgeable poet in providing *solacia* to the addressee. Lucretius suggests that his poem is itself a representation of the *rerum natura*, whose constituent elements (letters and words) resemble those that make up the universe (atoms), and whose *simulacra* can therefore impart themselves upon the mind's eye of the listener in a way no different to that of the world itself.²⁷⁰ Given that it is faulty interpretation of observations rather than observations themselves that give people a faulty understanding of the world (4.464-8), the *DRN* functions equally as a producer of *simulacra* and their interpreter. The poem, in short, becomes the prism through which the reader views the world. As far as Propertius is concerned, his poetry and life experience are inseparable further still: where the content of Lucretius' poetry constitutes philosophical doctrine, for Propertius it is a living *puella*, who is the subject, inspiration, source of knowledge, and addressee; for him, moreover, poetry is as much the means by which to represent the world as it is to live in it and change it (as Ponticus is urged to do by writing poetry to win over his beloved in 1.9).²⁷¹ So, while for Lucretius poetry is a means by which to change his reader's conception of the world, for Propertius it essentially becomes the world

²⁷⁰ See Thury (1987) and Schiesaro (1994, 87-8), though *contra* Markovic (2008, 122) who argues that 'his language is not meant to encode but to clarify the world'.

²⁷¹ See Stroh (1971) on *werbende Dichtung*.

itself, whose fundamentally written nature breaks down the need for the reason and regularity that constitute the true workings of Lucretius' universe. Lucretius hopes to build a world of ἀταραξία, where one lives in peace following indoctrination through the *DRN*; in Propertius' world, escape from amatory *furor* is contingent on submission to its amatory counterpart.

It is through this interplay of life and poetry that Propertius also explores the idea of retribution. For Lucretius, the work is the means by which to fight the dark designs of the *uates*, who use *religio* to keep a stranglehold over the ignorant and to terrify them with tales of divine punishment. While the poet is at times playfully scolding in his instruction,²⁷² the proem sets a scene of serenity where Venus – described as the only hope for peace among mortals (*tu sola potes tranquilla pace iuuare | mortalis*, Lucr. 1.31-2) – is invoked as an 'ally' (*te sociam studeo scribendis uersibus esse*, 1.24) for the education of 'our Memmius' (*Memmiadae nostro*, 1.26) whose success has come as a result of the goddess' favour (1.27).²⁷³ Equally, the same word links Venus' sweet coaxing of Mars (*suauis ex ore loquellas | funde*, 1.39-40), Lucretius' description of his friendship with Memmius (*tua ... uirtus ... et sperata uoluptas | suauis amicitiae ... | suadet*, 1.140-2),²⁷⁴ and Lucretius' poetry (*incussit [sc. laudis spes] suauem mi in pectus amorem | Musarum*, 1.924-5; *uolui tibi suauiloquenti | carmine Pierio rationem exponere nostram*, 1.945-6; 4.20-1) – and these final two instances also frame the simile of the honeyed cup. In sum, the poet's honeyed *solacia* are paralleled through the language of warm and harmonious friendship which provides the reason for the addressee's instruction; the Venus who watches over Lucretius' poetic instruction to Memmius is quite unlike the desperate love felt by those described at the end of *DRN* 4.

But no such sweetness is available to Propertius or his addressee, who is called *insane* and *infelix* from the start and is primed to become so over the course of the poem. The addressee's keenness, so valued and encouraged by Lucretius (e.g. 1.402-3), in Propertius becomes a rivalrous action paradoxically punishable by the realisation of his desires, as he hints in the final couplet:

²⁷² See, e.g., Lucr. 1.980-3.

²⁷³ See Gale (1994, 137), who notices the etymological pun on the name Epicurus and the Greek word for 'ally', ἐπίκουρος.

²⁷⁴ For the play *suauis ... | suadet*, see Snyder (1980) 86.

quare, quid possit mea Cynthia, desine, Galle,
quaerere: non impune illa rogata uenit.

1.5.31-2

The final word brings us back to the present tense. The couplet is a generalisation, to be sure, but the shift in tense underlines the actualisation of the warning in this elegiac world. After all, the very opening of 1.5 assumes that Cynthia has been *rogata*; and once she is, she comes *non impune*. There are, then, two reasons why Gallus would stop asking what Propertius' Cynthia can do: firstly, because Gallus does not want the future that a relationship with her will bring; secondly, because Gallus can now see what power Cynthia has – Propertius' warning has come in the elegiac collection that bears her name. So the warning comes too late; and while Lucretius is frank about the way the honey of his poetry and the bitter medicine of its didactic content affect his addressee, Propertius leaves it up to Gallus to see that being warned about drinking Thessalian poisons (1.5.6) means taking them, too.

Thus, while Lucretius builds from his stated respect for Memmius to provide him with a path to enlightenment and uses Venus as an ally in this endeavour, love in 1.5 becomes a cause for rivalry and underhand punishment. Warning Gallus away from danger, Propertius appears to be acting as a friend:²⁷⁵ he will even be his comrade in amatory sorrow (1.5.29-30). Yet even here, affection for Gallus is undermined: the infinitive with which Propertius describes their sorry states as much implies weeping as elegiac composition ([*sc. cogemur*] *alter in alterius mutua flere sinu*, 1.5.30),²⁷⁶ meaning that Propertius hints – but pointedly does not reveal – the means by which a cure can be sought. And if Lucretius' instruction provides room for the addressee to live a peaceful life beyond the scope of the poem, Propertius' does not – for just as Gallus is roped further into the life of love he seeks as he is instructed to avoid it, so his means of escape can only constitute further engagement with the poetry one's love for Cynthia inspires. Far from seeing the world clearly through the filter of an enlightening poem, he will be stuck expressing his love through the poetic confines of an elegiac world, written for him by

²⁷⁵ Cf. *amice* at 1.10.14, 1.13.18.

²⁷⁶ An association ironised by Propertius at 1.9.10 when asking Ponticus why he is 'bewailing the walls of Amphion's lyre' rather than composing elegy for his mistress. Cf. *Ov. Her.* 15.7 (*flendus amor meus est – elegi elegi sunt flebile carmen*); for the reading of *elegi sunt* instead of *elegi* transmitted in many *MSS*, see Watt (1995) 92, who follows Baehrens.

another poet who cannot cure himself with his own remedy. The adventure Propertius has written for his addressee has, therefore, only just begun.

iv. 1.10

With Ponticus' fate as a guide, one might expect Gallus' next appearance in Propertius' verse to be marred by misfortune; yet in 1.10, both he and Propertius are unusually merry. While his name is again withheld at first, it is at least now revealed by line 5 – but before it is, as scholars have noted,²⁷⁷ traces of Lucretius appear again:

O iucunda quies primo cum testis amori
adfueram uestris conscius in lacrimis!
o noctem meminisse mihi iucunda uoluptas,
o quotiens uotis illa uocanda meis,
cum te complexa morientem, Galle, puella
uidimus et longa ducere uerba mora.

1.10.1-6

Compare the opening of *DRN2*:

Suaue, mari magno turbantibus aequora uentis
e terra magnum alterius spectare laborem;
non quia uexari quemquam est iucunda uoluptas,
sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suaue est.

Lucretius 2.1-4

Lucretius stands on the shore, watching the tribulations of unfortunate sailors at sea. It is pleasant not to be them, he muses sardonically – but it can get better still.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ See n. 240.

²⁷⁸ For Lucretius' satirical tone in the proem to *DRN2*, see Dudley (1965), Sosin (1999), and Gellar-Goad (2012, 90-3, 155-7; 2018, 52-4).

sed nihil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
 edita doctrina sapientum templa serena,
 despiciere unde queas alios passimque uidere
 errare atque uiam palantis quaerere uitae, 10
 certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
 noctes atque dies niti praestante labore
 ad summas emergere opes rerumque potiri.
 o miseras hominum mentes, o pectora caeca!

Lucret. 2.7-14

These lines that follow constitute a playful play on perspective. At first (1-4), Lucretius collapses the distinction between teacher and student. The latter can imagine himself standing beside Lucretius, seeing what he narrates; and while he can disagree about the extent to which it is *suaue* to watch another's misery, there is little to make him feel that Lucretius has his misery in mind – unless, perhaps, he is reading the *DRN* at sea. In these lines (7-14) that follow, however, the distance between the two begins to increase: even if he can briefly imagine himself in Lucretius' company, he soon realises that such a space is reserved for him only if he keeps reading the poem he has barely begun. Thus, the teacher rises above the student, who is left to decide who he wants to be: one of the ignorant *alii* or Lucretius' companion in serenity: the sweet verse (1.924-5; 1.945-6; 4.20-1) begotten from sweet friendship (1.140-2) can lead to even sweeter contemplation (*suaue ... suaue est. | suaue etiam ... dulcius*, 2.1-7). The poet, then, both recognises his student's achievements so far and teases him about his still-unesaped ignorance – and this flexible relationship, it may be said, somewhat echoes his use of first-person plurals elsewhere to construct himself at times as close to, or distant from, the addressee.²⁷⁹

For his part, Propertius does not appear to be standing on any shore; it has even been proposed that he is attached to Gallus' groin (*testis*, 1).²⁸⁰ But whatever one makes of such a pun, the opening lines of *DRN 2* remain informative for understanding Propertius' relationship with his addressee. No time is given for Gallus to see himself side-by-side with the poet: only

²⁷⁹ See Taylor (2020).

²⁸⁰ Pincus (2004) 174.

Propertius experiences *iucunda quies* (1), as if already watching over from his own *templa serena*; meanwhile, the subject of his voyeurism is in tears along with his beloved (*uestris ... lacrimis*, 2). While Propertius' happiness may suggest that these tears are ones of joy,²⁸¹ he has toyed with expectations in 1.5, and the Lucretian intertext complicates such a reading. Against it, Gallus more obviously becomes one of the *miseri*, buffeted by storms of passion and working away his night in pursuit of a silly goal:²⁸² he is, after all, dying (*te ... morientem*, 1.10.5) and struggling to speak (*longa ducere uerba mora*, 6), experiencing some of the symptoms Propertius had outlined in their first encounter. Propertius even inverts this Lucretian intertext by also moving from exclusivity to inclusivity, shifting from a concrete singular (*adfueram ... mihi ... meis*, 2-4) to a more ambiguous plural (*uidimus*, 6); and even if it now encompasses Gallus as the reader of his own affair, he ends up by Propertius' side only to become a witness to his own troubles. The tone at the beginning of 1.10 is therefore far from straightforward, suggestive of underhand play itself reminiscent of 1.5. As in that poem, moreover, Propertius plots Gallus on the path to elegiac enlightenment by echoing, and adapting, a Lucretian intertext – and while he thereby both anticipates the instruction to come (1.10.11-30) and draws a narrative continuity to that which came before, the path also appears to lead Gallus once more to endless romantic frustration.

Propertius also inverts his Lucretian intertext by stressing the night-time setting of his *uoluptas*. Along with (wakeful) sleep, Lucretius turns to darkness (and by extension, night) as metaphors for ignorance: in the passage cited above, Lucretius alludes to the life of misery dreamed by the ignorant (*noctes atque dies*, *Lucretius* 2.12), and contrasts his own ability to see (*spectare*, 2.2; *cernere*, 2.4; *despicere ... uidere*, 2.9) with their blindness (*pectora caeca*, 2.14). This motif recurs when Lucretius bewails the life they live in the shadows:

²⁸¹ So Fedeli (1980) *ad loc.*

²⁸² Cf. 2.12.5-8. If Propertius is to be understood as reading Gallan verse (see below), a tacit identification with sailors seems all the more apt.

qualibus in tenebris uitae quantisque periclis
degitur hoc aevi quodcumque est! nonne uidere
nil aliud sibi naturam latrare, nisi utqui
corpore seiunctus dolor absit, mensque fruatur
iucundo sensu cura semota metuque?

Lucr. 2.15-19

Likewise, if we see corporeal desires as ridiculous (*quod si ridicula haec ludibriaque esse uidemus*, 2.47) we can break free from the darkness that encompasses life:

quid dubitas quin omni' sit haec rationi' potestas,
omnis cum in tenebris praesertim uita laboret?
nam ueluti pueri trepidant atque omnia caecis 55
in tenebris metuunt, sic nos in luce timemus
interdum nilo quae sunt metuenda magis quam
quae pueri in tenebris pauitant finguntque futura.
hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necesse est
non radii solis neque lucida tela diei 60
discutiant, sed naturae species ratioque.

Lucr. 2.53-61

The poem in *DRN2* thus concludes with another metaphor of light and darkness (repeated at 3.87-93) and so looks back to the start of the *DRN* itself. There, Lucretius says that the 'hoped-for pleasure of sweet friendship' (1.140-1) persuades him to carry out his work (*efferre laborem*, 1.141; cf. *labore*, 2.12; *laboret*, 2.54) even during the night (*inducit noctes uigilare serenas*, 1.142; cf. *serena*, 2.8): he seeks to 'reveal shining lights for [Memmius'] mind' (*clara tuae ... praepandere lumina menti*, 1.143-4) because he himself follows the sage who 'first desired to break through the narrow confines of the gates of nature' (*effringere ut arta | naturae primus portarum claustra cupiret*, 1.70-1) and 'advanced far beyond the flaming walls of the world' (*extra | processit longe flammantia moenia mundi*, 1.72-3). Though Lucretius carries out his work during the night, he is not in the dark: as a follower of Epicurus, whose own mental toil gave him a clear image of the *rerum natura*, his poem is an opportunity to hand

down that torch of knowledge to Memmius – and for its *naturae species ratioque* to illuminate his view of the world. The ignorant, meanwhile, will remain blind even during daytime (*sic nos in luce timemus*, 2.56),²⁸³ making up terrors for themselves while trapped in the shadows (*tenebris*, 2.54, 2.56, 2.58; *tenebrasque*, 2.59). Like children, they need to be shown that darkness is not to be feared because it does not exist, and to be brought into light by a helping of doctrinal medicine infused with the honey of Lucretius’ verse.

Propertius, however, leaves us in the dark as to whether he is in the light:

quamuis labentes premeret mihi somnus ocellos
 et mediis caelo luna ruberet equis,
 non tamen a uestro potui secedere lusu:
 tantus in alternis uocibus ardor erat.

1.10.7-10

The setting’s ambivalence mirrors that of the tone: the moon is reddening, making the scene neither wholly dark nor light; and its colour is a harbinger of storms to come,²⁸⁴ thereby recalling the nautical turmoil of *DRN2* yet again. Meanwhile Propertius, who fights back from sleep while watching Gallus, edges towards being like the unenlightened that Lucretius considers to be trapped in wakeful sleep – not that Lucretius would consider this lover to be awake anyway. And as for Gallus’ amorous ‘play’ with his beloved (*Iusu*, 9), another Lucretian intertext appears instructive:

eximia ueste et uictu conuiuia, ludi,
 pocula crebra, unguenta, coronae,serta parantur,
 ne quiquam, quoniam medio de fonte leporum
 surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipsis floribus angat,
 aut cum conscius ipse animus se forte remordet
 desidiose agere aetatem lustrisque perire,
 aut quod in ambiguo uerbum iaculata reliquit,

1135

²⁸³ On the inclusivity of *timemus*, see Taylor (2020) 69.

²⁸⁴ Fedeli (1980, *ad loc.*) cites Theophrastus *Sign. Temp.* 27; Verg. *G.* 1.430-1; and Valerius Flaccus 2.55-7.

quod cupido adfixum cordi uiuescit ut ignis,
aut nimium iactare oculos aliumue tueri
quod putat in uoltuque uidet uestigia risus.

Lucr. 4.1131-40

Propertius does not say whether he is watching Gallus at a banquet, but the night-time setting and voyeurism is certainly suggestive: at such events, entertainment for all (*ludi*, 4.1131) can eventually give way to more private enjoyment (*uestro ... lusu*, 1.10.9). For Lucretius, however, such games do not always lead to a happy ending: these *ludi* are *ludibrii* (cf. 2.47); and viewed against this intertext, the joy of 1.10 is complicated still further. One's flames of passion (*ignis*, 4.1138; *ardor*, 1.10.10) may be fanned as much by romantic reciprocity as by jealousy. Can one trust the words of a beloved (*in ambiguo uerbum ... reliquit*, 4.1137; cf. *in alternis uocibus*, 1.10.10)?²⁸⁵ What if her desirous eyes strike those of another (*oculos*, 4.1139; cf. *ocellos* 1.10.7)? Perhaps one realises that one's love is not all it is made out to be (*consciis*, 4.1135; cf. *consciis*, 1.10.2). What if one realises it is a waste of time (*desidiose agere aetatem*, 4.1136; cf. *longa ... mora*, 1.10.6)? Can one trust that this happiness in love is shared (*risus*, 4.1140; cf. *uoluptas*, 1.10.3)? Are these tears of joy (*uestris ... lacrimis*, 1.10.2) or a sign of the bitterness to come (*medio de fonte leporum | surgit amari aliquid*, 4.1133-4; cf. *at lacrimans exclusus amator*, 4.1177)?²⁸⁶

The ambivalence of 1.10 is developed on another level still: Propertius may be party not to an affair but to a poetic rendition of one. As Sharrock has argued, *alternis uocibus* recalls the elegiac couplet,²⁸⁷ while the couple's tears (*uestris ... lacrimis*, 1.10.2) recall the genre's associations with lament; a *lusus*, meanwhile, may also be suggestive of poetic play.²⁸⁸ At any rate, the Lucretian intertext remains inverted: while Lucretius spends his quiet nights composing (1.142), Propertius would spend his quiet nights watching and reading (1.10.1).

²⁸⁵ See *OLD* s.v. 6 for *alternus* in the sense of 'ambivalent'; but *alternis ... uocibus* is more importantly a marker of elegiac composition (see *OLD* s.v. 1c, and below).

²⁸⁶ Cf. 4.1179 where the *exclusus amator* anoints his beloved's doorposts with 'the oil of marjoram' (*amaracino*); see also Snyder (1980) 64-6, 103, and 114 for Lucretius' plays on *amare*, *amarus*, and *amaracinum* (though for the latter, she cites only 6.970-5).

²⁸⁷ Sharrock (1990).

²⁸⁸ Cf. Catull. 50.1-2; see also *OLD* s.v. 8b.

But Propertius, of course, keeps writing too – and by characterising the triangle of himself, Gallus, and his *puella* in poetic terms, Propertius also looks back to the formative role played by his words in 1.5. This is instructive for what follows:

sed quoniam non es ueritus concredere nobis
accipe commissae munera laetitiae:
non solum uestros didici recitare calores;
est quiddam in nobis maius, amice, fide.

11 concredere c] concedere Ω

13 recitare Heyworth] reticere Ω | calores Dousa] dolores Ω

1.10.11-14

Gallus has entrusted (*concredere*, 11; *commissae*, 12) Propertius with his (poetic) amatory experience, and our poet now repays the favour (*accipe ... munera*, 12). Yet, '[i]ronically, the only way an experience can be returned is in a graphic description, and this the Propertian poetry of 1.10 provides'; *fides* can have financial connotations, and Propertius looks to 'return the principal with interest'.²⁸⁹ So, Propertius gives up Gallus' secret just as he did his *culpa* before (1.5.25), while the first-person plural adds to the joke: if referring to *Cynthia* (named at 19), it points to her poetic role in the betrayal; if referring to the audience, it makes Gallus' secret public knowledge. Propertius, in sum, is again not the friend Gallus thinks him to be (*amice*, 14), and his *fides* is quite unlike that of Lucretius:

quod super est, uacuas auris animumque sagacem
semotum a curis adhibe ueram ad rationem,
ne mea dona tibi studio disposta fideli,
intellecta prius quam sint, contempta relinuas.

Lucret. 1.50-4

Lucretius' poem is an extension of his friendship with Memmius: its books are 'gifts arranged with trustworthy zeal' (*dona... studio disposta fideli*, Lucret. 1.53). Any difficulty in applying carefree mental faculties (1.50-1) towards 'true reasoning' (*ueram ad rationem*, 1.51) will be

²⁸⁹ Heyworth (1984) 399.

smoothed by the honeyed nature of Lucretius' verse. Gallus, meanwhile, is not carefree nor encouraged to be so. To Propertius' joy, he is dying in love (1.10.5): his mind is hardly *sagax* (cf. *longa ducere uerba mora*, 1.10.6) and his ears are not *uacua* (cf. *Lucretius* 1.50) but filled with passionate words (cf. *tantus in alternis uocibus ardor erat*, 1.10.10).²⁹⁰ So as Propertius returns to his guise of *praeceptor*, he accordingly revels in leading his addressee not to serenity but to the sort of reciprocal *ardor* he witnessed:

possum ego diuersos iterum coniungere amantes,
 et dominae surdas possum aperire fores,
 et possum alterius curas sanare recentes:
 nec leuis in uerbis est medicina meis.
 Cynthia me docuit semper quaecumque petenda
 quaeque cauenda forent: non nihil egit Amor.

16 surdas *Heinsius*] tardas Ω

1.10.15-20

These lines appear to contradict Propertius' earlier claim. Weight might be given to that seemingly throwaway personal pronoun (*cum mihi nulla mei sit medicina mali*, 1.5.28): Propertius does not say that he has *medicina* for the *mala* of another. But this follows a claim to be unable *solacia ferre roganti* – and since *solacia* and *medicina* are no distant cousins,²⁹¹ Propertius has in mind a recipient of a cure other than himself. Confronted with this stark contradiction in Propertius' abilities, the answer may well lie in the poems between 1.5 and 1.10: he has now taught Ponticus (1.7, 1.9) and showed that his elegiac cure works wonders on himself too (1.8a/b); perhaps that confidence now spills over into this poem, reaffirming the strength of readings which emphasise the sequence of poems in Propertius' collection.

Having thus turned a corner, Propertius nevertheless continues to go against his friend's wishes after twice revealing what should have been kept hidden (*culpa*, 1.5.25; *munera*, 1.10.12). By suggesting that his part in Gallus' affair is bigger (*maius*, 14) than simply being witness to it, Propertius encourages us to take lines 15-20 as the 'interest' Propertius pays for the 'credit'

²⁹⁰ Though only for so long with this *puella*, for Gallus is a 'serial philanderer' (Lyne 1980, 112; see discussion below).

²⁹¹ Cf. *Ov. Tr.* 4.10.117-18: *nam tu [sc. Musa] solacia praebes, | tu curae requies, tu medicina uenis.*

Gallus has given to him (*fide*, 14) – and there is no reason it should be paid in instalments. Propertius’ abilities in these lines seem to match the reciprocal amatory *Iusus* he had written of earlier; so having turned his warning into a means for writing Gallus into a new elegiac reality in 1.5, his *medicina* here may be none other than the poetic *munera* he asks Gallus to accept, revealing his secret and (re-) writing it for him, too. He may have been unable to alleviate the pains of one who asked for help earlier, but now he offers a cure unprompted. And despite this about-turn, the direction for Gallus remains unchanged – to be carried to love by Propertius’ verse.

As before, moreover, the propellant constitutes versified instruction. Propertius quite literally establishes a close relationship between teaching and poetry (*non solum uestros didici recitare calores*, 13), while the basis of his didactic credentials is made out to be a combination of Cynthia and *Amor* (*Cynthia me docuit ... | ... non nihil egit Amor*, 19-20), recalling their roles and sequence described at the start of the collection (*Cynthia prima ... | tum ... Amor ... me docuit* 1.1-5). But while these may have brought Propertius to write his verse and teach from it too, the knowledge he has gained from the pairing is also presented as experience; and while this points to the blurring of life and verse already discussed, it also recalls the Aristotelian debate about art (τέχνη) and experience (ἐμπειρία).²⁹² Aristotle considered the former, not the latter, to be scientific knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) because ‘artists can teach, but those with experience cannot’ (δύνανται γάρ, οἱ δὲ οὐ δύνανται διδάσκειν, *Metaph.* 1.981b): the artists ‘know the cause but the others do not; those with experience know the fact but not the “why”, while the artists know the “why” and the cause’ (οἱ μὲν τὴν αἰτίαν ἴσασι, οἱ δ’ οὐ. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἔμπειροι τὸ ὅτι μὲν ἴσασι, διότι δ’ οὐκ ἴσασι· οἱ δὲ τὸ διότι καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν γνωρίζουσι, *Metaph.* 1.981a). τέχνη, however, arises from ἐμπειρία, and Aristotle uses the example of a doctor’s work to draw out the connection, and difference, between the two terms (*Metaph.* 1.981a).

As concerns Propertius, his own *medicina* stems from poetic τέχνη presented as amatory ἐμπειρία. He may know the αἴτια of his predicament, but he does not seem to know the αἴτια of his success. Having been taught by Cynthia, it is as if he is an ‘artisan’ taught by a

²⁹² Cf. Fowler (2000) 208 and n.10.

‘master craftsman’: he successfully carries out his work without necessarily knowing why he is successful (διὸ καὶ τοὺς ἀρχιτέκτονας περὶ ἕκαστον τιμιωτέρους καὶ μᾶλλον εἰδέναι νομίζομεν τῶν χειροτεχνῶν καὶ σοφωτέρους, ὅτι τὰς αἰτίας τῶν ποιουμένων ἴσασιν, *Metaph.* 1.981a-b). Lucretius, for instance, knows both the theory and the practice, following one who does too: his addressee can rest assured that the poetic *medicina* he imbibes comes from a trusted source. But Propertius knows only the particulars, not the universals (ἢ μὲν ἐμπειρία τῶν καθ’ ἕκαστόν ἐστι γνῶσις, ἢ δὲ τέχνη τῶν καθόλου, *Metaph.* 1.981a) – and even derives his knowledge from a teacher he writes for himself. So, though Gallus has here progressed from a tormented, to a pleasant, affair, and while Propertius can now, unlike before, provide *medicina*, this narrative development is still contextualised within a recursive ignorance which undermines both the harmony of Gallus’ love and the durability of Propertius’ remedy.

Didactic authority therefore becomes but a means to further poetic authority: Propertius controls Gallus’ success; he also controls his failure. And if Gallus continues down the amatory path prescribed to him by Propertius’ verse, then his amatory characterisation also brings him full circle. Lyne likewise sees 1.5 as important context for 1.10: for him, Gallus’ interest in Cynthia and another *puella* here makes him a ‘casual philanderer’, who ‘has now at last fallen *really* in love ... [and] has his own troubles’.²⁹³ Propertius’ teaching, meanwhile, becomes an extension of ‘a rival’s come-uppance ... relishing the position of superiority in power and knowledge that he can reasonably claim.’ Yet while he elevates the ‘power and influence’ of his teaching to a ‘hyperbolic, magical, even divine level ... it all boils down to the knowledge of the laws of *seruitium*’:²⁹⁴

²⁹³ Lyne (1980) 112-13. Emphasis his own.

²⁹⁴ Lyne (1980) 113.

tu caue ne tristi cupias pugnare puellae
neue superba loqui neue tacere diu,
neu si quid petiit, ingrata fronte negaris,
neu tibi pro uano uerba benigna cadant.

irritata uenit quando contemnitur illa,
nec meminit iustas ponere laesa minas;
at quo sis humilis magis et subiectus Amori,
hoc magis effectu saepe fruare bono.
is poterit felix una remanere puella
qui numquam uacuo pectore liber erit.

25

28 effectu ε] effecto Ω

1.10.21-30

As generic as these instructions may be, the crucial ingredient is left unmentioned: *loqui* (22) is both negated and a notable step down from *canere*,²⁹⁵ especially so after it appeared in the previous poem (*et cane quod quaeuis nosse puella uelit*, 1.9.14). Thus, while Propertius' medicinal *volte-face* may be grounded in the success and instruction of previous poems, Gallus would do well to follow his advice now with caution – not that he will follow it at all. Contrary to what Propertius preaches, Gallus' interests extend to more than a single *puella*: he likes his amatory freedom (*liber*, 30) and, therefore, will not be *felix* (29) for long. After all, having earlier shown interest in Cynthia – and been drawn into a relationship with her through the eponymous text – Gallus' philandering risks leaving her *irritata* and *laesa* and himself open to *iustae minae* (25-6): the fact that he continues to appear in *Cynthia* does not preclude him from being punished by it as well. So if, as Lyne says, Gallus has 'at last fallen *really* in love', then now he is also primed to fall in the tormented love Propertius had described in 1.5 – and this is just what happens in 1.13.

²⁹⁵ See Lowrie (2009, 177), who argues that poetry becomes *carmen* in Book 1 when it is 'represented as having pragmatic force'.

v. 1.13

While 1.10 began with Propertius' joy, 1.13 opens with Gallus' – and his identity is revealed from the start:

Tu, quod saepe soles, nostro laetabere casu
Galle, quod abrepto solus amore uacem.

1.13.1-2

Propertius may not be 'free with an empty heart' (*uacuo pectore liber*, 1.10.30), but he is now 'alone, without stolen love' (*abrepto solus amore uacem*, 1.13.2): he has been dumped. This turn of events echoes that of the previous poems: in 1.11, Propertius complains to Cynthia that her presence in Baiae leaves him paranoid about her lack devotion to him; in 1.12,²⁹⁶ he rebuffs the charges of amatory *desidium* levelled by *Roma* (1.12.1-2) by claiming that Cynthia's absence now forces him to spend long nights on his own (1.12.13-14). As 1.8a/b reinforces Propertius' claim to the role of *praeceptor amoris* in 1.7 and 1.9, this particular pair of poems both provides the context for the conceit of 1.13 and undermines the authority of Propertius' advice to Gallus in 1.10.

While Gallus takes pleasure in Propertius' misfortune, Propertius takes the higher ground:

at non ipse tuas imitabor, perfide, uoces:
fallere te numquam, Galle, puella uelit.
dum tibi deceptis augetur fama puellis,
certus et in nullo quaeris amore moram,
perditus in quadam tardis pallescere curis
incipis, et primum lapsus abire gradu.

5

8 primum Heyworth] primus Ω

1.13.3-8

²⁹⁶ See Heyworth (2007b, 59-60), who argues that Propertius alludes to Gallus (*uno tellures diuidit amne duas*) and Virgil's *Georgics* (4.370-4) in 1.12.4 (*quantum Hypanis Veneto dissidet Eridano*), and to the *Georgics* (2.490) and Lucretius at 1.12.15 (*felix qui potuit praesenti flere puellae*, cf. *cognoscere*, 13).

What are these *uoces* (3)? Commentators have stressed the connection to 1.5.1-2, in which Propertius asks his addressee to ‘put an end to irksome refrains’ (*tu ... uoces compesce molestas*, 1.5.1): for those who follow the manuscripts,²⁹⁷ the *tu* is to be identified with Gallus. However, Gallus’ interest in Cynthia is less fittingly described as ‘grudging’ (*inuide*, 1.5.1) than the vocatives that follow (*insane ... | infelix*, 1.5.3-4); the epithet is rather directed at Bassus, whose advertisement of alternative romantic opportunities Propertius aptly misinterprets as an assault on his happiness.²⁹⁸ Instead, the *uoces* look back to those of 1.10 (*tantus in alternis uocibus ardor erat*, 10), alluding to Gallan verse as those of 1.5.1 do to Bassus’.²⁹⁹ So again, Gallus’ poetic identity appears to determine his relationship with Propertius; but more importantly, Propertius thus makes the first step towards importing the conceit of 1.10 into 1.13. If the *uoces* signify Gallan (poetic) love as depicted in Propertius’ elegy, Propertius allows for a second reading of line 3: not just ‘I shall not imitate your derision’ but also ‘I shall not imitate your (versified) passion’. Helpfully, this amatory dimension only ties it further to the subsequent line.

Propertius, moreover, now foregrounds the theme of deceit (*perfide ... | fallere ... | ... deceptis* 3-5), which had already lain latent since Propertius revealed Gallus’ *culpa* (1.5.25) and his secret in a *munus* (1.10.12) for all to read. Such public discourse becomes no less instrumental in increasing Gallus’ renown for treachery (*dum tibi deceptis augetur fama puellis*, 5). Yet Propertius’ deceit has also taken the shape of narrative development: first, urging him away from Cynthia, Propertius has integrated him into *Cynthia*; then, instructing him how to succeed, Propertius has set him up to fail. In each case, the overt plot has been undermined by the covert power of words in shaping Gallus’ elegiac reality, and the same occurs here. Propertius hopes that no *puella* would ever wish to deceive Gallus (4) – but his *Cynthia* will do just that. Gallus’ predilection for amatory deceit becomes a ground for a reaffiliation with the *puella* of 1.10; the philanderer is forced on a second date. More precisely, Gallus will be written into the same date as before – but its warm reciprocity will be exchanged for more familiar elegiac torment, with Propertius assuming the role of *praeceptor* once more. Plot

²⁹⁷ E.g. Camps (1961); Richardson (1977); and Fedeli (1980).

²⁹⁸ See n.241.

²⁹⁹ For *uox* as a poet’s work, see the reference to Ennius’ *Annals* in Cicero, *Prou. Cons.* 20.7: *an uero M. ille Lepidus, qui bis consul et pontifex maximus fuit, non solum memoriae testimonio, sed etiam annalium litteris et summi poetae uoce laudatus est ...?*

development remains tied to inversion: as a carefree Gallus is forced to look back to 1.10, his love begins to resemble that of 1.5.

Propertius begins to reshape Gallus' reality using well-established means. As at the end of 1.5, where the present tense of the final word (*uenit*, 1.5.30) furthered the suggestion that the future described is imminent, Propertius uses a slew of present tense verbs (*augetur*, 5; *quaeris*, 6; *palescere* ... | *incipis*, *abire*, 7-8) to retouch and concretise the general picture painted in the future at the start of the poem (*soles* ... *laetebere*, *imitabor*, 1.10.1, 3). The first of these (*augetur*) fittingly draws a connection between Gallus' amatory behaviour and Propertius' role in making it so, laying the foundations for further use of poetry as a means to shape reality; and what follows looks back to earlier verse too. Gallus is growing pale and feeling anxiety (*tardis palescere curis*, 7), just as Propertius had warned him (*at tibi curarum milia quanta dabit*, 1.5.10; *nec iam pallorem totiens mirabere nostrum*, 1.5.21); *tardis*, in turn, echoes Propertius' own love and the ears of unmindful lovers (*in me tardus Amor non ullas cogitat artes*, 1.1.17; *quod si quis monitis tardas aduerterit aures*, 1.1.37). Having not heeded his advice in the earlier poem, Gallus is turning into Propertius: both have now 'fallen' (*lapsus*, 8; *lapsus*, 1.1.25).

In short, then, Gallus is not as *certus* (6) as Propertius describes him. The only certainty is Propertius' control over his addressee as he traps Gallus in elegy with a *puella*:

haec erit illarum contempti poena doloris:
multarum miseras exiget una uices.
haec tibi uulgares istos compescet amores,
nec noua quaerendo semper inultus eris.

12 inultus *Watt*] *amicus* Ω

1.13.9-12

This *puella* will be the *poena*, and her direct identification with Gallus' punishment, rather than being the source of it, endows her with the sort of artificial quality that allows her to be read as a poetic creation who directly affects Gallus' elegiac reality. This *puella* is unnamed, nor is she even described as one: she is *haec* (9, 11), *una* (10, 36), or *illa* (31, 32). This anonymity makes her identifiable with the *Cynthia* which orchestrates this amatory demise and the

Cynthia threatened as punishment earlier (*non impune illa rogata uenit*, 1.5.32). Gallus may have continued to seek out new *puellae* after his dalliance in 1.10, but that *puella* was herself *noua* (12) given his desires in 1.5. So he can no longer go unpunished (*inultus*, 12) – not, especially, when he also disregarded Propertius’ pleas to be meek (*neue superba loqui*, 1.10.22) and sincere (*neu tibi pro uano uerba benigna cadant*, 1.10.24), subverting his earlier trust in Propertius and *Cynthia* (*non es ueritus concredere nobis*, 1.10.11) to take joy at the former’s sorrows in the latter.

While this development looks back to the earlier poems addressed to Gallus, it also echoes the Ponticus cycle. Just as in 1.8a/b Propertius shows the efficacy of his instruction that writing elegiac verse softens the heart of the *puella* before posturing as a *praeceptor amoris* in 1.9, so in 1.11 and 1.12 Propertius proves his status as a lover enthralled by a *dura puella* and a poet who can write himself into such a relationship. If Ponticus should listen to Propertius given the success of his verse, Gallus should fear Propertius because of his amatory failure. Yet a *puella* fashioned in punishment as deceitful recompense for deceit also echoes Pandora’s creation in Hesiod’s *Theogony* and the *Works and Days*, anticipating Propertius’ didactic pose later in 1.13 as well as recalling those of 1.10 and 1.5. While there appear to be no particular verbal echoes of Hesiod’s story in 1.13, it certainly informs it: it is present as an ‘implicit myth’,³⁰⁰ as Fowler puts it, ‘[p]lots sometimes come associated with a particular canonical story, which can be seen as present even if not explicitly stated.’³⁰¹ Pandora is the archetypal woman, whose effects upon humankind recall the torments of the elegiac *puella*. Pandora is endowed with ‘painful desire and gnawing sufferings’ (πόθον ἀργαλέον καὶ γυιοβόρους μελεδώνας, *Op.* 66) and ‘lies, wily words and a cunning character’ (ψεύδεά θ’ αἰμυλίου τε λόγους καὶ ἐπικλοπον ἦθος. *Op.* 78); the women spawned from her, meanwhile, give men no choice but to associate with them. Shunning marriage, one is without help in old age (*Theog.* 603-7); however, one ‘who finds a baneful type lives with incessant trouble in his heart’ and his ‘evil is incurable’ (*Theog.* 610-12). Only in acquiring a ‘trustworthy wife’ can one’s evils be mixed with blessings (*Theog.* 607-10).

³⁰⁰ See Lyne (1987) 139-44. As Rutherford remarks (1989, 46 n.16): ‘[t]he concept is obviously a dangerous one, but some examples ... seem certain, especially in self-consciously and ostentatiously learned poetry’.

³⁰¹ Fowler (2000) 215. He argues for the implicit presence of the myth of Odysseus in the plot of the *De Rerum Natura*, simultaneously taking part in an adventure and returning home.

Marriage, to be sure, is no option for an elegist³⁰² – but a poetic union is more long-lasting, preserving the joys and torments for all to read. The relationship between Propertius and Gallus, meanwhile, can be plotted onto that between Zeus, Prometheus, and Epimetheus. The jauntiness felt by Propertius in 1.10 and by Gallus in 1.13, along with the deceit that accompanies it, suggests Gallus as Prometheus and Propertius as Zeus (who anticipates, and reacts to, Prometheus’ deceit): both Prometheus and Zeus engage in playful banter as they deceive each other in the *Theogony*,³⁰³ and the rulers of their respective worlds fashion a *puella*, too. But having earlier accepted Propertius’ *munera* (1.10.12) Gallus is also like Epimetheus, who did not heed Prometheus’ advice and mistook Pandora for a gift: it was only ‘after he received her that he understood he had evil’ (αὐτὰρ ὁ δεξάμενος, ὅτε δὴ κακὸν εἶχ’ ἐνόησεν, *Op.* 89). Whether Prometheus or Epimetheus, then, Gallus is punished like both; and this Hesiodic context likewise shows his demise in 1.13 to have its roots in 1.10. Gallus may not have stolen fire from Propertius – indeed, Propertius granted it to him (*ardor*, 1.10.10, 1.13.28); but mocking the latter’s solitude arising from ‘stolen love’ (*abrepto ... amore*, 2), Gallus’ *ardor* now comes accompanied by Propertian *amor*.

Yet Gallus is not prohibited from appearing as Jupiter too – as long as the god’s susceptibility to love is noted:

³⁰² In 2.7, Propertius outlines his relief – and Cynthia’s joy (1-3) – at the abrogation of Augustan legislation that would have separated them by forcing him to marry according to his aristocratic status, and allowing them to continue their affair. The poem’s political stance has provoked numerous (and conflicting) interpretations: see, e.g., Cairns (1979b); Stahl (1985) 139-55; Gale (1997); and Heyworth (2007c) 109-19. The reality of the law has been questioned by Badian (1985) and treated with caution by Martins (2018). In repeatedly referring to Neaera as his *coniunx*, Lygdamus is the exception that proves the rule about the dissociation between elegy and marriage; see Maltby (2021, 98-100).

³⁰³ Prometheus smiles softly (ἤκ’ ἐπιμειδήσας, *Theog.* 547) as he deceives Zeus, while Zeus calls Prometheus ‘my fine fellow’ both before and after Prometheus’ deception is made manifest (ὦ πέπον, 544, 560); Zeus also cajoles Prometheus (κερτομέων, 545) for the way in which he divides the meat, seemingly to the detriment of the latter – although Zeus is aware of the deception from the start (οὐδ’ ἠγνοίησε δόλον, 551).

nec tibi praeteritos passa est succedere fastus,
nec sinet: addictum te tuus ardor aget.
nec mirum, cum sit Ioue digna, et proxima Ladae
et Ladae partu, gratior una tribus.
illa sit Inachiis et blandior heroinis,
illa suis uerbis cogat amare Iouem.

1.13.29-32

Like Propertius the Zeus, Gallus the Jupiter is a slave to the love of his *puella* (29-30; cf. 1.1.3). Quite who she is compared to remains obscure: the ‘slightly chaotic piling up of encomiastic phrases’ may be owed to Propertius’ quoting of Gallus’ own poetry;³⁰⁴ yet it appears quite likely that *gratior una tribus* alludes to a Callimachean epigram in which the three Graces are joined by Berenice:³⁰⁵

Τέσσαρες αἱ Χάριτες· ποτὶ γὰρ μία ταῖς τρισὶ κείναις
ἄρτι ποτεπλάσθη κῆτι μύροισι νοτεῖ·
εὐαίων ἐν πᾶσιν ἀρίζαλος Βερενίκα,
ἄς ἄτερ οὐδ’ αὐταὶ ταὶ Χάριτες Χάριτες.

Call. *Ep.* 51

Her description as ‘moulded’ or ‘crafted’ (ποτεπλάσθη, 2) leads back to the similarity between the *puella* written for Gallus and the Pandora formed for humankind: Hesiod twice uses a variant of the verb in his account of her creation (γαίης γὰρ σύμπλασσε περικλυτὸς Ἀμφιγυήεις | παρθένῳ αἰδοίῃ ἵκελον, *Theog.* 571-2; αὐτίκα δ’ ἐκ γαίης πλάσσε κλυτὸς Ἀμφιγυήεις | παρθένῳ αἰδοίῃ ἵκελον, *Op.* 70-1). Beside their beauty, moreover, the three Graces were known for their charming speech;³⁰⁶ in the *Works and Days* (73), they and Πειθῶ adorn Pandora with golden jewellery, which appears to be a material representation of her seductive power. In the *Aetia*, meanwhile, Callimachus asks them to ‘rub [their] sleek hands

³⁰⁴ Heyworth (2007b) 63.

³⁰⁵ See Hendry (1995-6) 245, and Booth (2007) 532-6.

³⁰⁶ Cf. Bacchylides, *Dithyrambs* 48-9: Πλεισθενίδας Μενέλαος γάρυϊ θελξιεπέϊ | φθέγγατ’, εὐπέπλοισι κοινώσας Χάρισιν.

on [his] elegies' (ἐλέγοισι δ' ἐνιψήσασθε λιπώσας | χεῖρας ἐμοῖς, fr. 7.13-14 Harder) to guarantee their longevity (ἵνα μοι πουλὸ μένωσιν ἔτος, fr. 7.14). The Graces' hands are sleek with an oil that Callimachus had described dripping from their hair in the preceding line, 'and thus the phrase suggests that ... [they] use an aspect of their own beauty as a means of transmitting poetic quality to Callimachus' poems'.³⁰⁷ But as concerns Propertius, his *puella's* physical seductiveness is intrinsically literary too: this is suggested as much in the lines cited above, where her desirability is compared to those of famous heroines in terms of the words with which she can force Jupiter to love her (*illa suis uerbis cogat amare Iouem*, 32); she fashions love just like Propertius (*nec leuis in uerbis est medicina meis*, 1.10.18). So if Gallus is made out to be a Jupiter, the terms of the god's promiscuity are nonetheless inverted: rather than forcing himself onto women, the woman now forces herself onto him.

Besides crafting this *puella*, Propertius also re-envisioned the night he had described in 1.10:

quae cano non rumore malo, non augure doctus:
 uidi ego, me quaeso teste negare potes?
 uidi ego te toto uinctum languescere collo 15
 et flere iniectis, Galle, diu manibus,
 et cupere optatis animam deponere labris,
 et quae deinde meus celat, amice, pudor.
 non ego complexus potui diducere uestros:
 tantus erat demens inter utrosque furor. 20
 ...
 una dies omnes potuit praecurrere amores; 25
 nam tibi non tepidas subdidit illa faces;

13 quae cano non Heyworth] haec non N(ego add. s.l. m. rec.): haec ego non AA

17 labris ζ] uerbis Ω

25 amores Lachmann] amantis Ω: amanti ζ

1.13.13-20; 25-6

³⁰⁷ Harder (2012) 136.

A *testis* then (1.10.1), and a *testis* (14) now: as Propertius is quick to emphasise, he saw the affair with his own eyes (*uidi ego*, 14; 15). This stress on the empirical plays on the untrustworthiness of any Propertian account: if, for Lucretius, infallible senses are to be combined with enlightened reason for a true understanding of the *rerum natura*, for Propertius the madness of love is only to be further enriched by the madness of poetic composition, bringing the reader to a world he creates. This overwhelming combination, in turn, plays an important role in this version of Gallus' love. While there are consistencies between the two accounts (cf. *amice*, 18 = *amice*, 1.10.14; *flere*, 16 ≈ *uestris ... lacrimis*, 1.10.2; *animam deponere*, 17 ≈ *morientem*, 1.10.5; cf. *perditus*, 1.13.7; *complexus*, 17 ≈ *complexa ... puella*, 1.10.5), Propertius notably rewrites Gallus' *lusus* and *ardor* (1.10.9-10) into the passion which resembles his poetic and amatory own (*demens ... furor*, 1.13.18; cf. *toto furor hic non deficit anno*, 1.1.7; *quid tibi uis, insane? meos sentire furores?*, 1.5.3). The hint that Propertius' joy belied a darker reality thus comes to pass while preserving the suggestion that Propertius was party to Gallus' love in elegiac form: Gallus begins to resemble Propertius both as a poet and as a lover. This coincides with a change from night (*noctem*, 1.10.3) to day (*una dies*, 1.13.24), playing on the supposed infallibility of Propertius' observation while developing the earlier Lucretian context to present Gallus' new reality as a form of elegiac enlightenment. But in so doing, Propertius further undermines the rhetorical nature of the question he asks (*me quaeso teste negare potes?*, 14). If Gallus achieves parity with Propertius as poet and lover, he can deny his evidence using the same elegiac means with which Propertius created it for him: Propertius may have inverted the Hesiodic intertext by furnishing his trickster with fire (*non tepidas subdidit illa faces*, 26), but Gallus can invert it further by handing it back. Thus, the narrative circles Propertius draws to portray Gallus' transformation can come to be deemed a feature of their shared elegiac pursuits: the written nature of their amatory realities means that no change is ever final.

Such circularity is latent also in the mythological *exempla* Propertius adduces to describe the strength of Gallus' love.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁸ The transition from water to fire also possibly recalls the circularity at the end of *DRN* 4, where Lucretius turns from describing ejaculation (cf. *amorem ... umorem*, 4.1054-6) to love's *ardor* (4.1073, 1086) and ends the book with a comparison between love that grows from habit and water's eroding power (4.1278-87).

non sic Haemonio Salmonida mixtus Enipeo
 Taenarius facili pressit amore deus;
nec sic caelestem flagrans amor Herculis Heben
 sensit ab Oetaeis gaudia prima rogis.

24 ab *Scaliger*] in Ω | rogis *Schrader*] iugis Ω

1.13.21-4

These lines recall the *Nekuia* of *Odyssey* 11.³⁰⁹ Tyro – daughter of Salmoneus – is the first heroine Odysseus sees in the Underworld. She is described as enamoured of the river Enipeus, only for Poseidon to have assumed his form and lain with her instead (*Od.* 11.235-44). Hercules, meanwhile, is the final character encountered in the Underworld: as three spurious lines explain, Odysseus sees his εἶδωλον, allowing for Hercules to be both simultaneously in the Underworld and on Olympus – where the real hero dwells with his heavenly consort, Hebe.³¹⁰ With Odysseus then promptly returning to the world above, these lines are as much about love as an allusion to his circular journey to the Underworld, an adventure within an adventure – a fitting *comparandum* for the inset story of Gallus’ transformation among the broader cycle of 1.5-1.20, and a further suggestion to the transience of his amatory demise. Yet as Heslin notes, ‘[i]t is particularly apt that Propertius chose interpolated lines of Homer to hint at the falsity of a literary self-portrait’:³¹¹ just as they retouch the specifics of Odysseus’ descent into the Underworld, so Propertius retouches the sort of death Gallus suffered before. The circularity to which Propertius alludes, then, is also contextualised in terms of composition – but deceit remains in play, too. While Gallus is explicitly compared to Poseidon and Hercules, he is more like Tyro and Hebe: his beloved is not quite who he thinks she is.

This nexus is, in turn, recapitulated at the poem’s end as Propertius adopts the guise of *praeceptor*:

³⁰⁹ So Heslin (2018) 134, following Commager (1974) 13 n.26.

³¹⁰ Heslin (2018) 135 and n.126, who also cites Gantz (1993) 460.

³¹¹ Heslin (2018) 136.

tu uero quoniam semel es periturus amore,
utere: non alio limine dignus eras.
qui tibi sit felix, quoniam nouus incidit error;
et quotcumque uoles, una sit ista tibi.

1.13.33-6

Gallus died in 1.10 – now he is to die in love truly once and for all. Both *uero* and *semel* tease out the irony of Propertius' insistent tone: the truth of his love depends on nothing more than the written word, and dying once for a second time hardly rules out dying again for a third. No less punning is *nouus error* (35): Gallus' affair may have taken a new turn, but only after being repeated; and being an *error*, there is no certainty it will not change course.³¹² In any case, he should 'make use of' (*utere*, 34) his new predicament: his happiness (*qui tibi sit felix*, 33) depends on staying with this one despite a desire for many. But having been written into an elegiac love, the Gallus of 1.13 is no more likely to be *felix* than the Gallus of 1.10. Then, he could not follow Propertius' advice to remain with one *puella*; now, he is bound to failure even if he follows it, especially so given that Gallus' promiscuity is guaranteed if he versifies his love for his own beloved. He cannot begin to dedicate himself to this *puella* from *Cynthia* without undermining his dedication to his *Lycoris* and vice versa – and if he begins to love the latter in the way of the former, he will love both and amatory torment will follow regardless.

Thus, Gallus is to remain trapped on the circular path Propertius had set him on in 1.5. This foreshadows his return in 1.20, but it also points to the endlessness of elegy: enlightenment consists not in completing a course but in dedication to versifying a love that lasts beyond death. To reach the goal is to end the process, and so to put a limit on love; the elegiac path must stretch on, even if it means taking new turns and even going round in circles. Propertius may emphasise the dedication he teaches by repeating both his account of the affair and the instruction that follows it – but at the same time, the differences between the two poems show that the *una* to be loved (1.10.29; 1.13.36) cannot remain one: she will be first requiting (1.8a/b) and then neglectful (1.11/12), transforming her lover's attitude with her own; their

³¹² Richardson (1977, 183-4) notes that Propertius employs *error* to describe Odysseus' adventures at 2.14.3 and 3.12.36.

relationship continues forever reconfigured, and the elegiac reality changes while staying the same.

vi. 1.20

The same pattern repeats in 1.20. Gallus is now in love with a youth, Hylas, and Propertius addresses him as a *praeceptor* once more (*monemus*, 1; *monitus*, 51). While this new beloved makes Gallus appear as promiscuous as before, Propertius is concerned not that Gallus will leave Hylas, but that Hylas will be stolen from Gallus and result in his endless lovesickness. Amatory dedication is, therefore, to remain as the centrepiece of Propertius' instruction, but the approach is inverted; and this inversion may also be said to recall the initial love triangle of 1.5, where Gallus was warned against stealing into an affair with Cynthia for fear of lovesickness as well.³¹³ Gallus thus remains trapped on Propertius' elegiac path, where instruction leads not to an end but to another beginning.

The bulk of the poem consists of a mythological *exemplum* concerning the story of Hylas, Hercules' lover, who was drowned by river nymphs enamoured of his beauty while fetching water for the Argonauts on a stop in Mysia (1.20.15-50). The introductory section (1-14) contains a developed warning on the threats posed to Gallus' Hylas by nymphs local to Italy: Gallus should take care not to lose him to them, whether he visits Umbrian woods,³¹⁴ dips his toes in the Anio (presumably at the resort of Tibur), or walks the shores of Baiae (1.20.7-9). The locales listed are not irrelevant: Propertius is an Umbrian poet;³¹⁵ Tibur was famed for its Temple of Hercules;³¹⁶ while Baiae is the adulterous hotspot where Cynthia abandoned Propertius in 1.11.³¹⁷ The connection between the two poems is developed both by Baiae's own

³¹³ If *Gallum* is the correct reading at 1.21.7, then this thematic regression anticipates a temporal one as the setting shifts to the past events of the Perusine War.

³¹⁴ *Vmbrae sacra* (7) is Hoeffft's conjecture for the *umbrosae* transmitted in the MSS; see discussions in Richardson (1977) *ad loc.*, and Heyworth (2007b) 88.

³¹⁵ Cf. 1.22.9-10; 4.1b.121-2.

³¹⁶ Cf. 3.16, 4.7.82. Gallus may have also written about it: see Mart. 4.62 and 7.13, where both poems concern a dark (*nigral fusca*) Lycoris who hopes the locale will bleach her skin – a transformative conceit not out of tune with that suggested in this poem – and see 1.72 in which the same Lycoris is under discussion. Lycoris is explicitly Gallus' at 8.73.6, where she is contrariwise *pulchra* (cf. *formosa* at Prop 2.34.91-2); a Lycoris is also mentioned at 1.102, 3.39, 4.42, 6.40.

³¹⁷ For Baiae's reputation, see e.g. Sen. *Ep.* 51.4, 11-12.

Herculean associations (*Bais* | *qua iacet Herculeis semita litoribus*, 1.11.1-2) and by their verbal echoes:³¹⁸

molliter in tacito litore compositam.

1.11.14

hic manus heroum, placidis ut constitit oris,

mollia composita litora fronde tegit.

1.20.21-2

While Propertius' mythological *exemplum* draws upon the fantastical settings of other genres, such as Apollonius' epic *Argonautica* and Theocritus' bucolic *Idylls* (see discussion below), the familiar locale of Baiae anchors the advice that frames it to Propertius' elegiac reality. And yet, this reality is still mythologized by the presence of rapacious *nymphae* (1.20.11, 52), developing the connection between the two worlds established by Hylas' name – and even recalling the first *exemplum* of the collection, when Propertius compared himself to Milanion, who wandered around Parthenian grottoes, hunted wild beasts, and groaned on Arcadian crags after being wounded by Hylaeus' club (1.1.11-14) until he was able to 'tame the swift girl' (1.1.15). As mentioned before, the story appears to draw upon one used by Gallus,³¹⁹ and Propertius returns us to it in the couplets that take us from elegiac reality to the world of the *exemplum*:

ne tibi sit duros montes et frigida saxa,

Galle, neque expertos semper adire lacus.

quae miser ignotis error perpessus in oris

Herculis indomito fleuerat Ascanio.

1.20.13-16

Neither Apollonius nor Theocritus make the setting for Hercules' search for Hylas quite so desolate. Apollonius notes the presence of mountain-dwelling nymphs (αἱ [*sc.* νύμφαι] μέν, ὄσαι σκοπιᾶς ὀρέων λάχον ἢ καὶ ἐναύλους, *Arg.* 1226), but notes only how Hercules threw

³¹⁸ See Heerink (2015) 123.

³¹⁹ See nn. 64 and 71.

down a pine tree in anger and ran down ‘any path’ where his feet carried him (ἐς δὲ κέλευθον | τὴν θέεν, ἧ πόδες αὐτὸν ὑπέκφερον αἴσσοντα, *Arg.* 1263-4). Theocritus remarks that Hercules ‘laboured greatly as he wandered over mountains and thickets’ (ἀλώμενος ὅσ’ ἐμόγησεν | οὔρεα καὶ δρυμούς, *Id.* 13.66-7), yet this is still not the same unforgiving landscape. But the same wintry ruggedness occurs in *Eclogues* 10, in precisely the passage that has been cited as a parallel to Propertius’ Milanion’s wanderings over Mount Parthenius: just as here, the geography there is frigid and watery (*iam mihi per rupes uideor lucosque sonantis | ire ... | nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus | Sithoniasque niues hiemis subeamus aquosae*, *Ecl.* 10.58-9; 65-6). So, given also the auditory and etymological concordance between Hylas the lover and the Hylaeian club striking Milanion (*Hylaei ... rami*, 1.1.13; cf. the *ramus* employed by Hercules at 4.9.15),³²⁰ it becomes quite possible to see the future against which Propertius warns Gallus in 1.20 as a reflection of the passions suffered by Milanion in 1.1.

From that perspective too, then, the end leads to the beginning – and this circularity can be found in Propertius’ didactic rhetoric too. Compare the first and last lines of the poem:

Hoc pro continuo te, Galle, monemus amore

(quod tibi ne uacuo defluat ex animo):

saepe imprudenti fortuna occurrit amanti

crudelis, Minyis durus ut Ascanius.

...

his, o Galle, tuos monitus seruabis amores,

51

<...>

<...>

formosum nymphis credere rursus Hylan.

52

*lacunam post 51 proposuit Heyworth*³²¹

1.20.1-4; 51-2

³²⁰ Petrain (2000) 411-2. Ὑλας and Ὑλαῖος both stem from ὕλη.

³²¹ See Heyworth (2007b) 93-4.

With Heyworth's conjectured missing couplet between lines 51 and 52, there forms a structural parallel between the four-line admonition at the poem's opening and its end, enriched by the repeated references to Gallus (1, 51) and Hylas' seizure (3-4, 52). These couplets, in turn, parallel those cited above on the same basis: Gallus is addressed (14) before the focus shifts to the story of Hylas (15-16). An inner (1-4, 13-16) and outer (1-4, 51-2) frame thus forms from corresponding instructional couplets, and those of the outer likewise form yet another instructional frame with the advice at the end of the first poem:

hoc, moneo, uitate malum: sua quemque moretur
 cura, neque assueto mutet amore locum.
 quod si quis monitis tardas aduerterit aures,
 heu, referet quanto uerba dolore mea!

1.1.35-8

The clear textual echoes (*hoc, moneo ... monitis*, 1.1.35, 37; *hoc ... monemus*, 1.20.1; *his ... monitus*, 1.20.51) parallel the thematic: each time Propertius urges his addressee to pay attention to avert potential misfortune (1.1.37-8; 1.20.2-4) and idealizes long-lasting love (*sua quemque moretur | cura*, 1.35-6; *continuo ... amore*, 1.20.1). A notable difference, however, lies in the lover's role in his own demise: in 1.1, he is urged not to abandon his beloved (*neque assueto mutet amore locum*, 1.1.36); in 1.20, Gallus is warned not to have his beloved stolen by nymphs. The dangers of promiscuity are replaced by those of naivety as Gallus becomes a faithful lover: the terms by which an empty mind leads to unhappiness have now changed (*is poterit felix ... | qui numquam uacuo pectore liber erit*, 1.10.30; *quod tibi ne uacuo defluat ex animo*, 1.20.2). Yet, with Gallus' faithfulness coming on the back of licentiousness, the echo of 1.1 only serves as a further hint that Gallus' new amatory reality is hardly stable – that Hylas might be snatched, and that Gallus will revert to showing interest in others.

While Propertius has high hopes for Gallus, the *praeceptor* continues to constitute the greatest threat to his student's success. As we learn by line 4, the overt danger in this poem is water-borne (*Minyis durus ut Ascanius*, 4) – but Propertius notably introduces it by framing the instruction to come in such terms (*ne ... defluat*, 2). And once this trickle begins, it gushes like a torrent. Gallus is not only to avoid 'the holy waters of the Umbrian wood' (1.20.7), the Anio

(1.20.8), and Baiæ (1.20.9): he should avoid the ‘broad hospitality of any river’ (*ubicumque uago fluminis hospitio*, 1.20.10) lest he forever end up wandering over the ‘harsh mountains, frozen rocks, and untried pools’ (*duros montes et frigida saxa | ... expertos ... lacus*, 1.20.13-14) like Hercules, who once ‘wept to the untamed Ascanius’ (*Herculis indomito fleuerat Ascanio*, 1.20.16). The emphasis on water unsurprisingly flows into the *exemplum* too. After the Argonauts cross the Hellespont (1.20.17-18) and dock on the Mysian shore (1.20.19-22), Hylas goes off to ‘seek choice water from a hidden spring’ (*raram sepositi quaerere fontis aquam*, 1.20.24). After beating off the advances of the Boreads (1.20.25-30),³²² he arrives alone at the spring Pegae, a dwelling of the nymphs (1.20.31-2) described as a ‘moist home’ (*domus ... umida*, 1.20.34), surrounded by ‘dewy apples’ (*roscida ... poma*, 1.20.36) and a ‘watery meadow’ (*irriguo ... prato*, 1.20.37). As Hylas lingers to pick up the flowers that grow there (39-40), he prolongs this mistake as he becomes captivated by the reflections in the water (*formosis ... nescius undis | errorem blandis tardat imaginibus*, 1.20.41-2) – and when he eventually leans down to fetch it with his outstretched hands (*haurire parat demissis flumina palmis*, 1.20.43):

cuius ut accensae Dryades candore puellae,
miratae solitos destituere choros,
prolapsum et leuiter facili traxere liquore;
tum sonitum rapto corpore fecit Hylas.

1.20.45-8

With this the water imagery ends, and the mythological setting unwinds: Hercules thrice calls Hylas by name only for the breezes to echo his call from the farthest mountains (1.20.49-50), reminding us of the couplet which introduced the story (*extremis montibus*, 1.20.50; *duros montes*, 1.20.13) before Gallus is urged never to trust Hylas to the nymphs again. By now, however, his *animus* (1.20.2) is surely quite drenched.

³²² Cf. Heerink (2015) 156-7, who sees ‘an elegiac dimension’ to the phrases *alterna ... fuga* (28) and *ludit* (29) in the description of the Boreads’ amorous assault on Hylas.

To trace the significance of the water imagery in 1.20, it will be helpful to turn again briefly to 1.11. Having fallen prey to the charms of Baiae, the poet wishes that Cynthia behave herself differently:

atque utinam mage te remis confisa minutis
 paruula Lucrina cumba moretur aqua, 10
 aut teneat clausam tenui Teuthrantis in unda
 alternae facilis cedere lymphæ manu,
 quam uacet alterius blandos audire susurros
 molliter in tacito litore compositam;

1.11.9-14

It is no coincidence that Propertius would rather she spend her time with ‘little oars’ on a ‘dinky boat’ in the ‘fine waters of Teuthras’ (*remis ... minutis | paruula ... cumba ... | ... tenui Teuthrantis in unda*, 1.11.9-11) for this is the common elegiac rhetoric of diminution. Cognates of *minutus*,³²³ *paruus*,³²⁴ and *tenuis*³²⁵ occur elsewhere in the collection with relevance to the character of Propertius and his poetry; and the idea of water as reflective of one’s choice of genre becomes more explicitly linked with his Callimachean principles as his collection progresses.³²⁶ Thus in 1.11.12, the waters yielding (*facilis ... lymphæ*) to the alternating hands of the swimmer (*alternæ ... manu*) recall not only elegiac composition (cf. *alternis uocibus*, 1.10.10), but also the carefree life of a lover; but Propertius fears that Cynthia has left these waters to lie on the shore (13-14). Though she remains *mollis* she is open to the *blanditiæ* of another, meaning that Propertius stands to experience amatory *duritia* – and the poetic crisis of amatory warfare that follows:

³²³ Cf. 2.13.58 (*ossa minuta*; see discussion in chapter 3, 138) and 2.29a.3 (*obuia, nescioquot pueri, mihi turba, minuti*; describing Cupids).

³²⁴ Cf., e.g., 2.13.24 (*plebei paruae funeris exsequiae*) and 2.13.32 (*accipiat manes paruula testa meos*); see discussion in chapter 3, 134-6.

³²⁵ Cf., e.g., 2.12.20 (*non ego, sed tenuis uapulat umbra mea*; see discussion in chapter 3, 116-118) and 4.5.64 (*per tenuem ossa mihi sunt numerata cutem*).

³²⁶ See, e.g., the discussion of 3.3 in chapter 4.

an te nescioquis simulatis ignibus hostis
sustulit e nostris, Cynthia, carminibus?

1.11.7-8

Of course, *Cynthia* remains even if Cynthia leaves; but Propertius nonetheless bases his amatory and poetic security on an aqueous locale of an appropriate kind. In 1.20, however, the situation is inverted as water becomes the danger to be avoided by staying on the shore: Gallus should keep his and his beloved's feet firmly on the shores of Baiae (*litoris*, 9) for Hylas would have been safe had he stayed where the Argonauts landed (*mollia composita litora*, 1.20.22); instead, he was snatched away into his own 'yielding water' (*facili ... liquore*, 47; *facilis ... lympa*, 1.11.12). On the one hand, such an inversion is but one of a number in this poem, whether it be the recharacterisation of Gallus into a dedicated lover, or even the basing of advice not on personal experience but a mythological *exemplum*; on the other, such striking transformation of earlier verse more pointedly echoes the rewritten *medicina* of 1.5 and 1.10, and the affair of 1.10 and 1.13. In both cases, Propertius leans upon the written nature of his elegiac world to fashion a new reality for his addressee with words alone. This, in turn, would suggest that the story of Hylas' seizure becomes no less a means for Propertius to exercise his poetic power over his addressee.

To see how that might occur, it is best to begin by viewing the nymphs in more detail. Pointing to the terms *Adryasin* (12), *Hamadryasin* (32), and *Dryades* (45), Heslin argues that '[t]here is a perverse insistence in the way ... Propertius calls these water-nymphs ... names that ought to refer to wood-nymphs'.³²⁷ For him, this is evidence of generic warfare between Propertius and Virgil over Gallus' poetic legacy: by developing the views of Monteleone, Petrain, and Heerink, he reads 1.20 as a metapoetic allegory for 'a cautionary tale about Virgilian poetics', whereby 'Virgil promises Gallus sweet release from his pain and so lures him into a pastoral poem', as he takes on the form of a sort of 'beguiling but treacherous nymph'.³²⁸ And their allegorical nature extends to Hylas too: like Petrain and Heerink, Heslin reads Hylas allegorically as 'poetic subject-matter'.³²⁹ The name Hylas recalls the Greek ὕλη both in sound

³²⁷ Heslin (2018) 158.

³²⁸ Heslin (2018) 156.

³²⁹ Heslin (2018) 158. See also Coutelle (2005) 416-23.

and ‘vertical juxtaposition’,³³⁰ for *Hylae* and *silvae* occupy the ends of consecutive lines (1.20.6-7), while both the Latin and Greek words ‘have a specialized meaning in literary contexts ... [as] the unshaped source material one fashions into a finished composition’.³³¹ As Petrain notes, Hylas becomes ‘both boy and [poetic] ὕλη’ in much the same way that Cynthia is Propertius’ *puella* and collection as a whole.³³²

For Petrain, the story of Hylas points to the playful rivalry between Propertius and Gallus: arguing that Gallus may have himself treated the story of Hylas,³³³ he takes Propertius to be playing with his addressee by ‘usurp[ing] Gallus’ ὕλη just as the Nymphs stole Hylas’, since ‘in the course of giving this advice [he] perpetrates just such a theft, taking over Gallus’ subject matter’.³³⁴ Heerink sees Propertius transforming ‘Virgil’s bucolic Hylas [of *Eclogue* 6] into an elegiac boy’,³³⁵ thereby inverting Virgil’s own appropriation of Gallus’ elegy into bucolic in *Eclogues* 10: Propertius has thus not only ‘capped Virgil’ but ‘also outdone his elegiac rival’.³³⁶ Heslin, however, disagrees with both: with Petrain, because ‘it is decidedly odd that that Propertius should wish to warn Gallus against a theft perpetrated by himself’;³³⁷ and with Heerink, because ‘boys are never, ever erotic subjects for Propertius’.³³⁸ Yet while that may be true as far as Propertius’ own elegiac *persona* is concerned, he does nonetheless take on the voice of *puellae* longing for their male beloveds;³³⁹ and besides, Hylas is not Propertius’ erotic subject but Gallus’ – whether or not this was paralleled in Gallus’ own poetry. As for Heslin’s claim that Petrain has Propertius making an ‘odd’ warning, he is correct: but Propertius has been no less odd in writing Gallus into association with Cynthia while warning him away from her in 1.5; or gifting him impossible advice in 1.10; or wishing him happiness with an elegiac *puella* in 1.13. This paradoxical oddity is to be embraced: Petrain hits upon precisely the kind

³³⁰ Petrain (2000) 410 with reference to O’Hara (1996) 86-8.

³³¹ Petrain (2000) 412.

³³² Petrain (2000) 417.

³³³ Petrain (2000, 418) adducing Skutsch’s (1901) view that the Silenus of Virgil’s *Eclogue* 6 alludes to Gallan themes, and citing Ross (1975, 77-81), who considered Gallan influence on 1.20.

³³⁴ Petrain (2000) 418-9.

³³⁵ See Heerink (2015) 157.

³³⁶ Heerink (2015) 162.

³³⁷ Heslin (2018) 157.

³³⁸ Heslin (2018) 158.

³³⁹ As, e.g., Cynthia in 1.3 or Arethusa in 4.3.

of incongruence between discourse and narrative that has so far dominated Propertius' advice to Gallus and appears in this poem as well.

Then again, Petrain does not place any emphasis on the woodland nature of Propertius' nymphs – which Heslin rightly does, for whom 'the nymphs who kidnap Hylas are meant to represent ... the threat posed by Virgil'.³⁴⁰ As he notes, Propertius later connects them explicitly with Virgil (2.34.75-6) and Virgil's Gallus mentions them too (*Hamadryades*, *Ecl.* 10.62); but in suggesting that Gallus 'consorts with' these nymphs in the *Eclogues*, he risks imprecision. The context needs to be taken into account, for when Gallus mentions them he is proclaiming that the bucolic world will yield to the elegiac:

iam neque Hamadryades rursus neque carmina nobis
ipsa placent; ipsae rursus concedite siluae.
...
omnia uincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori.

Verg. *Ecl.* 10.62-3; 69

Gallus is only a tourist in, not a hostage to, Virgil's bucolic world; the Hamadryads will not be his consorts. So while Propertius may be using them to allude to Virgil's power over Gallus, they are hardly signifiers of 'the danger posed by Virgil to the existence of Latin elegy as an independent genre'.³⁴¹ Their woodland nature, as an extension of his inversion of the relative safety of land and water, may draw on the Virgilian intertext but becomes part of Propertius' own play. These are elegiac nymphs, and not just because of the verse in which they now appear: they dominate the male beloved by eagerly seizing him (*nympharum ... cupida ... rapina*, 1.20.11); being a source of grief (*a dolor! unus Hylas ibat Hamadryasin*, 1.20.32); and causing their victim to cry for help as they easily drag him into their yielding water (1.20.47-8). Hylas' demise (*prolapsum*, 47; cf. 1.1.25, 1.13.8) recalls *seruitium amoris* and the accompanying toil of bewailing one's fate through elegiac composition. Recalling the dangers posed to Gallus by Virgil, they now point to the dangers posed by Propertius.

³⁴⁰ Heslin (2018) 159.

³⁴¹ Heslin (2018) 161.

It appears, then, seductive to read this poem as yet another piece of advice that does more than what it claims to do on the surface. Just when Propertius warns Gallus from entrusting Hylas back to the nymphs, Propertius snatches Hylas with the waters of his elegy. The conjectured *rursus* (*formosum nymphis credere rursus Hylan*, 1.20.52) thus not only produces good sense but irony too: the story which Gallus is urged not to repeat is repeated for him; Gallus should equally have kept his love safe from Propertius' poetry. Again, then, Gallus fails thanks to his *praeceptor*, and does so in keeping with the patterns of inversion discussed above: the dedicated lover is the victim not of one implacable *puella*, but of many willing *puellae* (45). This pattern extends to trust too. Propertius had earlier thanked Gallus for his trust in him (*non es ueritus concredere nobis*, 1.10.11); now he warns Gallus from trusting in others (*nymphis credere*, 1.20.52). No matter the difference, the result is the same: Propertius' words betray Gallus regardless.

Hylas' seizure by the nymphs thus becomes emblematic of Gallus' broader immersion into Propertius' elegy, and their similarity may be considered in another way, too. Fontein's excellent conjecture (*cui procul Alcides ter 'Hyla' respondet*, 1.20.49) aligns Propertius with Theocritus by having Hercules shout his beloved's name three times, a detail in keeping with the proceedings at the cult of Hylas.³⁴² Yet it may also suggest a further play by Propertius.³⁴³ Until line 49, Hylas' name appears three times (*Hylae*, 1.20.5; *Hylas* 1.20.32; 48): it is as if Propertius has already echoed Hercules' cries (*nomen ab extremis montibus aura refert*, 50). Actualising the echo before the cry is even uttered writes Gallus into the reality from which he is warned, for if the echo resounds, he must already be wandering over the mountains (*montes*, 13). But in line 50, Gallus' name also appears for the third time (*Galle*, 1, 14, 51), making his own name an echo of Hylas' (suitably, the two names are similar without being the same);³⁴⁴

³⁴² Theoc. *Id.* 13.58-60: τρις μὲν Ὑλαν ἄσπεν, ὅσον βαθὺς ἤρυγε λαϊμός· | τρις δ' ἄρ' ὁ παῖς ὑπάκουσεν, ἀραιὰ δ' ἴκετο φωνά | ἐξ ὕδατος, παρεὼν δὲ μάλα σχεδὸν εἶδετο πόρρω. Cf. also Antonius Liberalis, *Metamorphoses* 26, with note by Celoria (1992, 174).

³⁴³ Cf. Heerink (2015, 159) on Virgil's play with the echo in *Eclogue* 6.

³⁴⁴ Lucretius treats the distortion of sound (Lucr. 4.557-62; 612-4) both before and after discussing the echo (4.572-94), and this plays a significant role in Ovid's story of Echo and Narcissus (*Met.* 3.339-510): Juno curses Echo so that the latter can only repeat the last parts of speech (*reque minas firmit. tantum haec in fine loquendi | ingeminat uoces auditaque uerba reportat*, *Met.* 3.368-9). See also Heerink (2007, 607-10), who considers 1.20 as a model for Ovid's episode as part of a broader discussion of the relationship between 1.20 and the Hylas episode in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* (3.481-610).

and their correspondence is developed still further as both come to frame the closing lines (*his, o Galle ... Hylan*, 51-2). Such an echo might even be viewed in the context of preceding poems: Gallus has been the subject of three poems already, and in the last of these he was named thrice (*Galle*, 1.5.31; 1.10.5; 1.13.2, 4, 16); this total, in turn, corresponds to the number of times Hylas is named in 1.20 (6, 32, 48, 49, 52). So just as Gallus comes to echo Hylas, 1.20 again comes to echo the poems that precede it – providing, even, a suitable context for its inverted conceit: the direction of travel may be reversed, but the end product remains broadly the same.

Furthermore, if Gallus becomes identifiable with Hylas, then Propertius, as the one that calls out to him, becomes identifiable with Hercules. This is reaffirmed by an echo of 1.18, which has also been proposed to be playing on a lost Gallan source:³⁴⁵ Hercules’ wanderings over the desolate landscape in 1.20 (*duros montes et frigida saxa, | neque expertos... adire lacus*, 13-14) resemble Propertius’ own in that poem (*pro quo dumosi montes et frigida rupes | et datur inculto tramite dura quies*, 1.18.27-8). More specifically, Hercules’ ‘untouched lakes’ might be taken to resemble Propertius’ ‘neglected path’ in terms of Callimachean aesthetics,³⁴⁶ especially if Hylas’ search for ‘choice water from a secluded fountain’ (*raram sepositi ... fontis aquam*, 1.20.24) is taken to be indicative of this too. A similar reading has been proposed in 4.9,³⁴⁷ when Propertius comically portrays Hercules as a thirsty *exclusus amator* and makes the hero identifiable with himself both in amatory and Callimachean terms.³⁴⁸ Lucretius, meanwhile, uses similar imagery to describe both himself and Epicurus as trailblazers, recalling Callimachean principles without necessarily adhering to them;³⁴⁹ but at least their philosophical path leads up to enlightenment and may be trodden by all who seek to reach it. Propertius’ path, on the other hand, leads only to the hopeless frenzy of the elegiac world, to be trodden endlessly – and also, alone.

³⁴⁵ Ross (1975) 77.

³⁴⁶ Petrain (2000) 413-14, citing Call. *Hymn* 2.210-12 and *Ep.* 2.3-4 (Gow).

³⁴⁷ See Anderson (1964), McParland (1970), Warden (1982) and DeBrohun (2003) 134-143.

³⁴⁸ For a Callimachean reading of 4.9, see DeBrohun (2003) 201-9.

³⁴⁹ Lucretius: 1.921-30, 4.1-9 (esp. *loca nullius ante | trita solo*, 1.926-7 and 4.1-2); Epicurus: *Lucr.* 6.26-8 (esp. *tramite paruo*, 6.27). Cf. Callimachus, *Aetia* fr. 1.25-8 Harder and also *Lucr.* 3.3-4: *te sequor ... inque tuis nunc | ficta pedum pono pressis uestigia signis*. See Knox (1999), who rightly encourages a more nuanced approach to Lucretius’ Callimacheanism than that offered by Kenney (1970); while he considers it ‘likely that the well known passage of the *Aetia* is the proximate inspiration for Lucretius’ formulation’ (285), he also notes the pertinence of the path metaphor to the *DRN* as used by other authors.

After all, while Propertius writes Gallus into his elegiac world in each of the four poems, Gallus also consistently fails to follow his *praeceptor's* advice: he may follow in Propertius' footsteps, but he takes his own path; a shared poetic reality does not bring them together. So although Gallus and Propertius may be jointly identified as Hercules, his fate also keeps them apart: following the loss of Hylas, the hero was abandoned by the Argo and left to complete his own adventures. As noted above, moreover, Hercules' wanderings in 1.20 recall those of Milanion in 1.1, which appear to have alluded to Gallus' verse and presented in contrast to Propertius' own. Circling back to the start of the collection thus does not prevent Hercules from keeping Propertius and Gallus treading different paths either.

It would appear, therefore, that having alluded to the power of Virgilian Hamadryads to seize Hylas (and Gallus) for himself, Propertius also mirrors Virgil in leaving his Gallus behind as he brings this book to a close. But the power of Propertius' poetry over Gallus' reality will continue to be expressed as long as his collection lives on, just as his own affairs will continue to be written in his predecessor's shadow. So, when Gallus re-appears in 2.34 to be listed as one of the poets who won fame through their amatory verse – a club Propertius himself hopes to enter – the cause of his 'recent' demise is made out to be not suicide but 'beautiful Lycoris' (*et modo formosa quam multa Lycoride Gallus | mortuus inferna uulnera lauit aqua*, 91-2); Gallus' poetic world may keep him singing from beyond the grave, but even his death cannot prevent Propertius from defining the terms of his existence. And while Propertius may use didactic contexts in Book 1 to present Gallus as an amatory antithesis, as one against whom he can fashion himself as the supreme elegist following a unique path, their shared interest in love means that they ultimately undertake their poetic journeys together – as Ovid will later reaffirm too (*successor fuit hic [sc. Tibullus] tibi, Galle, Propertius illi; | quartus ab his serie temporis ipse fui*, *Tr.* 4.10.53-4).

Don't believe me, just watch: 'Book 2'

As Propertius leaves his Gallan addressee behind to begin a new part of his collection, he continues to develop his elegiac world while keeping it revolving around the same tormented affair with which he began. There is continuity amid the change, then – and it will, therefore, be apt to consider the next part of his collection through a theme which is important from the very first line. By beginning his collection with the claim that Cynthia captured him with her eyes (*Cynthia ... me cepit ocellis*, 1.1.1), 'he is announcing a theme which, in its various forms, is to play a major role in his love poetry', and which concurrently informs his role as *praeceptor*, for '[a]n essential element in Propertius' erotodidaxis is that the eyes are the road to love'.³⁵⁰ Thus Propertius tells Ponticus to avoid feeling confident even if he writes elegy as he is encouraged to do:

nec te decipiat quod sit satis illa parata:
acrius illa subit, Pontice, si qua tua est,
quippe ubi non liceat uacuos seducere ocellos
nec uigilare alio limine cedat Amor.

1.9.25-8

Propertius likewise emphasises the importance of sight in love in each of his poems to Gallus, beginning by warning him against starting an affair with Cynthia, who will appear before his eyes sleeping or awake (*non tibi iam somnos, non illa relinquet ocellos*, 1.5.11), and concluding with the story of Hylas, who is enthralled by the 'charming images' of his reflection (*errorem blandis tardat imaginibus*, 1.20.42) – and who, in turn, enthralls the nymphs dwelling in the stream (*miratae*, 1.20.46).³⁵¹ Given that Propertius writes Gallus into the relationship with Cynthia against which he warns him in 1.5, and suggests Hylas as yet another Gallus being snatched into the waters of amatory verse, sight comes to be crucial not only in love but also in the poetic composition that love engenders. Thus Cynthia's eyes lead Propertius into a *furor* (1.1.7) as amatory as it is poetic, and Ponticus' eyes will stand filled with his beloved as he writes to her too. Yet since the power of composition in Propertius' poetry extends beyond

³⁵⁰ Maltby (2006) 165.

³⁵¹ Cf. *nescit Amor priscis cedere imaginibus* (1.5.42), and see also chapter 2, 63 and n.264.

merely expressing love to creating and moulding his elegiac reality, sight also assumes an important ontological role. So, in 1.10 and 1.13 Propertius uses sight to direct the reality of Gallus' love, first seeing it as a pleasant affair for himself and his addressee (even if the Lucretian intertext suggests a darker undercurrent to the joy), and then as the tortured kind that he himself suffers. What Propertius sees becomes what is, for sight of the beloved gives rise to her creation in the text to which she gives her name.

This chapter will examine the way in which Propertius continues to relate sight to his poetic process as part of his didactic self-characterisation in the collection of poems known as 'Book 2'. This chapter comprises two broad parts. The first considers 2.12, 2.1, and 2.13, programmatic poems in which Propertius assumes a didactic tone to inform us further about the nature of his elegiac world. It proposes that Propertius portrays his world as fundamentally artistic by subordinating sight to the imagination and stressing the key role of the latter in determining the kind of love he suffers, the kind of poetry he writes, and the kind of beloved around whom it revolves. Propertius shows sight, *qua* imagination, to be the means with which he conflates the forms of his verse with that of his *puella* at the same time as he presents his written self to be a mere shadow, a figment of the imagination no more directly visible to the reader than the *Amor* who makes him so. In so doing, Propertius reaffirms that his elegiac affair is a fiction whose course he directs; yet more importantly, he deconstructs the value of sight as an epistemological tool in his teaching. As noted in the introduction, didactic poets – most notably, Lucretius – frequently relate their teaching to the world seen by their addressee and reader. Propertius, however, teaches by encouraging us to look not through our own eyes but through his own, keeping them captive to the imagined reality of his *Cynthia* and having us learn love without lifting our eyes up from the page.

The second part of this chapter turns to 2.14, 2.25, and 2.34, three poems in which Propertius explicitly assumes the guise of *praeceptor amoris* and which are indicative of the poetic evolution his collection ultimately undergoes. In the first of these, Propertius radically alters his teaching by decreeing that lovers should spurn their beloveds (*contemnite, amantes*, 2.14.19), finally seeing the light having been blind before (2.14.17-18); Propertius then repeats this advice in 2.25 before decrying the lovers whose eyes flit between many *puellae* and stating that one is enough for his own; and in the final poem, Propertius first rebukes (and forgives)

Lynceus for showing interest in Cynthia and then immediately writes him into the same elegiac love he had Gallus and Ponticus, reverting to his original instruction by urging him to write love elegy and adding that he should look to Propertius as an example of its efficacy (*aspice me*, 2.34.55). The inherent interdependence of eyes and love thus continues to inform Propertius' teaching, but the significance goes beyond the amatory. Firstly, Propertius foregrounds the restricted epistemological value of sight by continuing to point to his elegiac world as a written construct of the imagination; secondly, Propertius evokes the ontological capabilities of sight suggested earlier in Book 1 as his shifting didactic pose shows him to be equally prone to the transformative powers of his written world as Gallus or Ponticus. In short, as Propertius reverts to his role of *praeceptor amoris*, he (again) does so less to teach about love than to show the incongruence between his poetic conceit and credible instruction. Propertius' didactic inconsistencies are symptomatic of his teaching love from an imagined world revolving around a written *puella*, whose fickle nature begins to inform the changing course of his poetry. Having earlier accused Cynthia's eyes of getting him to believe in her falsehoods (*ocelli*, | *per quos saepe mihi credita perfidia est*, 1.15.33-4), Propertius suggests that his *Cynthia* will lead our eyes to believe nothing more than them too.

I. Programmatics

i. 2.12

The point of departure will be 2.12, a poem of two halves (1-12; 13-24) in which Propertius first marvels at the ingenuity of *Amor's* first painter, and then compares this *Amor* to his own. Preliminarily, it may be noted that this poem has already been discussed by Wyke in an article arguing that the phrase *quando scripta puella mea est* (2.10.8) is a definitive marker of an elegiac *puella's* fictionality.³⁵² For Wyke, 2.10 is the first part of a poetic sequence (ending in 2.13, discussed in more detail later in this chapter) which 'breaks away significantly from the devices of realism and instead associates Cynthia so intimately with the practice of writing elegy

³⁵² Wyke (1987) 50, citing Butler (Loeb Reprint 1976) 93, Camps (1967) 109, Luck (1964) 79, and Stahl (1985) 157: '[b]y such techniques as ... the employment of "beschreiben" [to describe] rather than "schreiben" [to write] commentators have limited the possible senses of the clause and thus safeguarded the Elegiac Woman's status always as flesh and blood, never as fiction.'

as to undermine her identity independently of that practice'.³⁵³ 2.11 and 2.12, in turn, comprise a 'statement of renewed literary intent' following a supposed turn away from elegy in 2.10,³⁵⁴ where 'the Propertian *puella* is the subject of poetic production and her features, however realistically constructed, are shaped to suit the expression of ... a renewal of that production'.³⁵⁵ It should be said, however, that looking for such sequences in Book 2 is a tricky business. While Wyke defended the group as belonging to Book 2 (against Lachmann and Skutsch's view that 2.10 opens a new book),³⁵⁶ Heyworth has subsequently shown that 2.13 has all the hallmarks of an opening poem and 2.10 that of a closing one, with 2.11 and 2.12 a displaced pair (and not necessarily one that stood together).³⁵⁷ The strength of Wyke's argument is such, however, that doubts about the sequence do little to weaken it. 2.10.8 remains a reminder of the *puella's* fictionality whether or not the pattern of elegiac rejection and renewal stands as Wyke argues it to be. Were 2.11 and 2.12 to have stood before 2.10, it would hardly be any less programmatic for Propertius to have deconstructed his *puella* towards the close of one book before reconstructing her in all her fictional glory at the beginning of another in 2.13. And in any case, if 2.10 clearly tells us that Propertius' *puella* is *scripta*, by this point in the collection it should also not be a surprise: the girl is written because she is inextricable from the written world she engenders.

This particular discussion of 2.12, on the other hand, will concern not so much the way in which Cynthia is shown to be a written construct as with the way it also presents Propertius as the written poet of his written world. The poem emphasises the role of the imagination in the relationship between art and reality, and does so from the start:

³⁵³ Wyke (1987) 49.

³⁵⁴ Wyke (1987) 53.

³⁵⁵ Wyke (1987) 56-7.

³⁵⁶ Lachmann (1816) xxi-xxii; Skutsch (1975).

³⁵⁷ Heyworth (1995) 169: 2.11 'conceivably ... formed part of a single poem with what we know as 2.10', but '[w]hether 2.12 was originally part of [Book 2a or 2b] is beyond conjecture'. See Lyne (1998), Murgia (2000), and Fedeli (2005, esp. 31-5), who all argue that 2.11 constituted the last poem of Book 2a. See also discussion at 129 later in this chapter.

Quicumque ille fuit puerum qui pinxit Amorem,
nonne putas miras hunc habuisse manus?
is primum uidit sine sensu uiuere amantes
et leuibis curis magna perire bona.

2.12.1-4

Propertius turns aside from the written reality of his elegiac affair to pose a question directly to the reader, initiating a didactic sequence in which he as much praises this *πρῶτος εὐρετής* as he informs us of his artistic process. Just as we have seen in earlier discussions of Propertius' teaching, he accompanies his instruction by adopting a shared perspective: this painter is equally removed in time and place for poet and reader alike. Yet with neither able to observe the painter directly, this perspective also betrays the restricted empirical basis upon which Propertius' instruction rests: he teaches what is not visible; we learn without using our eyes. Thus, while Propertius' rhetorical question echoes Lucretius' frequent refrain *nonne uides*,³⁵⁸ his own version – *nonne putas* – exchanges eyesight for mental activity. As Propertius shifts the focus away from his amatory reality to the painter's process, he encourages us to learn from him by following his lead and imagining another artist at work.³⁵⁹

This didactic move is then contrasted with – and emphasised by – by the primacy for which this *πρῶτος εὐρετής* is praised: not painting (*qui pinxit*), but seeing (*is primum uidit*). Yet far from leading us to see what the painter saw, Propertius leaves us trapped in his mind. As the focus shifts from the painter's hands, what stands before us is a confusion of the literal and metaphorical. The painter would not have seen either 'lovers living without reason' (3) or 'great goods perishing thanks to fickle anxieties' (4). Reason cannot be literally seen, and to describe one as living without it is to portray one's behaviour in figurative terms. As for *bona* – whether 'property' or 'propriety' – these neither die nor perish: the former are sold or given away; the latter merely ceases. The painter's actual perceptions are here already transformed by the imagination: the unempirical perspective with which Propertius begins the poem thus extends to the creative process of the painter about whom he informs us, as the only seeing continues to be that done in the mind. This establishes a parallel between the two artists developed later

³⁵⁸ On the expression, see the seminal discussion by Schiesaro (1984).

³⁵⁹ See also Martins (2017) 187.

in the poem; and in the meantime, Propertius hints at our relationship with the reality he writes. Holding us back from the reality seen by the painter, Propertius suggests his poetry can only do the same: we can never be sure of the reality behind his art, only of the imagination's role in its creation.

Furthermore, by drawing a parallel between his and the painter's creative processes in terms of the imagination, Propertius encourages his poem to be viewed in light of ancient discourse concerning the kinship between painting and poetry, encapsulated by two *dicta*: 'painting is mute poetry, poetry is speaking painting',³⁶⁰ which is attributed to Simonides and, according to Plutarch, 'frequently repeated';³⁶¹ the other is Horatian – *ut pictura poesis*.³⁶² This similarity is rooted in the idea that poetry can convey images before the mind's eye through the interplay of two important devices – ἐνάργεια and φαντασία – whose power ultimately extends to other forms of narrative too, such as history and rhetoric, as well as painting itself.³⁶³ The former device, rendered in Latin by a number of terms,³⁶⁴ is 'an expression which brings that which is signified before the eye'.³⁶⁵ To achieve ἐνάργεια, it is necessary for the speaker to visualise that which he wants to show: he produces for himself mental impressions – φαντασίαι, dubbed *uisiones* or *imagines*³⁶⁶ – which subsequently arise in the minds of his listeners through the ἐνάργεια they inspire. These are powerful: Longinus' claim that a φαντασία 'enslaves' (δουλοῦται, *Subl.* 15.9) is echoed by Quintilian, who argues that a speech does not sufficiently 'hold sway' if it only goes as far as the ears (*neque ... plene dominatur oratio si usque ad aures*

³⁶⁰ Cf. Plut. *De Glor. Ath.* 346F: Πλὴν ὁ Σιμωνίδης τὴν μὲν ζωγραφίαν ποίησιν σιωπῶσαν προσαγορεύει, τὴν δὲ ποίησιν ζωγραφίαν λαλοῦσαν. Cf. also Plut. *Quaest. Conu.* 748A; *De audiendis poetis* 18A; *De adulate et amico* 58B.

³⁶¹ Plut. *Quomodo adul.* 17F-18A: καὶ μὴ μόνον ἐκεῖνο τὸ θρυλούμενον ἀκηκοῶς ἔστω, ζωγραφίαν μὲν εἶναι φθεγγομένην τὴν ποίησιν, ποίησιν δὲ σιγῶσαν τὴν ζωγραφίαν.

³⁶² Hor. *Ars P.* 361. See Brink (1971) 368-71.

³⁶³ On painting and history, see Sheppard (2014) 27-34. On the concept of φαντασία and its development in late antiquity, see Watson (1998).

³⁶⁴ E.g. *illustratio* and *euidencia* (Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.32); *demonstratio* (*Rhet. Her.* 4.68); *descriptio* (Prisc. *Praeex.* 10). See also Vasaly (1993) 90.

³⁶⁵ Anonymous Seguerianus 96: ἔστι δὲ ἐνάργεια λόγος ὑπ' ὅψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον. Confusingly, Hermogenes uses the same phrasing for ecphrasis ('Ἐκφρασίς ἐστι λόγος περιηγηματικός, ὡς φασιν, ἐναργῆς καὶ ὑπ' ὅψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον, *Prosgymnasmata* 10); Lausberg (1998) §810 lists both in his collection of evidence for ἐνάργεια.

³⁶⁶ Cf. Lausberg (1998) §811.

ualet, *Inst.* 8.3.62).³⁶⁷ And significant too was that these devices were inextricably tied to an emotional response, whether of the one producing φαντασῖαι or receiving them:³⁶⁸ according to Longinus, both poetry and oratory aim for the ‘emotional and excited’ through φαντασῖαι.³⁶⁹ Quintilian, meanwhile, argues that one should be moved by emotions before moving the audience, and that to do so, one must produce φαντασῖαι for himself;³⁷⁰ such a speaker will be the ‘most powerful in terms of emotions’ and may be called a εὐφαντασίωτος.³⁷¹

This constitutes valuable aesthetic and didactic context for 2.12 – perhaps all the more so given that this poem has been considered to be playing on a rhetorical exercise.³⁷² As Propertius imagines the painter, he encourages us to do the same: his φαντασῖαι give rise to our own. And as for ἐνάργεια, Quintilian lists three kinds: (1) where ‘the whole image is somehow painted with words’ (*tota rerum imago quodam modo uerbis depingitur*, *Inst.* 8.3.63); (2) where the image comprises a number of details (*ex pluribus efficitur*, *Inst.* 8.3.66); (3) where ‘vividness arises from incidental effects’ (*contingit eadem claritas etiam ex accidentibus*, *Inst.* 8.3.70), which Lausberg interprets as ‘the symptomatic effects on those who are involved with it in some way’.³⁷³ It would appear that lines 3-4 are thus ἐνάργεια on all three accounts: (3) because they concern lovers’ angst; (2) because this angst is shown in two different ways; (1)

³⁶⁷ Cf. Goldhill (2007) 4-5.

³⁶⁸ An association already suggested in the fifth century BC; see Sheppard (2014) 19-22.

³⁶⁹ Longinus, *Subl.* 1.15.1: ἤδη δ’ ἐπὶ τούτων κεκράτηκεν τοῦνομα [*sc.* φαντασῖαι], ὅταν ἂ λέγεις ὑπ’ ἐνθουασιασμοῦ καὶ πάθους βλέπειν δοκῆς καὶ ὑπ’ ὄψιν τιθῆς τοῖς ἀκούουσιν. ὡς δ’ ἕτερον τι ἡ ῥητορικὴ φαντασῖα βούλεται καὶ ἕτερον ἢ παρὰ ποιηταῖς, οὐκ ἂν λάθοι σε, οὐδ’ ὅτι τῆς μὲν ἐν ποιήσει τέλος ἐστὶν ἐκπληξίς, τῆς δ’ ἐν λόγοις ἐνάργεια, ἀμφοτέραι δ’ ὁμως τό τε <παθητικόν> ἐπιζητοῦσι καὶ τὸ συγκεκινημένον. Although Longinus distinguishes the τέλη of poetry and oratory as ἐκπληξίς (emotional astonishment) and ἐνάργεια respectively, he discusses Simonides’ poetry in terms of the latter (οὐκ οἶδ’ εἴ τις ὄψιν ἐναργέστερον εἰδωλοποίησε Σιμωνίδου, 1.15.7) and praises Demosthenes for the former (ᾧθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀποδεικτικοῦ περιελκόμεθα εἰς τὸ κατὰ φαντασίαν ἐκπληκτικόν, 1.15.11).

³⁷⁰ Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.28: *primum est igitur ut apud nos ualeant ea quae ualere apud iudicem uolumus, adficiamurque antequam adficere conemur*.

³⁷¹ Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.29-30: *quas φαντασίας Graeci uocant (nos sane uisiones appellemus), per quas imagines rerum absentium ita repraesentantur animo ut eas cernere oculis ac praesentes habere uideamur, has quisquis bene ceperit is erit in adfectibus potentissimus. quidam dicunt εὐφαντασίωτον qui sibi res, uoces, actus secundum uerum optime finget ...*

³⁷² Quint. *Inst.* 2.4.26: *solebant praeceptores mei neque inutili et nobis etiam iucundo genere exercitationis praeparare nos coniecturalibus causis cum quaerere atque exequi iuberent ... ‘quid ita crederetur Cupido puer atque uolucer et sagittis ac face armatus’*. See Lyne (1998) 171; Keith (2008) 35-6; and Martins (2017) 186-9.

³⁷³ Lausberg (1998) §813.

because they portray the painter having already begun the creative process required to produce his painting. As for the emotional response, it stands at the heart of this poem since it concerns the nature of *Amor*; yet it also stands to be reckoned against Propertius' guise of *praeceptor*. Quintilian argues that painting an emotional picture in the mind of an orator's audience can be used to persuade them by introducing plausible falsehoods (*et licebit etiam falso adfingere quidquid fieri solet*, *Inst.* 8.3.70), for 'a judge overcome by emotions leaves aside the idea of inquiring into truth' (*omnem ueritatis inquirendae rationem iudex omittit occupatus adfectibus*, *Inst.* 6.2.6).³⁷⁴ Having already ditched the epistemological value of sight in this poem's instruction (*nonne putas*), Propertius can be read against this background to further suggest that teaching about the nature of *Amor* involves painting in our minds a reality that cannot be free from make-believe.

Complicating this further is the fact that Propertius begins this poem by teaching about one who is himself a creator of fiction. The painter is a *πρῶτος εὐρετής* because he was the first who exposed *Amor* in this observable guise to the public imagination.³⁷⁵ others may have painted other *Amores* and made them perceptible in different ways, but it is what he first saw that has since come to be seen. In so doing, the painter has given an enduring visible form to a universal emotion – a form arising from his own *φαντασία*, and which has produced *φαντασία* in the minds of all who saw it, persuading them that their reality is as the painter has seen it. In that sense, the painter is as much a creator of reality as any orator, if only his version of truth appears to be immortal; by drawing *Amor* as a boy – a recognisable human shape – the painter may even be said, like an orator, to have constrained the reality he proposes 'within the activities of life' to make it more plausible and easier to accept (*omnis eloquentia*

³⁷⁴ Notably, Quintilian introduces this point by comparing the power of emotions over judges to lovers' inability to judge beauty because their 'mind overtakes [or commands] the perception of the eyes' (*sicut amantes de forma iudicare non possunt quia sensum oculorum praecipit animus, ita omnem ueritatis inquirendae rationem iudex omittit occupatus adfectibus*, *Inst.* 6.2.6). See Elsner (2007, 186-7; with references), who notes that in Stoic philosophy, 'truth itself ... could be derived from sense perception', leading him to argue that 'the key concept around which Roman ideas of artistic creativity, rhetorical theory, ekphrasis, and even truth itself all intersected was *phantasia*'; Watson (1998) 70 holds that Longinus was influenced by Stoic conceptions of *φαντασία*. Goldhill (1997) 207-10 argues that Stoic philosophical concerns with *φαντασία* ushered in a new '*discourse of viewing* in the Hellenistic period' (emphasis his own), whose ramifications were felt in other philosophical branches.

³⁷⁵ Cf. *Lucr.* 1.66-7 (*primum ... tollere contra | est ausus primusque obsistere contra*) and 3.9 (*tu, pater, es rerum inuentor*) where Epicurus is also a kind of *πρῶτος εὐρετής*.

circa opera uitae est ... et id facillime accipiunt animi quod agnoscunt, Inst. 8.3.71). And as the painter's eyes have clearly led him to persuade us towards a constructed reality, his influence upon reality remains that of a creator, as subsequent verses show:

idem non frustra uentosas addidit alas,
fecit et humano corde uolare deum:
scilicet alterna quoniam iactamur in unda:
nostraque non ullis permanet aura locis.

2.12.5-8

What the painter saw now becomes what he did, adding (*addidit*, 5) and making (*fecit*, 6); but what he fashions remains a φαντασία, appearing first in his mind, then in ours. His painting is filled with motion: *Amor* flies (*uolare*, 6) on *uentosae alae* (5), which suggest billowing wind; and while static paintings can be said to give the illusion of motion, they do so only if their ἐνάργεια creates the requisite φαντασία in the minds of the audience. However impressive the painter's skill, our relationship to his painting remains solely mental, not least because it is brought here before us through the φαντασία created by Propertius' verse.³⁷⁶ Here, moreover, the wind sweeps from the painter's work to the lovers' experiences (*aura*), themselves rendered in the figurative terms of stormy seas: this highlights the emotional force of the painter's φαντασία and its congruence with the audience's reality, but more importantly shows that the nature of this reality remains inherently imaginative, with the painter's creation enriching the lived φαντασία that already holds sway over the lovers – among whom Propertius naturally counts himself too (*iactamur ... | nostraque*, 7-8). The poet also inserts himself into the chain of artistic production, for an *alterna unda* alludes to the two-part form of the elegiac couplet

³⁷⁶ Skutsch (1973, 323), with reference to Cornutus' description of *Amor* (*Theol. Gr. Comm.* ch. 25), argues that 'Propertius' inspiration is verbal rather than visual ... [i]t is obviously true that Propertius here or there describes something which he has seen ... [b]ut if I am not mistaken his description of what he has seen is poor'; he questions 'how ... a painting can show *Amor* flying in or into a human heart'. Laird (1996, 83) takes a similar perspective when commenting on *molliter ... pedes* (24) at the end of the poem: 'these literary techniques are beyond the resources of the painter'. See, however, Reedy (2007, 233-80), who discusses the ways in which ἐνάργεια 'offers a way out of the binary opposition between "visual" and "verbal"' (243) in 2.12 and other Propertian poems.

through the water imagery with which his poetry is frequently associated.³⁷⁷ Propertius thereby once more foreshadows the comparison to come between painting and poetry in the poem's second half; yet more fundamental still is the implication for the amatory teaching offered here and elsewhere. Propertius, living through his poetry the imaginative reality of love created by the painter, cannot himself teach a reality any more true – not that a reader enraptured by love can be expected to see where truths end and falsehoods begin.

This implied antithesis between love and truth may be further strengthened if the painter's creation of *Amor* is compared to that of Pandora.³⁷⁸ Arising from a chain of deceitful action between Prometheus and Zeus, she was endowed by Hermes with his own character as he 'set into her breast lies, crafty words, and a thievish disposition according to the plans of deep-thundering Zeus' (ἐν δ' ἄρα οἱ στήθεσσι ... | ψεύδεά θ' αἰμυλίους τε λόγους καὶ ἐπίκλοπον ἦθος | τεῦξε Διὸς βουλῆσι βαρυκτύπου, *Op.* 77-9).³⁷⁹ As in 2.12, a simple verb of making (τεῦξε; cf. *fecit*, 6) elides a more complicated process as the creation is brought to completion. *Amor* and Pandora also appear as mirror images of one another: *Amor* is a boy made a god (*deum*, 6); Pandora is divine made woman. And both, moreover, have their origins in hindered eyesight and mental vision: the painter, as noted above, sees through his imagination; while the tiff between Prometheus and Zeus begins with the former hiding the bones of an ox in 'gleaming fat' (καλύψας ἀργέτι δημῶ, *Theog.* 541), drawing the eyes of the latter towards his deception and leaving him to perceive it first in his mind, where 'he saw evils for mortal humans' (Ζεὺς δ' ἄφθιτα μήδεα εἰδὼς | γνῶ ρ' οὐδ' ἠγνοίησε δόλον· κακὰ δ' ὄσσετο θυμῶ | θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισι, *Theog.* 550-2). Now, both creations exist as nothing more than φαντασία, shown before our minds by painters and poets alike.

So if *Amor* is another Pandora, the painter becomes another Zeus; but more importantly, Propertius also appears as another Hermes. Describing Pandora's creation in the *Works and Days*, Hesiod twice refers to the god as the 'Argus-slaying intermediary', alluding to the myth in which Hermes slayed the hundred-eyed monster after lulling him to sleep with his music

³⁷⁷ For King (1980a, 81), *alterna in unda* is indicative of the theme of *rota amoris* (cf. 2.8.7-8), which she argues pervades the poems of Book 2a – and which would thus recall the cyclicity already described in Book 1.

³⁷⁸ See the discussion of the 'implicit myth' of Pandora in 1.13 in chapter 2, 84.

³⁷⁹ The same verb occurs in the *Theogony* (570) when Zeus first contrives Pandora as a punishment: αὐτίκα δ' ἀντὶ πυρὸς τεῦξεν κακὸν ἀνθρώποισι.

from his constant watch (διάκτορον ἀργειφόντην, *Op.* 68; διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης, 77; cf. Ἀργειφόντην ... | ... ἄγγελον, 84-5).³⁸⁰ Hermes' associations extended to music and writing,³⁸¹ while Lucian later uses διάκτορος to mean 'poet';³⁸² and though these make Propertius an easy parallel for Hermes, it is perhaps the god's blinding of Argus that most informs the message this poem conveys. Portraying the painter's *Amor*, Propertius channels his φαντασία through the one he creates with his verse, blinding the reader's reason despite – or even because of (cf. *Inst.* 4.2.64) – the ἐνάργεια with which he transmits it. His lovelorn reader, in turn, is left to become another Epimetheus, understanding what has been transmitted only once he has received it, if at all (αὐτὰρ ὁ δεξάμενος, ὅτε δὴ κακὸν εἶχ' ἐνόησεν, *Op.* 89).

Propertius, in any case, thus continues to develop a concordance between the painter's and his own art while complicating the boundary between the imagination and the reality to which it responds. Having conflated *Amor*'s characteristics with lovers' experiences in the couplets cited above, he proceeds to do the same again:

et merito hamatis manus est armata sagittis
 et pharetra ex umero Cnosia utroque iacet,
 ante ferit quoniam tutos quam cernimus hostem,
 nec quisquam ex illo uulnere sanus abit.

2.12.9-12

The similarity between these two pairs of couplets is clear from their language and structure: *non frustra* (5) is paralleled by *merito* (9), *quoniam* is repeated (7; 11) and so are first-person

³⁸⁰ Propertius refers to the story of Argus 1.3 as he idealizes his sleeping mistress while describing himself watching her intently (*sed sic intentis haerebam fixus ocellis* | *Argus ut ignotis cornibus Inachidos*, 19-20). Kaufhold (1997, 96-7) has associated his sight with creation by arguing that 'the Argus simile which heralds the second portrait of the wakened mistress suggests what follows is novel ... [t]he comparison ... suggests the presence of a novel Cynthia rather than the familiar angry mistress whose outpouring of wrath would be nothing new. [T]he novelty could ... lie in the fact that the generic conventions in the second portrait of Cynthia [*uiz.* when she awakes] rewrite her as a Cynthia unknown in the first two poems, a Cynthia who plays the role of the elegiac lover.'

³⁸¹ For Hermes as the inventor of the alphabet, see Plut. *Symp.* 9.3.2; Diod. Sic 1.16, 5.75; and Hyg. *Fab.* 277. For Hermes as the inventor of the lyre, see *Hom. Hymn Herm.* 51, and Hor. *Carm.* 1.10.6.

³⁸² Cf. Luc. *Alex.* 33, where the false prophet suggests Pythagoras and Homer as teachers: Πυθαγόρην πολέμων τε διάκτορον ἐσθλὸν | ᾠοιδόν.

plurals (*iactamur ... | nostraque*, 7-8; *cernimus*, 11); the first couplet again refers to the painter's depiction of *Amor*, and the second extends it onto amatory experience. Yet a transition is under way too. The painter has begun to recede from view: he has been the subject of lines 5-6, but it is *Amor* that is the subject of lines 9-10; the focus has shifted from the painter's hands (*manus*, 2) to his creation's arms (*manus est armata*, 9). This difference, moreover, is matched by a tighter connection between the first and second couplets: if the god's wings and flight were rather obliquely mirrored by amatory tempests, his weapons now directly cause the wounds he deals. In sum, as *Amor* comes into existence he begins to stand less as a painter's φαντασία than as a god in his own right – yet with the lovers' experiences still conceived in clearly figurative terms (which also allude to the Propertian *militia amoris*, developed in subsequent lines), the god remains part of reality that is no less rooted in the imagination.

Amor's continued existence as a φαντασία is also burnished by the first-person plural verb of seeing (*cernimus*, 11). *Amor* strikes before he is seen, appearing only once he has left his target insane (*nec quisquam ... sanus abit*, 12). The god thus causes the *furor* that Propertius bewails at the start of his collection (1.1.7); but becoming visible only once his target has lost all reason further turns him into an illusion which one has been persuaded to believe following a strong emotional response. Like an orator's audience, then, the lovers' minds again appear beholden to the φαντασία served up for them; but with the painter fading from view, Propertius creates room for himself to become the creator of this φαντασία instead. He does, after all, portray himself captivated by it – as Quintilian suggests an orator should be – and has been painting the god in our minds step-by-step with a medium whose goal Longinus considers to be emotional astonishment (ἐν ποιήσει τέλος ἐστὶν ἔκπληξις, *Subl.* 15.2). So, while Propertius complicates his didactic role by making the subject of his instruction so clearly a product of the imagination and one detached from reason, he nonetheless suggests himself to be in control of the illusion from which he suffers and which he here portrays. As the poet once more assumes the role of *praeceptor*, he ends up teaching us that his elegiac world bends to his whim.

Thus we are introduced to the second half of this poem, in which Propertius begins to outline his own amatory experience, showing the way in which his *Amor* differs from that of the painter:

in me tela manent; manet et puerilis imago;
sed certe pennas perdidit ille suas,
euolat heu nostro quoniam de pectore nusquam
assiduusque meo sanguine bella gerit.

2.12.13-16

The first-person singular appears for the first time (*me*, 13; cf. *meo*, 16) as Propertius now brings us away from the poetically-coloured generalities of previous lines to the specifics of his amatory reality. He now speaks with certainty (*certe*, 14), and, having earlier received a *uulnus*, continues to flesh out his form (*pectore ... | ... sanguine*, 15-16). As this reality sharpens into focus so too it appears to bring *Amor* further into the realm of the living: the god sheds his wings, and what Propertius battles is a mere boy. Yet Propertius is merely altering the φαντασία which he has inherited from the painter, putting himself in control of the creative process he had begun by describing, but keeping his reality fundamentally artistic: his *Amor*'s violence recalls the battles waged by an elegiac *milites amoris*, while the god's wingless appearance alludes to a passage from Eubulus, in which the poet argues that *Amor*'s first painter made a mistake in giving him wings;³⁸³ Propertius' reality may thus be unlike the painter's imagination, but it can still be read as beholden to that of another artist. Propertius, furthermore, had earlier described the painter drawing *Amor* inside the human heart (*humano ... corde*, 6): now he recalls this and makes the heart his own (*nostro ... pectore*, 15). In so doing, he becomes part of that painting, simultaneously both the creator and the created – as befits the poet who writes about his own verse. And just as the painter's drawing is ultimately a φαντασία which has become part of a lover's reality, so Propertius suggests that his edits to this mental image can become part of ours: while he is the one who reveals to us what his *Amor* is like, the first person plural suggests that his creation need not be confined to his heart alone (*nostro ... pectore*, 15).

The poet thus puts himself at the crossroads between artistic reception and artistic creation. The art of the painter weighs on his life in his written world, but his life is itself art in poetic form, ready to become part of the reality of his audience. However much he fleshes out his

³⁸³ Eubulus fr. 40, cited in Ath. 13.562c-d: τίς ἦν ὁ γράψας πρῶτος ἀνθρώπων ἄρα | ἢ κηροπλαστήσας Ἔρωθ' ὑπόπτερον; | ... πῶς ἂν οὖν ἔχοι πτερὰ | τοιοῦτο πρᾶγμα; λήρος, εἰ κάφησέ τις. See Lyne (1998) 171-2.

existence, he remains imagined – and however much he personifies his *Amor*, the god remains so too. The language of seeing is instrumental once more: the reality of Propertius’ love becomes expressed not by a boy but by a ‘semblance’ of one (*puerilis imago*, 15) – a phrase which recalls not only Love’s pictorial origins but also his existence as a φαντασία (cf. *Inst.* 6.2.29; 8.3.63). This serves as important context for the following couplet, where the paths of *Amor* and Propertius diverge:

quid tibi iucundum est siccis habitare medullis?

si pudor est, alio traice tela, puer.

18 pudor est ε] puer est Ω: puer es ζ(Q) | tela puer ε] puella tuo Ω: tela tua ζ: tela loco ζ(Q)

2.12.17-18

Amor becomes the addressee, assuming our place – and as a *puer* once more, he is asked even to pay heed to contemporary social norms (*si pudor est*, 18). But his continued personification contrasts with Propertius’ disintegration: with war waged within him (16), he has turned into nothing but dry bones (*siccis ... medullis*, 17). It is as if the *puerilis imago* (13) was not that of *Amor* but that of Propertius: after all, the god may be his *hostis*, but Propertius is also subservient to a *domina* – and *puer* was used of a male slave of any age.³⁸⁴ The parallel between Propertius’ feeble state and his ephemeral nature as a φαντασία is then strengthened in the subsequent couplet:

intactos isto satius temptare ueneno;

non ego, sed tenuis uapulat umbra mea.

2.12.19-20

Dry bone turns into a shade (*umbra*); yet this is more than a melodramatic reaffirmation of the strength of Propertius’ Love. While *umbra* is often used for the shades of the afterlife,³⁸⁵ Propertius is not quite dead (see 2.12.21, below); here, the term rather plays off the *topos* of a

³⁸⁴ *TLL* s.v. II.B1bα.

³⁸⁵ *OLD* s.v. 7.

lover's physical ephemerality.³⁸⁶ Propertius is more fittingly an *umbra* in the sense of *imago*,³⁸⁷ an association enriched by the broader artistic context and congruent with the imaginative underpinnings of his elegiac reality. While both terms can refer to phantoms of the dead,³⁸⁸ Ovid twice uses them to refer to the reflection with which Narcissus fell in love;³⁸⁹ each time, Ovid also stresses the ephemeral nature of this semblance mistaken for reality, the sight of which stupefies the real Narcissus into statuesque form and makes him just like the art that captivates him.³⁹⁰ Ovid's use of *umbra* thus points not only to the amatory death Narcissus immediately suffers and foreshadows the real death that follows, but is also tied to an artistic discourse that encourages Narcissus and his beloved self to be viewed as φαντασία – not least since Quintilian dubs these *imagines*, and stresses their ephemerality too.³⁹¹ The *umbra* that Propertius is, then, is not unlike that seen by Narcissus: the product of *Amor* realised as art, slight (*tenuis*, 20) as the elegy within which it is portrayed – and no less the product of the imagination than the god which strikes him, or the φαντασία of him that we ourselves see.

Enriching this reading is the intertextual link through *uapulat* to Plautus' *Persa* – one noted, but incuriously dismissed, by Fedeli.³⁹² There, Sagaristius accosts the boy-slave Paegnium, and initiates an abusive back-and-forth by demanding to know the whereabouts of his master, whom Paegnium has by now kept waiting. In the end, Sagaristius tells Paegnium to get lost, to which Paegnium replies: *abigis facile. | nam umbra mea iam intus uapulat* (297-8). While the sense is tricky and the text uncertain, whether Paegnium suggests that Sagaristius is doing

³⁸⁶ See Fedeli (2005) 357, citing in comparison 1.5.21-22 (*nec iam pallorem totiens mirabere nostrum, | aut cur sim toto corpore nullus ego*).

³⁸⁷ Cf. also 4.4.66, where *umbra* refers to an imagined semblance as Tarpeia wishes to see Tatius in her dreams: *fac uenias oculis umbra benigna meis*, the association of *umbra* with sleep is also not insignificant for my discussion of 3.3.1 (see chapter 4, 185-6).

³⁸⁸ Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 2.772-3: *infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae | uisa mihi ante oculos et nota maior imago*. The Greek φάντασμα can likewise mean 'shade' (ἦλθ' ὑπὲρ ἄκρας τύμβου κορυφᾶς | φάντασμ' Ἀχιλέως, Eur. *Hec.* 94) or an artistic φαντασία (πρὸς πότερον ἢ γραφικὴ πεποιήται περὶ ἕκαστον; πότερα πρὸς τὸ ὄν, ὡς ἔχει, μιμήσασθαι, ἢ πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον, ὡς φαίνεται, φαντάσματος ἢ ἀληθείας οὐσα μίμησις; Plato, *Rep.* 598β).

³⁸⁹ Ov. *Met.* 3.416-17: *dumque bibit, uisae correptus imagine formae | spem sine corpore amat, corpus putat esse, quod umbra est; Met.* 3.434-5: *ista repercussae, quam cernis, imaginis umbra est: | nil habet ista sui*.

³⁹⁰ Ov. *Met.* 3.418-19: *adstupet ipse sibi uultuque inmotus eodem | haeret, ut e Pario formatum marmore signum*. See Darab (2018) 110: 'Narcissus eyes not his animate, real self, but the image of his own sculpture-self.'

³⁹¹ Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.30; 10.7.15.

³⁹² Fedeli (2005) 357.

nothing but beating his *umbra*, or that his master is already beating his *umbra* for being late,³⁹³ Paegnium's retort broadly means that the abuse harms not him directly but the mental conception of him held in the minds of others. And even if he is about to receive a beating from his master personally, it will not be seen directly by the audience either: this is the end of the scene. In that regard, this parallel is instructive for Propertius: instead of *non ego, sed* he might as well have written *non ego, quod*, to chase after the real Propertius through his poetic text is to chase after shadows. To paraphrase another Plautine line, the Propertius we see as we read is less a lover than the shadow of one (*umbra es amantum magis quam amator, Mil. 625*).

The final couplets comprise a conditional clause:

quam si perdidideris, quis erit qui talia cantet
 (haec mea Musa leuis gloria magna tua est),
 qui caput et digitos et lumina nigra puellae
 et canat ut soleant molliter ire pedes?

2.12.21-4

The apodosis, as the poem's second rhetorical question, neatly forms a frame with the opening lines. The protasis, meanwhile, looks back to the *tenuis umbra* – and in so doing, complicates the simple answer the question expects. Is it Propertius or his *umbra* that sings about the *puella*? The *Musa leuis* appears to be produced by an immaterial figment of the imagination – and Propertius' poeticization is paralleled by his *puella*'s. Her characteristics map well onto poetry itself: *caput* can mean 'title'; *digitos* calques δάκτυλος, a unit of verse; while *pedes*, as often, suggest poetic 'feet' – and these go *molliter*, just as a *leuis Musa* is wont to.³⁹⁴ Her description also moves from top to bottom, her form the same as the poetry of which she is part. The only feature to break this sequence are her *lumina*, but this also stresses their significance. While dark eyes are a common marker of beauty, these are black and strikingly devoid of the light their name supposes them to have,³⁹⁵ thereby becoming parallels for Propertius' self-

³⁹³ See Woytek (1982) 271-2 for discussion of text and meaning; he, however, also considers the Propertian parallel unhelpful in teasing out the precise meaning of Paegnium's retort.

³⁹⁴ Cf. Wyke (1987) 56.

³⁹⁵ That *lumina nigra* is meant as a fantastical oxymoron is suggested by the only other occurrence of the phrase in Propertius, at 4.3.14. Arethusa proclaims that the cause of her husband's absence is to be found in their wedding

characterisation as an *umbra*. Her eyes are lights we do not see; we can never see her meet our gaze just as we can never direct it at her with our eyes.

Wyke is therefore right to argue that in 2.12, ‘the Propertian *puella* is the subject of poetic production and her features ... are shaped to suit the expression ... of that production.’³⁹⁶ Yet no less important is that this production is undertaken by an equally fictitious artist: they jointly retreat from reality into the imaginative realm as Cupid, the explicitly artistic creation, becomes most alive by being anthropomorphised and addressed. And while ‘the cohesion of these two sketches [of the painter’s *puer* and Propertius’ *puella*] encourages the reader to observe that the transition is ... from a visual to a verbal work of erotic art’,³⁹⁷ it is also a transition that encourages the reader to observe that his relationship with this verbal work of art is visual: Propertius and the *puella* may be written, but they manifest themselves as φαντασίαι. In alluding to rhetorical discussions, 2.12 thus also reminds us that no matter the similarity between oratory and poetry in their emotional effects upon the audience, the latter differed from the former in pertaining wholeheartedly to fiction: poetry was seen to have no business with the reality and truth to which oratory ultimately tends.³⁹⁸ Lucretius might have disagreed with such a generalisation, but he, at least, admits to the apparent incongruence of his choice of medium and subject matter. Propertius, on the other hand, happily lets us believe that the φαντασίαι portrayed by his verse derive from a concrete reality – that he feels the emotions he writes himself to have. Yet he also accedes to the whims of the sceptic to show that the reader believes him at his own risk. Unlike an orator, he cannot be seen apart from the φαντασίαι he creates – only a desperate lover would trust the words of one whose self, like his art, is shaped by them, too.

day: a marriage torch being lit from an upturned pyre and burning with ‘black light’ is one of the things to have gone wrong (including being sprinkled with water from the Styx, wearing a wonky headband, and performing vows in the absence of Hymenaeus).

³⁹⁶ Wyke (1987) 56-7.

³⁹⁷ Wyke (1987) 56.

³⁹⁸ Cf. Longinus, *Subl.* 1.15.8: οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν παρὰ τοῖς ποιηταῖς μυθικωτέραν ἔχει τὴν ὑπερέκπτωσιν, ὡς ἔφην, καὶ πάντῃ τὸ πιστὸν ὑπεραίρουσαν, τῆς δὲ ῥητορικῆς φαντασίας κάλλιστον ἀεὶ τὸ ἔμπρακτον καὶ ἐνάληθες. δεῖναι δὲ καὶ ἔκφυλοι αἱ παραβάσεις, ἥνικ’ ἂν ἡ ποιητικὸν τοῦ λόγου καὶ μυθῶδες τὸ πλάσμα καὶ εἰς πᾶν προεκπίπτων τὸ ἀδύνατον ... Cf. also Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.28: *meminerimus tamen non per omnia poetas esse oratori sequendos, nec libertate uerborum nec licentia figurarum: genus ostentationi comparatum, et, praeter id quod solam petit uoluptatem eamque fingendo non falsa modo sed etiam quaedam incredibilia sectatur ...*

ii. 2.1

Propertius, in fact, explores the relationship between sight and his creative process right from the start of his second book,³⁹⁹ where he likewise adopts a didactic tone and exposes the fundamental fictionality of his elegiac world. While 2.12 begins by asking the readers a question, 2.1 begins by repeating, and then answering, a question the readers have already asked:⁴⁰⁰

Quaeritis unde mihi totiens scribantur amores
unde meus ueniat mollis in ora liber.

2.1.1-2

Propertius' affairs are written (*scribantur amores*, 1): led according to soft elegiac ideals they result in a soft book (*mollis ... liber*, 2), which grows in fame as it passes over the lips of men – a fame now written back into the book. The second book thus opens by pointing to the circular relationship between life and poetry that has already been shown in Book 1, but now Propertius will take us into the heart of his creative process: just as he will show us the painter's production of his *Amor* in 2.12, so he shows us the production of his own *amores*. The painter is inspired by people, but Propertius needs only his girl:⁴⁰¹

non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo:
ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit.

2.1.3-4

³⁹⁹ Cf. Curtis (2019), who has recently argued that Propertius' rhetoric of sight helps to present Cynthia in 2.1 in terms of a divine epiphany 'to position his elegiac book as a potent object for conjuring Cynthia's presence' (407).

⁴⁰⁰ Wiggers (1977, 334-5) argues that 'the all-inclusive invocation ... draws [the reader] into the poem as an active participant and casts him into an adversary role in which he is made the question the artist's facility and success. The transformation of readers into critics is important because ... [i]t is a sign that all of us are being invited into a serious discussion ... of the poetry which describes that love.'

⁴⁰¹ See Miller (1986, 157-9), who argues that Ovid 'follows the basic structure of the Propertian disclaimer' (157) in claiming authority on the basis of *usus* in the *Ars* (1.29) as well as parodying the precedents of didactic inspiration set by Hesiod and Callimachus.

The poet's *ingenium* comes not from the gods but from his *puella*: she is the cause of his *amores*, and it is these that force him to his elegiac Muses. As in 1.7, moreover, what *ingenium* means merits attention. The *TLL* cites this line under '*inspiratio, ἐνθουσιασμός*,'⁴⁰² and Goold and Fedeli translate it as such;⁴⁰³ it can also mean 'poetic talent', as Heyworth translates it.⁴⁰⁴ But as noted earlier,⁴⁰⁵ *ingenium* stems from *in-gignere* and can mean φαντασία – and in a poem which begins by elucidating its origins as an artistic production (*unde ... scribantur*, 1), this meaning ought to be in play too. The *puella* is Propertius' inspiration because she is the φαντασία that he sees and which he writes, and for which he is ultimately credited with poetic talent. As in 2.12, we begin to learn about the creative process not by seeing out of the artist's eyes but into his mind;⁴⁰⁶ but while in 2.12 it will be the painter who made his φαντασία (*addidit ... | fecit*, 2.12.5-6), here it is the *puella* that makes Propertius', extending his submissiveness as a lover onto his role as an artist, and also keeping his elegiac world independent of reality. This is a written *puella* who writes herself, first furnishing the poet and then us (*nobis*) with φαντασία; we affirm her and her poet's (*nobis*) talent as she passes through our lips in the guise of a soft book (2.1.2).

Propertius, therefore, obfuscates just when he claims to elucidate: his written *amores* come from a *puella*, and this *puella* comes from his written *amores*. The interwoven relationship between the two continues to be expressed until Propertius addresses Maecenas in line 17, and as in 2.12, the language of sight is used to stress that the poetic process is tied inextricably to the workings of the mind's eye:⁴⁰⁷

siue illam Cois fulgentem incedere cerno,
totum de Coa ueste uolumen erit;

5 cerno *Leo*] cogis *NATJWMUC*: togis *SKR*: uidi ζ

6 totum de ζ] hoc totum e Ω

2.1.5-6

⁴⁰² *TLL* s.v. 2b.

⁴⁰³ Goold (1990) 103, 'inspiration'; Fedeli (2005) 47, 'ispirazione', also citing 1.7.7-8 as a parallel.

⁴⁰⁴ Heyworth (2007b) 533.

⁴⁰⁵ See chapter 1, 36-7 and n.156.

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. *Aetna* 549: *nec locus ingenio est: oculi te iudice uincit*.

⁴⁰⁷ On 2.1.5-8, see also O'Neill (2005, 250), who analyses Propertius' sight through Lacan's theory of the gaze: '[I]ooking emerges as the crucial factor in the speaker's account of his poetic inspiration.'

The collection takes on the appearance of the *puella* and vice versa. Coan silk is a material equivalent of elegy's *mollitia*, and alludes to the works of Philitas, praised by Callimachus and by Propertius, among others.⁴⁰⁸ The *puella*'s appearance is thus presented in terms of literary aesthetics, but her poetic nature is suggested in another way, too. As Propertius switches deftly from a supposedly real beloved to a clearly fanciful medium, the seeing that was probably conveyed by the verb lost at the end of line 5 – *cerno* being accepted *exempli gratia* – is immediately superseded by the fantasy of line 6; Propertius' sight, in hindsight, has taken us no further than the poet's mind. Thus, while the *uolumen* resembles the *puella* in its Coan guise, she, in turn, comes to resemble it as no less imagined – and so this *praeceptor* appeals to sight only to show that his subject matter is to be seen in the mind alone. Just as a lover cannot help but view his amatory reality through the lens of the painter's *Amor*, so the reader can only view Propertius' elegiac reality through the lens of his written *amores*.

The *puella* continues to be a material girl in the next couplet too:

seu uidi ad frontem sparsos errare capillos,
gaudet laudatis ire superba comis.

2.1.7-8

Again, she attains the qualities of the *uolumen*, this time as papyrus and parchment. Persius speaks of receiving a *membrana* stripped of *capilli* (on which one could write, or use to envelop a scroll),⁴⁰⁹ while Ovid uses both *frons* and *comae* when hoping that his collection will resemble his own dishevelled appearance:

⁴⁰⁸ Callimachus: *Aetia* fr. 1.9-10 Harder (and cf. fr. 532 Pf.); Propertius: 2.34.31, and cf. 3.1.1, 3.3.52, 4.6.3. Cf. also Ov. *Ars* 3.329-30, *Rem.* 759-60, *Tr.* 1.6.1-4, *Pont.* 3.1.57-8; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.59; Stat. *Silu.* 1.2.252-255. On Philitas' slenderness, see Dorda (1990) and *contra* Cameron (1991), published later (1995, 488-93) in revised form. On Philitas more broadly, see Spanoudakis (2002) and Bing (2003). On Philitas in Callimachus see, e.g., Wimmel (1958), and Harder (2012) 33-6. On Philitas and the Roman poets, see Knox (1993).

⁴⁰⁹ Pers. 3.10-11: *iam liber et positus bicolor membrana capillis | inque manus chartae nodosaque uenit harundo*. Cf. *TLL* s.v. I.C1b for *membrana* used as scroll covers; and especially Catull. 22.7 (*lora rubra membranae*) with Fordyce (1961) *ad loc.*, and Tib. 3.1.9 (*Iutea sed niueum inuoluat membrana libellum, | pumex et canas tondeat ante comas*, 9-10), with Tränkle (1990) 71-2, and Fulkerson (2017) 83-4. For a background on *membrana*, see Birt (1882) 57-71.

nec fragili geminae poliantur pumice frontes,

hirsutus sparsis ut uideare comis.

12 sparsis] passis *cett.*⁴¹⁰

Ov. *Tr.* 1.1.11-12

Ovid personifies his scroll and Propertius objectifies his beloved, but the intertext still helps to show that a concordance between *uolumen* and *puella* remains despite a transition from the former (6) back to the latter (7); their similarity is likewise enriched by poetry's ability to 'rejoice' (*gaudere*) as well as 'to go' (*ire*).⁴¹¹ But more importantly, sight (*uidi*, 7) continues to be associated with poetic production. In this couplet, the pentameter concerns the *puella* – rather than the *uolumen*, as above – but Propertius continues to suggest that what he supposedly sees with his poetic imagination: the *puella* will go praised through his writing, and since strewn hair is not inherently praiseworthy, this writing will not accord with observed reality either. So, the reality offered in this pentameter is no less fanciful than in the one that precedes, while the continued focus on the *puella* belies her existence as the product of his *uolumen*: again, as Propertius sees, he reminds us that we can see no more of his elegiac world than the φαντασία of it his words offer. And if Ovid alludes to Propertius, sight remains part of the play too. In his case, it is not the poet who sees but his work that is seen (*uideare*, 1.11.12) – but the verb likewise nudges the reader to question what it is that he sees. With neither the exiled Ovid nor the work about which he fantasizes directly perceptible by the reader, the very means by which he maintains his presence in Rome is also, paradoxically, what amplifies his remoteness.

As for Propertius, *comis* (8) appears to echo the *Coma Berenices*,⁴¹² and the connection extends from the verbal to the thematic. As Ovid inverts Propertius, so Propertius has inverted Catullus (and Callimachus): there, the *coma* speaks after being cut off from her *domina* (66.76); here, the two are inseparable, and, as *puella* and writing material, are even one and the same. And once again, sight is part of the game. The *coma* speaks of having been seen by the astrologer

⁴¹⁰ The connection to Propertius may thus favour *sparsis* over *passis*, printed by Goold (1996) in the Loeb.

⁴¹¹ Cf. *Culex* 35-6: *mollia sed tenui decurrens carmina uersu | uiribus apta suis Phoebō duce ludere gaudet* [*sc. pagina*, 26]. Cf. *OLD* s.v. 3d, citing Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.57-9: *num rerum dura negarit | uersiculos natura ... euntes | mollius*; and Quint. *Inst.* 9.4.142: *ut debeat [sc. compositio] ... in eosdem semper pedes ire*.

⁴¹² Heyworth (2007b) 104. Zetzel (1983, 92) also notes a bilingual pun on the genre of ἐγκώμιον in *laudatis ... comis*.

Conon, ‘shining brightly in the sky’s light, a lock from Berenice’s head’.⁴¹³ like the painter, Conon drew inspiration from reality to infuse it with his φαντασία, personifying an observable phenomenon with imaginative vision. Propertius, on the other hand, draws upon his elegiac reality – but his seeing is no less creative in force. From the written signs of his verse, he fashions a φαντασία of his own, which, like Conon’s or the painter’s, we may even dare to incorporate into our reality too.⁴¹⁴

Cynthia likewise remains *Cynthia* when she performs:⁴¹⁵

siue lyrae carmen digitis percussit eburnis,
miramur faciles ut premat arte manus;

2.1.9-10

She again appears one with the medium of song: her *digiti* recall the poetic δάκτυλοι with which she appears before us (cf. 2.12.23), while lyres could be made out of ivory too (cf. *eburna* ... *lyra*, Hor. *Carm.* 2.11.22).⁴¹⁶ It has also been argued that her ivory fingers give her a statuesque form,⁴¹⁷ but their significance may lie even deeper, for Propertius appears to be a trailblazer in his characterisation: while Ovid happily makes arms, neck, and back out of ivory,⁴¹⁸ only Pelops’ shoulder appears to have been so described in Latin verse before these fingers.⁴¹⁹ And if Propertius stresses the constructed nature of his *puella* through this nod to

⁴¹³ Catull. 66.7-9: *me ille Conon caelesti in lumine uidit | e Beroniceo uertice caesariem | fulgentem clare.*

⁴¹⁴ Cf. Volk (2012), who views Aratus’ celestial σήματα as a literary text. At 210 n.6 she notes the similarity between Aratus’ comparison of a man-made sphere to the heavens above (*Phaen.* 529-33) with Conon’s understanding of the sky coming ‘from a pictorial representation’ (ἐν γραμμαῖσιν, *Aetia* fr. 110.1 Harder).

⁴¹⁵ Cf. Wiggers (1977) 335, Fredrick (1997) 180, and Wyke (2002) 150.

⁴¹⁶ The lyre was also associated with Erato (cf. [Auson.] *Appendix* 3.6 = *Lat. Pal.* 664.6; *Anth. Pal.* 9.505.3-4; LIMC-France, *LIMCicon ID 1987* [<http://www.limc-france.fr/objet/1987>]), the Muse associated with love poetry (cf. Pl. *Phdr.* 259d, Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 3.1-5; Ov. *Ars* 2.16, *Fast.* 4.195-6).

⁴¹⁷ Cf. Curtis (2019, 412-18), who considers the relationship between Cynthia’s epiphanic appearance at the start of ‘Book 2’ and her growing identification as a *scripta puella*.

⁴¹⁸ Ov. *Am.* 3. 7.7 (*bracchia*); *Epist.* 19.57 (*cervix*); *Met.* 3.422, 4.335 (*colla*); *Met.* 10.592 (*terga*). Elsner (2007, 113-131) argues that Ovid’s story of Pygmalion, who carves his statue – and beloved – out of ivory (*Met.* 10.247-9) may be read two-fold: ‘Pygmalion as artist can be taken for a symbol of the writer ... the beholder-lover in Pygmalion may be read as a myth of the reader. This is a story of how you can view, of how you can read, a metamorphosis.’ (131).

⁴¹⁹ Verg. *G.* 3.7: *cui non dictus ... | ... umeroque Pelops insignis eburno, acer equis?*

Pelops, the allusion to lyric poetry through *Iyrae*⁴²⁰ would suggest he also connects it to the untrustworthiness of his verse – for Pindar recounts the story of Pelops along with other θαύματα (*Olympian* 1.28; cf. *miramur*), but notably calls it an example of tales embellished with ‘elaborate lies’ (δεδαϊδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι, *Ol.* 1.29). We should likewise be wary of letting *Cynthia* get the better of our reason: consumed by emotion, lovers will be led to believe they were struck by the work of a painter with wondrous hands (*miras ... manus*, 2.12.2); however much we may admire Cynthia's hands (*miramur ... manus*), the song which she strikes (*carmen ... percussit*, 9) – and which strikes us in turn⁴²¹ – is no less a product of the imagination, whose craft (*arte*, 10) dazzles first the poet, then us.

A different form of seeing is suggested in the subsequent couplet, but the connection to creativity remains:

seu cum poscentes somnum declinat ocellos,
inuenio causas mille poeta nouas.

2.1.11-12

The gist seems clear: whenever his girl’s eyes begin drooping with sleep, Propertius finds endless reasons for hanky-panky. Yet this admission of wantonness continues to be a comment on his art and its reception. Propertius develops the didactic tone of this poem by clearly alluding to Callimachus’ *Aetia*: *causae* calques αἴτια; *posco*, αἰτέω⁴²² – and like that model, Propertius’ poem is also concerned with origins, with its premise framed as an answer to questions. The allusion is further strengthened through the soporific context: Propertius’ beloved is falling asleep (*somno*, 11);⁴²³ Callimachus’ work is set in a dream. And this, in turn, may serve to remind us that φαντασία are the domain of lovers and poets alike. Plutarch

⁴²⁰ See Zetzel (1983) 92, and Heyworth (2007b) 104.

⁴²¹ *percutere* is can be used of striking emotions and φαντασία into the mind. See *OLD* s.v. 8, esp. Hor., *Epod.* 11.2 (*amore percussum graui*); and Cic. *De Or.* 2.358, concerning the use of mental images as an aid to memorization (*est utendum ... imaginibus autem agentibus, acribus, insignitis, quae occurrere celeriterque percutere animum possint*).

⁴²² The former calque has been widely noticed (though *contra* Butrica 1996, 109); the latter, it would appear, has not.

⁴²³ *somnum* seems to have the meaning of ‘dream’ at Verg. *Aen.* 2.793-4 (*effugit [sc. Creusa] ... | ... simillima somno*; though *dub.* Horsfall 2008, 545-6) and Sil. 3.216 (*promissa euoluit somni noctemque retractat*).

argues that lovers' φαντασίαι are more powerful than those created by the poets (καὶ οὐχ ὥς τις εἶπεν αἱ ποιητικαὶ φαντασίαι διὰ τὴν ἐνάργειαν ἐγρηγορότων ἐνύπνια εἰσιν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον αἱ τῶν ἐρόντων, *Amat.* 759C); Quintilian notes that *imagines* arise during 'wakeful dreams' (*et somnia quaedam uigilantium ita nos hae de quibus loquor imagines prosequuntur, Inst.* 6.2.30). So while Propertius shows himself to be unlike Callimachus both by disavowing the importance of Apollo and Calliope and by keeping awake in his search for manifold *causae*, he is, still, no less a dreamer. And his is a dream he would create: the Hellenistic background Propertius invokes suggests *poeta* has the full force of its Greek equivalent,⁴²⁴ leaving him not only finding (*inuenio*, 12) but devising his *causae*⁴²⁵ – as he has done so far by writing them up in this poem. One might even find some humour in this too. The *poscentes ocelli* may be those of the inquiring reader: while Propertius' *Cynthia* threatens to lull (*declinat*) them to sleep with its φαντασίαι, it is also engaging enough to keep us awake.

The language of sight disappears in the final two couplets, but the association between poem and *puella* continues to be informed by the creative role of the poet's imagination. Propertius next moves from Callimachean foreplay to Homeric action:⁴²⁶

seu nuda erepto mecum luctatur amictu,
tum uero longas condimus Iliadas;

2.1.13-14

Sex is expressed as poetic composition, which is itself expressed with a 'climactic pun, as he both composes long Iliads and inserts his long *ilia*'.⁴²⁷ The circularity of love and verse thus continues, but the reality of the former remains no less imagined. As Propertius disrobes Cynthia (*erepto ... amictu*, 13) and reveals her form (*nuda*, 13), he foreshadows the energetic

⁴²⁴ Cf. 1.7.24 and see also chapter 1, 36-7.

⁴²⁵ For *inuenire* as 'to devise', see *OLD* s.v. 6.

⁴²⁶ See however Cameron (1995) 263-361, who argues against the traditional view that Callimachus' target in the prologue to the *Aetia* (fr. 1.2-4 Harder) is epic, and that it is instead a swollen kind of elegy (especially Antimachus' *Lyde*), one with 'flabbiness and bombast ... the lack of artistry that makes a poem *seem* never ending' (358; emphasis his own).

⁴²⁷ Heyworth (2007b) 104; see also Wiggers (1977) 336. Given the poet's amatory submissiveness to his *domina*, however, the first-person plural may suggest that she inserts her (poetic) *ilia* into him as much as he into her – for she does, after all, instil him with *ingenium*.

action to follow with seductive ἐνάργεια;⁴²⁸ but he also hints at the impossibility of seeing what lies beneath, for before his eyes – and our own – remains a mental image dressed up in *Cynthia's* words. Revelation remains no path to reality other than Propertius' own, written, elegiac reality; and likewise the truth (*tum uero*, 14) of what we see depends on nothing but the *longae Iliades* that arise from their romp – which, of course, we cannot expect to find in Propertius' collection anyway. Having inquired into the origins of his written *amores*, we are referred back to his verse and to the imagination used so far to display them – and so, there is nothing to see beyond that which we see:

seu quicquid fecit, siue est quodcumque locuta,
maxima de nihilo nascitur historia.

2.1.15-16

A sexual climax is expressed with rhetorical flourish. The conjunctions that have opened each couplet since line 5 are repeated (*seu ... siue*, 15) and the actions are expressed in universalizing terms (*quicquid ... quodcumque*, 15), taking us towards the finish in the shape of a *maxima historia* – and thus back to the very start (*nascitur*, 16). While *historia* appears to indicate yet another literary precedent,⁴²⁹ it is more instructive as the closing frame of this opening section: ἱστορία is the process of inquiry, one with which we are apparently engaged (cf. *quaeritis*, 1). So our inquiry simply leads to another, and just as ours was conceived by the poet, so this one – much like the *puella*⁴³⁰ – arises out of nothing (*de nihilo*, 16) too. This circularity thus established may, in turn, be said to point back to the blending of poem and *puella* and their reciprocal roles in the making of the poet's *ingenium*. The origins of the φαντασία displayed by the work are no more than the φαντασία they display: these *amores* beget themselves, for the *puella* is the work she inspires. Thus, as Propertius answers our questions, he leaves us no more clear-sighted than we were before: far from making us knowledgeable about the reality

⁴²⁸ See Quint. *Inst.* 8.3.64-5 on clothing and ἐνάργεια, citing Cic, *Verr.* 5.86: *an quisquam tam procul a concipiendis imaginibus rerum abest ut non, cum illa in Verrem legit: 'stetit soleatus praetor populi Romani cum pallio purpureo tunicaque talari muliercula nixus in litore', non solum ipsos intueri uideatur et locum et habitum, sed quaedam etiam ex iis quae dicta non sunt sibi ipse adstruat?*

⁴²⁹ Wiggers (1977) 336; Heyworth (2007b) 104.

⁴³⁰ See Wyke (2002) 151: '*de nihilo ...* suggests that the history of a mistress is being composed that has no firm basis in reality.'

beyond his text, he has taught us that the reality he portrays is one he controls, seeing it into existence with his imagination, and writing it up in his verse.

iii. 2.13

Propertius continues to present Cynthia as *Cynthia* in 2.13, where he twice assumes a didactic guise: firstly to re-establish his poetic principles (1-16), and then to instruct his beloved on the funeral and veneration with which he wishes to be remembered. Propertius reaffirms his commitment to amatory elegy and shows that its continued existence does not depend on his own survival. But while his poetry and the love it portrays will continue to live on from beyond the grave, the collection that remains to be written stands to be different.

2.13 is primed to offer insight into the development of Propertius' poetics, assuming that it stood at the head of a new book and served as a sequentially immediate response to 2.10 – the final poem of the preceding book,⁴³¹ in which Propertius addressed Augustus (15) and promised to swap elegiac themes for martial ones:

... sed tempus lustrare aliis Heliconae choreis,
et campum Haemonio iam dare tempus equo.
...
aetas prima canat Veneres, extrema tumultus:
bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est.
nunc uolo subducto grauior procedere uultu;
nunc aliam citharam me mea Musa docet. 10
surge, anime, ex humili iam carmine; sumite uires,
Pierides; magni nunc erit oris opus.
...
nondum etiam Ascræos norunt mea carmina montes; 25
sed modo Permessi flumine lauit Amor.

25 montes *Butrica*] fontes Ω

2.10.1-2; 7-12; 25-6

⁴³¹ See n. 357.

The preserved opening of 2.10 has been shown to resemble closural formulae seen elsewhere, making it the start of a final poem or, more likely, the lacunose beginning of its end.⁴³² As transmitted, 2.8 and 2.9 also appear to contain a number of fragments,⁴³³ and 2.11 is one too, comprising six lines and lacking a vocative to match the second-person singular with which it begins (*scribant de te alii ...*, 2.11.1), suddenly taking us back to a *puella* (2.11.6) with an ignominious tone unmatched in 2.12.⁴³⁴ Neither 2.11 nor 2.12 offer the apertural force which deserves to follow the dramatic conclusion that is 2.10,⁴³⁵ making their transmitted positions further evidence of the textual problems marring this part of the collection. Rather, they quite probably stood before 2.10, for 2.13 provides not only the programmatic tone suitable for an opening poem or clear echoes of the poem it follows, but brings to mind even the bellicose *Amor* that tormented Propertius in 2.12:

Non tot Achaemeniis armatur Itura sagittis
 spicula quot nostro pectore fixit Amor.
 hic me tam graciles uetuit contemnere Musas,
 iussit et Ascraeum sic habitare nemus;

1 Itura ε] etrusca Ω: Susa ζ

2.13.1-4

Propertius begins by immediately reneging on his promise to sing Augustan *bella* waged abroad and returning to the amatory warfare waged within him: *Amor* remains in his heart (*pectore*, 2; cf. *pectore* 2.12.15), striking him just as before (*spicula ... fixit*, 2; cf. *in me tela manent*, 2.12.13). The subject of his verse will therefore be not the reality forged by the *princeps* but the φαντασία imagined first by the painter and then by himself; and the fantastical topography

⁴³² See Heyworth (1995) 166-7 and (2007b) 153, and Hutchinson (1984) 100 and n.14; *contra* Skutsch (1975) 230-1.

⁴³³ See Heyworth (2007b) 143, 146-7; *contra* Suits (1965). Luck (1974) argues that 2.6.41-2 are the first verses of 2.7; Butrica (1984, 188-90), that 2.9.1-2 are the final verses of 2.8. Murgia (2000, 150 and 222-31) splits 2.8 in two.

⁴³⁴ See Heyworth (1995) 167.

⁴³⁵ Murgia (2000) 156-68 argues that 2.12 and 2.13 together form the opening poem of Book 2b given the 'presence of connective links ... and a unity of theme' (168). Yet as we have them, the opening poems of Books 1-3 open with an emphasis on the poet-lover (*me* 1.1.1; *meus*, 2.1.2; *me*, 3.1.2); 2.12 makes us wait until the second half of the poem (*in me*, 13). The exception is 4.1a, but it also promises a novel poetic project and innovation far more consequential than the new teaching of 2.14.

which served as the basis for the pivot towards Augustan *militia* now becomes the grounds for continued seclusion from it. In 2.10, Propertius suggested that his swelling spirit (*surge, anime*, 2.10.11) and instruction upon a new lyre (*nunc aliam citharam me mea Musa docet*, 2.10.8) was to be accompanied by ranging further up Helicon (*Ascraeos ... montes*, 2.10.25): Propertius would, thereby, follow in the footsteps of Gallus, led into the mountains of Boeotia (*Aonas in montis*, *Ecl.* 6.65) by one of the Muses and given the reeds once given to Hesiod (*Ecl.* 6.69-70). Now, however, Propertius is instructed not by a *Musa* but by his *Amor* (*iussit*, 3): he is to continue paying heed to the ‘slender Muses’ (*graciles ... Musas*, 3) of his humble song (*humili ... carmine*, 2.10.11); and he is to dwell in the Heliconian grove (*Ascraeum ... nemus*, 4) – where, we might presume, also flows the Permessus, in which *Amor* had washed himself and Propertius’ poetry (*sed modo Permessi flumine lauit Amor*, 2.10.26), and from which Gallus was led upwards by one of the Muses (*errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum | ... ut duxerit una sororum*, *Ecl.* 6.64-5).

The didactic terms in which Propertius twice expresses his occupation of this literary terrain suggest that depicting Helicon as an Ascraean locale points specifically to its association with Hesiod – just as the Hesiodic reeds received by Virgil’s Gallus are those of the ‘old Ascraean’ (*Ascraeo ... seni*, *Ecl.* 6.70). While it is true that ‘nothing anywhere in Book 2 can be compared to the *Works and Days* or *Theogony* or *Eoiai* or even Gallus’ Hesiodic poem on the Grynean grove’ (which Gallus is urged to compose with his reeds in the *Eclogues*, cf. 6.72),⁴³⁶ it does not follow that “inhabiting the Ascraean grove” means not “writing Hesiodic poetry” but simply “writing poetry” on the grounds that “it would be impossible for Propertius to write Hesiodic poetry *without* scorning the “slight muses” which represent his love poetry’.⁴³⁷ Like Hesiod, Propertius is a *praeceptor*: instructed by divinities, he teaches the love that is forced upon him; but more importantly, the Hesiod to which Propertius refers is not only the father of didactic epic, but the poet who ‘used to draw down the unyielding ash trees from the mountains with his song’ (*ille solebat | cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos*, *Ecl.* 6.70-1) – a Hesiod, in short, who used song to shape reality. And since Propertius’ reality is the elegiac world revolving around his beloved, this is where he is to play Hesiod too:

⁴³⁶ Butrica (1996) 125.

⁴³⁷ Butrica (1996) 125. Emphasis his own.

non ut Pieriae quercus mea uerba sequantur,
aut possim Ismaria ducere ualle feras,
sed magis ut nostro stupefiat Cynthia uersu:
tunc ego sim Inachio notior arte Lino.

2.13.5-8

In lines 5-6, Propertius recalls the powers of Virgil's Hesiod described above (*Ecl.* 6.70-1) within a more specific allusion to those of Orpheus; these are then rejected in favour of stunning Cynthia with verse (*ut ... stupefiat Cynthia uersu*, 7), a power with which Propertius hopes to be better known for his art than Linus – a poet who, like Orpheus, is descended from Apollo, and at whose prompting Virgil's Gallus received the reeds from Virgil's Hesiod (*Ecl.* 6.67-9).

That Orpheus is meant in lines 5-6 is clear: he is associated with Ismarus by Virgil (*nec tantum ... miratur et Ismarus Orphea*, *Ecl.* 6.30) and with Pierian oaks by Apollonius (φηγοῖ ... | ... ἄς ὃ γ' ἐπιπρὸ | θελγομένας φόρμιγγι κατήγαγε Πιερίηθεν, *Argon.* 1.28, 30-1).⁴³⁸ As for Linus' epithet *Inachio* ('Argive'), it would appear to be derived from Callimachus' *Aetia*, in which he is the son of the Argive princess Psamathe.⁴³⁹ Rejecting the power of Apollonian Orpheus in favour of trying to outshine Callimachean Linus may suggest itself as a (re-)affirmation of adherence to Callimachean poetics and abstinence from writing epic; but however this preference is to be understood, Propertius is not displaced from the explicitly Hesiodic terrain he inhabits even if he denies his poetry the Orphic powers that are granted to Virgil's Hesiod.

Though Virgil's Hesiod plays Apolline Orpheus by 'leading down' ash-trees (*deducere* echoes κατήγαγε, *Argon.* 1.28.31; cf. *ducere*, 2.13.6), Virgil begins this same poem by using the verb in a different sense ('finely-spun') to portray the Callimachean foundations of his own verse (*Cynthius aurem | uellit et admonuit: 'pastorem, Tityre, pinguis | pascere oportet ouis, deductum dicere carmen'*, *Ecl.* 6.3-5). In so doing, Virgil possibly alludes to the 'finely-spun

⁴³⁸ Heyworth (1992) 49-50. Cf. Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.32-4: Ὀρφέα ... | ... Πιερίη Βιστωνίδι κοιρανέοντα.

⁴³⁹ Ross (1975) 35 and cf. 22; Heyworth (1992) 49.

tale' mentioned in the Linus episode (μῦθον ὑφαινόμενον, *Aetia* fr. 26.5 Harder),⁴⁴⁰ but he also certainly recalls Apollo's instructions at the start of the *Aetia* (fr. 1.22-4), where they are followed by an explicitly Hesiodic initiation (fr. 2). Propertius may differentiate himself from Virgil's Hesiod by rejecting the powers of Apollonian Orpheus, but he continues to be grounded in the *Ascraeum nemus* nonetheless: his hope to surpass Linus echoes that poet's connection to Hesiod in *Eclogue* 6; while Linus' Callimachean epithet, both in itself and through Virgil's own Callimacheanism at the start of *Eclogue* 6, recalls the *Aetia* and its reliance upon its Hesiodic predecessor. The (near total) absence of Gallus' own poetry is, of course, a significant impediment to gaining a clearer picture of this literary play; but as far as concerns Propertius' Hesiodic guise, it would appear that he merely reconfigures it to present himself in power not over nature, but over the nature of his verse. Again, therefore, Propertius' didactic pose would serve to show his control over his elegy.

That Cynthia is also *Cynthia* has, in turn, been well demonstrated by Wyke. She rightly argues that *stupefiat Cynthia* 'is subordinate to, and subsequent on, an instruction to dwell in a particular landscape of language', and since 'the activity of attracting wild beasts and trees demarcates ... a rejected form of Hesiodic discourse', the phrase 'becomes an analogous yet favoured form of poetic production'.⁴⁴¹ Cynthia therefore becomes less a name for Propertius' *puella* than a 'word marking itself as literary terrain', especially as it follows from 'a list of adjectival forms derived from Greek names for mountains, each of which was variously associated with ... literary production'.⁴⁴² Seeing the *puella* as the poetic topography in which Propertius dwells may be possible even in the subsequent proclamation that seemingly concerns the reality of his elegiac existence:

⁴⁴⁰ Heyworth (1992) 51, who also suggests Catull. 64.303-22 (and cf. the refrain at 327, 333, 337, 342, 347, 352, 356, 361, 365, 371, 375, 381) as a precedent for comparing spinning to composition. See also discussion in Harder (2012) 268, with bibliography.

⁴⁴¹ Wyke (1987) 58-9.

⁴⁴² Wyke (1987) 59, citing literary parallels: for Mount Pierus (the birthplace of the Muses), Hes. *Theog.* 53 and *Op.* 1 (and Verg. *Ecl.* 6.13); for Mount Ismarus (the haunt of Orpheus), *Ecl.* 6.30; for Mount Cynthus (the birthplace of Apollo), *Ecl.* 6.3.

me iuuat in gremio doctae legisse puellae
 auribus et puris scripta probasse mea.
 haec ubi contigerint, populi confusa ualeto
 fabula: nam domina iudice tutus ero.

2.13.11-14

A *gremium* is a lap, bosom, or even female genitalia⁴⁴³ – but it is also a natural basin, such as those found at the bases of mountains,⁴⁴⁴ and possibly filled with a stream’s waters.⁴⁴⁵ It may, therefore, suggest the *Ascraeum nemus* in which Propertius dwells, and be the place not only for recitation but for poetic production too: a *gremium* is also the term for ground specifically suitable for sowing,⁴⁴⁶ and it is by casting his seed that Propertius composes his (non-existent) Iliads (2.1.13-14). The *puella*, therefore, may also be a *Puella* – perhaps one of the *graciles Musae* (2.13.3) – whom Propertius looks to stun with his verse as she judges it with *puri aures*;⁴⁴⁷ and it would be her on whom Propertius relies to keep him secluded from the *populi fabula* while he composes a *fabula* of his own. Thus, then, Propertius’ Hesiodic powers of shaping reality with verse would become directed not only at his imagined elegiac world, but even the fantastical literary landscape from which this world arises.

Yet it is also significant that Propertius combines an adherence to a modified Hesiodic poetics with an inverted expression of poetry’s power: it is not to move (*sequantur ... | ... possim ... ducere*, 5-6) but to stun (*stupefiat*, 7) – to cause its target to stop in its tracks. That poetry has specifically this power is attested by Virgil: lynxes (cf. *feras*, 6) were stunned by the ‘song of the Muse of the shepherds Damon and Alpheisiboeus’ (*Pastorum Musam Damonis et Alpheisiboei ... | ... quorum stupefactae carmine lynces | ... dicemus*, *Ecl.* 8.1-5);⁴⁴⁸ but Cicero also

⁴⁴³ See *OLD* s.v. 3.

⁴⁴⁴ See *OLD* s.v. 2b, citing Plin. *HN.* 4.35: *montes Rhodope, Scopius, Orbelus; dein praeiacente gremio terrarum ...*

⁴⁴⁵ See *TLL* s.v. II.C1a, citing Plin. *Ep.* 8.8.2, who describes the source of the Umbrian river Clitumnus: *eluctatusque quem facit gurgitem lato gremio patescit, purus et uitreus ...*

⁴⁴⁶ See *TLL* s.v. II.A1.

⁴⁴⁷ For *doctae Musae* cf. 2.10.10 (*me mea Musa docet*); and, e.g., Ov. *Met.* 5.255 (*doctas sic est adfata sorores*); Ov. *Fast.* 6.811 (*doctae adsensere sorores*); Tib. 3.4.45 (*doctaeque sorores*); Manilius, *Astronomica*, 2.49 (*doctae cecinere sorores*).

⁴⁴⁸ Lynxes may be a specifically Callimachean import (*Hymn* 3.87-9); see Clausen (1994) *ad loc.*

attributes this power to speeches which produce an emotional response through their perspicuity – a process which alludes to the totalizing power of φαντασία through ἐναργεία.⁴⁴⁹ A work that can ‘stupefy’ is therefore one which can displace its audience from its reality into one constructed for it by its author; but while this may appear inconsequential if Cynthia is read as the beloved, her wholesale identification with Propertius’ elegy suggests that the poet will use his *uersus* (7) against itself to suspend its reality in favour of one he now sings, and so to subject the *Ascraeum nemus* to the Hesiodic powers which it grants. *Cynthia*, in sum, will pause to become enveloped in a(nother) reality of the poet’s own making.

This may constitute the poetic ‘development’ denied to 2.13 by Butrica on account of the apparent incompatibility of Hesiodic and amatory verse,⁴⁵⁰ for the reality to which Propertius proceeds to subject Cynthia – and *Cynthia* – is their death, figured as the dissolution of the elegiac world which nonetheless continues to portray their love from beyond the grave thanks to its poetic nature. In keeping with the broader association of Hesiod with teaching, Propertius structures this reality as instructions to his beloved, rendered explicitly as the stuff of imagination:⁴⁵¹

quandocumque igitur nostros mors claudet ocellos,
accipe quae serues funeris acta mei.

2.13.17-18

What Propertius narrates he cannot see, now or later: this is a mental vision of a time when his eyes will be closed by death (*mors claudet ocellos*, 17). But not just his (*nostros*, 17): in asking his beloved to receive (*accipe*, 18) these *acta*, he also shuts her eyes with the φαντασία of his

⁴⁴⁹ Cic. *De Or.* 3.53: *in quo igitur homines exhorrescunt? quem stupefacti dicentem intuentur? in quo exclamant? quem deum, ut ita dicam, inter homines putant? qui distincte, qui explicite, qui abundanter, qui illuminate et rebus et uerbis dicunt et in ipsa oratione quasi quemdam numerum uersumque conficiunt ...* See Mankin (2011, *ad loc.* and *ad* 3.19) who notes the connection between *illuminate* and *lumen*, and through it, to ἐναργεία (which is normally rendered as *evidentia*, *illustratio*, or *demonstratio*; see Lausberg (1998) §810).

⁴⁵⁰ Butrica (1996) 125.

⁴⁵¹ On the continuity of lines 16-58 with those that precede, see Enk (1956) 187-9, and Wilkinson (1966) 141-4. Heyworth (2007b, 163) suggests a lacuna before 17, against Murgia (2000, 166-7), who attempts conjecture in 14-15 to smooth the transition in 17. Camps (1967) and Richardson (1977) print 2.13 as one elegy; Fedeli (2005), as two.

death these *acta* portray⁴⁵² – and given that his own elegiac existence is subject to her *ocelli* (1.1.1), closing his own spells the same for hers too. The poet thus brings himself and his *puella* to an imagined reality which blinds them both, and he develops this obfuscation by eliminating everything from this funeral except the humble rites that befit an adherent of Callimachean λεπτότης (19-23).⁴⁵³ His bier is to be accompanied solely by the ‘slight procession of a common funeral’ (*adsint | plebei paruae funeris exsequiae*, 2.13.23-4) – yet Propertius is to be not a man of the people but of books, for it is these that are to comprise his funereal train:

sat mea sat magna est si tres sint pompa libelli
 quos ego Persephonaе maxima dona feram.
 tu uero nudum pectus lacerata sequeris,
 nec fueris nomen lassa uocare meum,
 osculaque in gelidis pones suprema labellis
 cum dabitur Syrio munere plenus onyx.

25 mea sat magna est ε] mea sit magna Ω

2.13.25-30

tres libelli is further evidence that 2.13 begins a new book – but this opening poem now threatens to kill off the collection by making it into the gifts the dead poet will deliver to Persephone. Having become objectified as *libelli*, these *exsequiae* thus leave the world above, emptying it still further; and as for Cynthia, while she follows his corpse in distraught fashion (27-30), she does so as part of his *exsequiae* too (cf. *sequeris*, 27) to become once again the *Cynthia* that he writes. The very poetry that Cynthia engenders may now spell her demise – and the distinction between the φαντασία she sees and the reality from which Propertius’ verse carries her collapses as Propertius engraves his imagined tomb with the poetry that portrays it:

⁴⁵² For φαντασία as something received, cf. Plut. *Quomodo adul.* 15B-C (comparing the effects of eating the head of a cuttle-fish to poetry): πούλυποδος κεφαλή ἐνι μὲν κακὸν ἐν δὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν, ὅτι βρωθῆναι μὲν ἐστὶν ἡδιστος, δυσόνειρον δ’ ὕπνον ποιεῖ, φαντασίας ταραχώδεις καὶ ἀλλοκότους δεχόμενον, ὡς λέγουσιν. οὕτω δὴ καὶ ποιητικῇ ...

⁴⁵³ Cf. Fedeli (2005) 387.

deinde, ubi suppositus cinerem me fecerit ardor,
 accipiat manes paruula testa meos,
 et sit in exiguo laurus superaddita busto,
 quae tegat exstincti funeris umbra locum,
 et duo sint uersus: QVI NVNC IACET HORRIDA PVLVIS
 VNIVS HIC QVONDAM SERVVS AMORIS ERAT.
 non minus hinc nostri notescet fama sepulcri 35
 quam fuerant Pthii busta cruenta uiri.

2.13.31-6

The procession ends and Propertius fades further from existence. No longer a corpse to be kissed (29) he becomes mere ash burned by *ardor* (31), suggestive of combustion by fire as well as the fire of love;⁴⁵⁴ he does, after all, become a shade (*manes*, 32) having once been an *umbra* made as such by *Amor*. And if in 2.12 Propertius' existence as an *umbra* identified him as a poetic φαντασία, his reality here remains no less encoded in verse: his tomb is to be further shaded by laurel (*laurus ... | ... umbra*, 33-4), a tree sacred to Apollo;⁴⁵⁵ and the god's tacit presence is enhanced through the repeated imagery of paucity (*paruula testa ... | ... exiguo ... busto*, 32-3) that is itself suggestive of Callimachean poetics. Yet the tomb dedicated as much to Propertius as the *Cynthia* he brings with him to the Underworld (*nostri ... sepulcri*, 35) also appears before our eyes as more than a φαντασία: the imagined epitaph (33-4) is written right onto the page. The play on the nature of elegiac reality begun at the start of the poem thus continues, as a tangible existence forms from a written death – an existence which, with readers' help, will be immortal. As long as they see his words with their eyes, the φαντασία of this elegiac Achilles shall live in their minds – not a soldier slain by the Apolline arrows of a lover, but Apollo's soldier-lover, slain by the versified arrows of his *Amor*.

Propertius' beloved is also to play her part in this memorialization, however:

⁴⁵⁴ For *ardor* as amatory passion, cf. 1.7.24: *ardoris nostri magne poeta, iaces?*

⁴⁵⁵ Cf. Fedeli (2005, 394), who sees the *laurus* as enhancing 'un senso nell'ambito del discorso di poetica'.

tu quoque si quando uenies ad fata, memento,
 huc iterum ad lapides cana ueni memores.
 interea caue sis nos aspernata sepultos:
 non nihil ad uerum conscia terra sapit.

40 huc iterum *Kießling*] hoc iter Ω

2.13.39-42

Propertius continues to speak as the dead: *tu quoque* (39) is a common epitaphic opening.⁴⁵⁶ But while *Cynthia* may follow him into the Underworld (*nos ... sepultos*, 41), Cynthia is to remain dedicated to him in the world above (*caue sis ... aspernata*, 41), coming again (*iterum*, 40) as his beloved to his tombstone in her old age, having already immortalized his φαντασία as his collection. Such a separation is later recalled in 4.7, where Cynthia reappears as a ghost for the first time in Book 4 to order (now, a living) Propertius to burn his work so that *Cynthia* can join her in death (4.7.77-8); here, however, it both perpetuates the elegiac disunity that has dominated the affair thus far and, possibly, serves as a tacit suggestion that the distance between lover and beloved will only grow as the collection unravels further. Their relationship, however, is to remain grounded in didactic terms. Having begun 2.13 in an *Ascræum nemus*, a terrain which he learned to sway with the verse it compels him to write, Propertius now finds himself writing poetry from one no less knowledgeable (*conscia terra*, 42), for it harbours the versified secrets of his love it, ‘in truth’ (*ad uerum*, 42), still shares with us.⁴⁵⁷

In the lines that follow, Propertius goes on to reaffirm the written reality of his death and his association with elegiac torment; but he also continues to suggest that this poem once formed the opening to his third book. Having spoken of *tres libelli* (25), Propertius complains that his death comes too late: would that one of the three savage sisters (i.e. *Parcae*) had ordered him to die long ago (*atque utinam primis animam me ponere cunis* | *iussisset saeuis de tribus una soror*, 43-4); even Nestor was seen turning to ash after three generations (*Nestoris est uisus post tria saecla cinis*, 46). Propertius, meanwhile, was ordered by his *Amor* to pay heed to his

⁴⁵⁶ See chapter 1, 35 and n.150.

⁴⁵⁷ Heyworth (2007b, 167) suggests that *ad uerum* constitutes an allusion to *Anth. Pal.* 9.450, where Philemon would hang himself to see Euripides if only ‘the dead had use of their senses’ (Εἰ ταῖς ἀληθείαισι οἱ τεθνηκότες | αἰσθησιν εἶχον, ἄνδρες ὡς φασίν τινες, | ἀπηγάμην ἄν, ὥστ’ ἰδεῖν Εὐριπίδην). If so, such an allusion would develop the theme of sight in these lines: in 2.14, Propertius shows that death is no barrier to sight.

own elegiac *Sorores* (cf. *uetuit ... |... iussit*, 3-4),⁴⁵⁸ and has used the poetic power derived from their Ascrean terrain to transform himself into ash (cf. *cinerem*, 31), realising his imagined death by making his epitaph visible to our eyes. Yet his death need not spell the end – as his closing *exemplum* indicates, death in love leads to rebirth:

testis qui niueum quondam percussit Adonin
 uenantem Idalio uertice durus aper;
 illis formosum lauisse paludibus, illic
 diceris effusa tu, Venus, isse coma.
 sed frustra mutos reuocabis, Cynthia, manes:
 nam mea quid poterunt ossa minuta loqui?

55 lauisse ζ] iacuisse Ω: fleiuisse ζ

2.13.53-8

Propertius alludes to the following myth: Adonis, beloved by Venus and hunting a boar, was killed by Mars in the guise of that animal; after mourning for him, the goddess restored him to life – and now worshipped at the annual festival of the Adonia, he alternates his time between worlds above and below. Presented as the testimony of its witness Mars (*testis qui*, 53), this *exemplum* takes us back to the poem's beginning, where Propertius was the one to be judged (*domina iudice tutus ero*, 14) after being forced to abandon thoughts of epic *militia* in favour of *militia amoris*,⁴⁵⁹ yet it also serves as a commentary on the poetics of 2.13. Each hunter (cf. 1.1.15-18) is as unsuccessful as the other: Adonis was struck by a *durus aper*; Propertius is struck by a *durus Amor* (cf. 1.3.14). Unlike Adonis, Propertius is kept from ranging over his own mountain heights (cf. *Idalio uertice*, 2.13.54); but like him, he survives his own death thanks to the actions of his beloved. For while Cynthia may not be able to call back his *manes*, *Cynthia* can. It preserves his *manes*, which we can recall (cf. *reuocabis*, 57) and see as we do; and it preserves his *ossa minuta*, allowing us to give a voice (cf. *loqui*, 58) to the words once written with a Callimachean stylus. Thus, then, Propertius lives on: both through the verse which has led him to this death, and through the verse this death now engenders.

⁴⁵⁸ Cf. 2.30.27 and see *OLD* s.v. 2b.

⁴⁵⁹ As his birthplace, the reference to Mt. Ida may likewise look back to Jupiter at 2.13.15-16.

II. *Praeceptor*

iv. 2.14

In the next poem, Propertius again directs his poetry against itself – this time, however, to write not the deaths of himself and his beloved but instead that of his amatory principles. He reverses his previous teaching that a beloved deserves dedication in elegiac form: having been forbidden from ‘spurning the slender Muses’ by *Amor* (*hic me tam graciles uetuit contemnere Musas*, 2.13.3), Propertius now instructs lovers to ‘spurn’ their beloveds because he found it useful himself (*hoc sensi prodesse magis: contemnite, amantes*, 2.14.19). The union of poet and *puella* engendered through *Cynthia* in the previous poem now, somewhat paradoxically, deepens as Propertius turns ‘a sperimentare la durezza della *domina*’, feigning disinterest for the sake of short-term sexual satisfaction instead of embracing love ‘nella sua pienezza’.⁴⁶⁰ Yet, by expressing this novel elegiac reality and resulting advice in terms of a new-found ability to see that to which he was previously blind (2.14.17-18), Propertius also suggests that his success is as imagined as the *puella* he hopes to have charmed.

He begins by comparing his joy to that of other mythological figures, but as has also been noted,⁴⁶¹ these *comparanda* do not suggest his joy will be long-lasting:

Non ita Dardanio gauisus, Atrida, triumpho es
cum caderent magnae Laeomedontis opes;
nec sic errore exacto laetatus Vlixes
cum tetigit carae litora Dulichiae;
nec sic Electra saluum cum aspexit Oresten, 5
cuius falsa tenens fleuerat ossa soror,
nec sic cum incolumem Minois Thesea uidit,
Daedaliu lino cui duce rexit iter,
quanto ego praeterita collegi gaudia nocte:

⁴⁶⁰ Fedeli (2005) 427.

⁴⁶¹ See Vaio (1962) 236-7, and Jackson (1984) 31-14.

immortalis ero si altera talis erit.

7-8 sic cum ... | ... cui *Housman*] sic ... | ... cum Ω

2.14.1-10

Whether the *Atrides* (1) is Agamemnon or Menelaus,⁴⁶² the fall of Troy is but the start of tribulations to come: both suffered a difficult journey home, and the former was murdered upon reaching it. Odysseus' (3) arrival in Ithaca, meanwhile, did not spell the end of his journeys; Electra's (5) joy at seeing Orestes was blunted by their matricide and his subsequent pursuit by the Furies; and Ariadne (7) was abandoned by Theseus on Naxos following their escape from Crete. Furthermore, underpinning all these myths are patterns of male deceit. The 'great power of Laomedon' (2) fell thanks to the Trojan Horse – a ruse attributed to Odysseus, the soldier famously πολύτροπος and πολύμητις, endowed with a craftiness thanks to which he reached Ithaca and regained control of his household; Orestes hid himself from Electra (who here weeps for his *falsa ossa*, 6); and Theseus went back on his promise. It might be said, then, that Propertius is not only jestingly undercutting his joy by hinting at possible tribulations to come, but also foreshadowing his revelation later in the poem that his success depends upon a novel approach comprising guileful *duritia*,⁴⁶³ hiding desires in order to have them required. Nor is it inconsequential that the short-lived joy experienced by Electra and Ariadne stems from their eyes (*aspexit*, 5; *uidit*, 7), for Propertius will also present his joy as the result of new-found vision (*ante pedes caecis lucebat semita nobis | scilicet insano nemo in amore uidet*, 2.14.17-18): while it may briefly lead him to invert his elegiac submissiveness and to play the part of a *dura puella*, it nevertheless sets him up to reprise the gender-inverted roles upon which his poetry depends.

So as Propertius then reveals his epiphany, his amatory troubles remain no more fixed than before:

atque utinam non tam sero mihi nota fuisset
condicio: cineri nunc medicina datur.

⁴⁶² Cf. Fedeli (2005) 416.

⁴⁶³ 2.24b.47-8: *dura est quae multis simulatum fingit amorem | et se plus uni si qua parare potest*; see, however, Heyworth (2007b) 216, who argues that the couplet 'does not belong to this poem ... but could have come from Propertius' pen.'

ante pedes caecis lucebat semita nobis:
 scilicet insano nemo in amore uidet.
 hoc sensi prodesse magis: contemnite, amantes.
 sic hodie ueniet si qua negauit heri.

2.14.15-20

medicina is now being applied to the *cinis* he became before (cf. *cinerem me fecerit ardor*, 2.13.31), but while his *Cynthia* may grant him life after death, this *medicina* will not leave him any less burned by *ardor*. He may now see, but he is no less cured of his love: his *duritia* constitutes but another attempt to lessen that of his beloved, and stems from the same dedication to her he has shown before. By this point in the collection, moreover, Propertius has twice argued for the inefficacy of *medicina* over his elegiac torment;⁴⁶⁴ and while he boasted to Gallus to be able to ‘cure the recent anxieties of another’ because ‘there is no slight *medicina* in [his] words’ (10.17-18), his words also altered the course of Gallus’ love from happy parity to elegiac longing in 1.13. And even Propertius’ instruction (*contemnite, amantes*, 19) sets him up for failure. Propertius realises his desire for another happy night (9-10) in the very next poem (*Io me felicem! io nox mihi candida!, io tu, | lectule deliciis facte beate meis!*, 2.15.1-2), but this written celebration also constitutes the sort of attention Propertius here discourages. While this might grant him the immortality he desires (*immortalis ero*, 10) it also stands to ground it in further elegiac torment. As with Ponticus and Gallus, Propertius’ advice constitutes a trap; this time, however, it is one into which he himself soon falls.

Furthermore, the path on which Propertius’ poetic feet are now to take him is one which has been trodden before. By defining his new approach in terms of sight, Propertius reminds us that, like his approach until now, it was also one undertaken by Theocritus’ Polyphemus.⁴⁶⁵ Thus far, Propertius has acted similarly to the Polyphemus of *Idyll* 11, who sings to Galatea after loving her not with ‘apples, roses, or locks of hair but with straight-up madness’ (ἤρατο δ’ οὐ μάλοις οὐδὲ ρόδῳ οὐδὲ κικίννοις, | ἀλλ’ ὀρθαῖς μανίαις, *Id.* 11.10-11). Like Propertius, then, he channelled his amatory *furor* into verse (cf. 1.1.7) – and like Propertius, his approach

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. 1.5.27-8 (*non ego tum potero solacia ferre roganti, | cum mihi nulla mei sit medicina mali*), and 2.1.57-8 (*omnes humanos sanat medicina dolores; | solus Amor morbi non habet artificem*).

⁴⁶⁵ In so doing, Propertius also recalls his allusion to the story of Polyphemus and Galatea at 1.8a.18 – and with it, the success of 1.8b and the instruction to Ponticus that followed.

was no less self-defeating. While Polyphemus' song is described as a *medicina* (ἀλλὰ τὸ φάρμακον εὔρε, 17), the Greek term can mean both 'drug' and 'poison', suggesting that Polyphemus ends up as much curing his love as perpetuating it, too.⁴⁶⁶

While still gripped by his *furore*, Polyphemus offers up his eye – his most prized possession – for Galatea's love (ἀνεχοίμαν | καὶ τὸν ἔν' ὀφθαλμόν, τῷ μοι γλυκερώτερον οὐδέν 11.52-3); but by the song's end he notices his madness (11.72), calls himself back to work (11.73-6), and reasons that he would be wiser to try his luck with some other, prettier, land-dwelling Galatea (εὐρησεῖς Γαλάτειαν ἴσως καὶ καλλίον' ἄλλαν, 11.76). He claims that many girls invite him for night-time play and that they giggle when he responds (11.77-8), adding 'it is clear that I seem to be a somebody on land' (δῆλον ὅτ' ἐν τᾷ γᾶ κήγών τις φαίνομαι ἤμεν, 11.79). Yet at the end of the poem we are told that 'Polyphemus shepherded his love with song, doing so better than if he had spent money [*sc.* on a doctor's fees]' (οὔτω τοι Πολύφαμος ἐποίμαιεν τὸν ἔρωτα | μουσίσδων, ῥᾶον δὲ διαῖγ' ἢ εἰ χρυσὸν ἔδωκεν, 11.80-1).⁴⁶⁷ While ἐποίμαιεν may have the sense of 'controlling', it can also suggest 'nurturing',⁴⁶⁸ suggesting that song is no better than a doctor in curing love for good. At any rate, if Polyphemus comes to view his focus on Galatea as a delusion, it only becomes replaced by another. Having saved his one eye – for now – Polyphemus becomes blinded to his own reason: aware at the start of the song that Galatea finds him unattractive, Polyphemus does not question why the Galateas he turns to do not follow up their flirting with anything other than giggles.⁴⁶⁹

In *Idyll* 6 Polyphemus tries a different approach – one which Propertius recalls in 2.14, but one which leaves him no more clear-sighted than in *Idyll* 11. There, Daphnis and Damoetas engage in a singing contest (which ends without victory for either): the latter sings as a Polyphemus who decides to pay no heed to Galatea's advances, which he has noticed despite his 'sweet

⁴⁶⁶ See discussion in Hunter (1999) 220-1.

⁴⁶⁷ The poem opens with an address to the doctor Nicias, who is told that there is 'no medicine in love other than the Muses' (Οὐδὲν ποττὸν ἔρωτα πεφύκει φάρμακον ἄλλο | Νικία ... | ἢ ται Πιερίδες (*Id.* 11.1-3); the poem's close thus playfully recalls its beginning (see Hunter 1999, 243).

⁴⁶⁸ See Goldhill (1991) 254, and Morrison (2007) 261-2. It has also been noted by Kutzko (2007, 80-2) that μουσίσδων may recall μουσιζόμενος in Eur. *Cycl.* 489, which (along with *Id.* 8.38) constitutes the only other extant use of the verb, and where the drunk Polyphemus is described as singing badly and 'soon to lament' (κλαυσόμενος, 490).

⁴⁶⁹ See Hunter (1999) 242.

single [*sc.* eye]’ (τὸν ἕμὸν τὸν ἕνα γλυκύν, 6.22). This Polyphemus teases her by saying that he loves another (25-6), and she, according to him, ‘grows jealous, pains, and pines as she looks out at the caves and flocks from the sea’ (ζαλοῖ μ’ ... καὶ τάκεται, ἐκ δὲ θαλάσσης | οἰστρεῖ παπταίνουσα ποτ’ ἄντρα τε καὶ ποτὶ ποίμνας, 6.27-8). He is resolute in his *duritia*: he will persevere even if she sends a messenger, locking himself away until she swears to sleep with him (6.31-3).

But yet again, a successful outcome is put in doubt at the poem’s end. Polyphemus turns from lauding his approach to lauding his looks, claiming that ‘they are not as bad as people say’ (καὶ γὰρ θην οὐδ’ εἶδος ἔχω κακὸν ὡς με λέγοντι, 6.34) for, ‘according to [his] judgement’ (ὡς παρ’ ἔμιν κέκριται, 6.37) his beard, eye, and teeth seemed beautiful in the sea’s reflection the other day (6.35-8).⁴⁷⁰ Thus he turns into a sort of Narcissus,⁴⁷¹ as much in love with himself as with Galatea and with his plan, and feeds his delusion further by following the advice of the old woman Cottytaris (ἐξεδίδαξε, 40), spitting three times so as not to be bewitched (ὡς μὴ βασκανθῶ δέ, 39). This end to Damoetas’ song, in turn, recalls the end of Daphnis’, in which Polyphemus was told that ‘things which are not pretty often seem pretty in love’ (ἦ γὰρ ἔρωτι | πολλάκις, ὃ Πόλυφαμε, τὰ μὴ καλὰ καλὰ πέφανται, 6.18-19). While Daphnis assumes a narrator’s perspective to describe Galatea’s delusions, his song may also be said to resemble the stream of consciousness when Polyphemus begins the final section of his song in *Idyll* 11 by addressing himself (ὃ Κύκλωψ Κύκλωψ, πᾶ τὰς φρένας ἐκπεπότασαι; 11.72). As a result, Polyphemus appears as blind to his own insight as he is in *Idyll* 11: both times his eye leads him to see failure as a success. Ironically for Polyphemus, trusting his eye will also lead to its loss – for the delusions it engenders in *Idyll* 6 lead him to distrust the prophecy of blindness to come.⁴⁷²

⁴⁷⁰ See Hunter (1999, 257-8), who notes that while Polyphemus gazed at the sea in the hope of seeing his Γαλάτεια in *Idyll* 11 (18), in *Idyll* 6 he sees instead the etymologically-related γαλάνα (35) and marvels at his ‘eye’ (κώρα, 36) instead of his ‘girl’. Hunter also draws attention to Pl. *Phdr.* 255d, where a lover is described as seeing himself in his beloved ‘as if in a mirror’ (ὥσπερ δ’ ἐν κατόπτρῳ ἐν τῷ ἐρῶντι ἑαυτὸν ὁρῶν) – a parallel not irrelevant for Propertius, whose sight of Cynthia/*Cynthia* corresponds to the composition of his own verse.

⁴⁷¹ So Hunter (1999) 257, and Kyriakou (2018) 119-20.

⁴⁷² Cf. Theoc. *Id.* 6.22-4: ὃ [*sc.* ὀφθαλμῷ] ποθορῶμι | ἐς τέλος (αὐτὰρ ὁ μάντις ὁ Τήλεμος ἔχθρ’ ἀγορεύων | ἐχθρὰ φέροι ποτὶ οἶκον, ὅπως τεκέεσσι φυλάσσοι).

So, while Propertius' sight may have brought about the success celebrated in 2.14 and 2.15 in contrast to his Polyphemean counterpart, these Theocritean intertexts nonetheless play up its transience. Propertius' eyes have led him away from his elegiac reality towards one of haughty *duritia*, but as he makes clear in the poem that follows, they will soon enough come to be used for writing up the kind of love he has written before:

illa meos somno lapsos patefecit ocellos	7
ore suo et dixit 'sicine, lente, iaces?'	
...	
non iuuat in caeco Venerem corrumpere motu:	11
si nescis, oculi sunt in amore duces.	
ipse Paris nuda fertur periise Lacaena	
cum Menelaeo surgeret e thalamo.	
nudus et Endymion Phoebi cepisse sororem	15
dicitur et nudus concubuisse deae.	
...	
dum nos fata sinunt, oculos satiemus amore:	23
nox tibi longa uenit, nec reditura dies.	

16 nudus *Rossberg*] nudae Ω: nitidae *Palmer*

2.15.7-8; 11-16; 23-4

Opening the eyes closed by sleep (*somno lapsos patefecit ocellos*, 2.15.7), Propertius' beloved also wakes him up back into the dream-like state of an elegiac reality (cf. 2.1.11-12) written up by one hopelessly consumed by his love (cf. *lapsus*, 1.1.25). Cynthia – and *Cynthia* – first captured his eyes: these are to continue to lead him to her (2.15.12) and thus, to the torments that came before. Eyes ultimately led Paris (13-14) to his death and his city's destruction, depriving him of a beloved who was possibly no more an εἶδωλον than Propertius' own;⁴⁷³ Endymion (15-16), loved by a Cynthia of his own and lulled into immortal sleep by her too,

⁴⁷³ Eur. *Hel.* 31-6; see discussion in Marshall (2014) 59-63, with citations. Cf. Plat, *Phdr.* 243a-b, *Rep.* 9.586c, Isoc. *Helen* 64, and Dio Chrys. *Or.* 11.40s for the story of Stesichorus, blinded for claiming that Helen travelled to Troy, and regaining his sight after reneging on that earlier claim in his *Palinode* (οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος, fr. 192) by asserting that she was only an εἶδωλον. For εἶδωλον as a mental image, see Xen. *Sym.* 4.21.

could never awake from his dreams to experience her love ever again.⁴⁷⁴ Propertius may have cast aside his blindness to follow the path that shone beneath his feet (2.14.17), but by opening them now (2.15.11) to a beloved his ruse has helped to win over, he will end up composing a love no more clear-sighted than before.⁴⁷⁵ Try as they might to satisfy their eyes with love while they can (23), the very act of perception leads to its own end: as in 2.13, love leads to death – his as much as her own (*uenit*, 2.15.24) – to be survived solely by the poetry that portrays the φαντασία upon which it is based.

It is fitting, therefore, that Propertius should portray his beloved as the guiding star of his poetic skiff as he briefly contemplates the possibility of failure at the end of 2.14 (*nunc a te est, mea lux, ueniatne ad litora nauis | seruata an mediis sidat onusta uadis*, 29-30): his new-found sight will both ruin this novel voyage and thus return him to the land of unrequited love from which he set out. Then again, Propertius is not going round in circles. 2.13 was a new beginning and 2.14 builds upon its foundations; it may deny Propertius the reciprocation he seeks, but it still constitutes an evolution in his poetics. As he adopts, and teaches, Cynthia's ways in his *Cynthia*, he shows that the terms of his amatory dedication need not remain constant. Having written Ponticus and Gallus into new realities in his guise as *praeceptor amoris*, he can do the same to himself too: teaching again becomes detached from its ostensible instructive function to serve as a catalyst for poetic transformation. Thus, while we might hesitate before following the advice Propertius offers in this poem, we still learn that his *Cynthia* can portray φαντασία hitherto unimaginable in his elegiac reality.

v. 2.25

This tension between consistency and evolution is likewise a significant flavouring of the last two poems to be discussed in this chapter. In 2.25, Propertius assumes the guise of *praeceptor amoris* in the second half of the poem: first, to repeat his advice of 2.14; then, to rebuke those who enjoy the sight of many *puellae* and to preach his dedication to his one. The irony arising

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.38.92: *Endymion uero, si fabulas audire uolumus, ut nescio quando in Latmo obdormiuit, qui est mons Cariae, nondum, opinor, est experrectus. num igitur eum curare censes, cum Luna labore, a qua consopitus putatur, ut eum dormientem oscularetur?*

⁴⁷⁵ For *motus* as poetic rhythm, see *TLL* s.v. II.B1bβ.

from the juxtaposition of these two sections is heightened by their relation to previous poetry: he not only failed in 2.14, but also portrayed himself enthralled by many *puellae* in 2.22a. The trustworthiness of Propertius' advice is therefore betrayed by his own verse, again making teaching a means by which to show the changes undergoing in his poetry – whose composition is once more expressed in terms of sight.

The poem begins by situating Propertius' affair in his literary milieu and conflating his love with poetic production:⁴⁷⁶

Cynthia, nata meo pulcherrima cura dolori
 (excludi quoniam sors mea saepe fuit),
 ista meis fiet notissima forma libellis,
 Calue, tua uenia, pace, Catulle, tua.

¹ Cynthia *Phillimore*] unica Ω

² excludi *Scaliger*] excludit Ω | fuit *Watt*] uenit *NS* (ueni *p.c.*)

2.25.1-4

Cynthia's (and *Cynthia's*) preeminent fame – and notoriety – depends on Propertius' renown matching that of Calvus and Catullus, 'non solo gli iniziatori del canto d'amore a Roma, ma anche i primi a rendere famosa la donna da loro celebrata'.⁴⁷⁷ Her *forma* is not merely her written likeness,⁴⁷⁸ but also that of the writing that presents it:⁴⁷⁹ both are born (*nata*, 1) as a *pulcherrima cura*,⁴⁸⁰ an object of care as amatory as it is literary;⁴⁸¹ and as Propertius composes,

⁴⁷⁶ Heyworth (2007a, 76) and Goold (1990, 175) print *Phillimore's* conjecture given that '*cura* needs not a second adjective, but a noun' (so Heyworth 2007b, 217). Although Fedeli (2005, 707), who prints *unica*, complains that neither *Phillimore* nor Goold 'si chiedono come mai un originario *Cynthia* possa essersi corrtto in *unica*', the susceptibility of initial letters to corruption provides a clear way for it to occur.

⁴⁷⁷ Fedeli (2005) 79.

⁴⁷⁸ For *forma* as artistic representation, see *OLD* s.v. 14b.

⁴⁷⁹ For the *forma* of a written work, see Plin. *HN*. 7.29.107 ([*sc. Homeris*] *operis forma*) and Tac. *Ann.* 4.39 ([*sc. scripti*] *eius talis forma fuit*). Propertius also conflates Cynthia's physical and written *forma* at 3.24[-5].1-2 (*falsa est ista tuae, mulier, fiducia formae, | olim elegis nimium facta superba meis*), where *elegis* is Schrader's conjecture for the transmitted *oculis*, 'a surprising agent' (Heyworth 2007b, 409) – unless, perhaps, it correlates with Propertius' association of sight with poetic composition.

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. 2.1.16 (*maxima de nihilo nascitur historia*); 2.34.66 (*nescioquid maius nascitur Iliade*); and 3.1.9-10 (*a me | nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis*).

⁴⁸¹ For *cura* as literary composition, cf. 2.1.26 and see *TLL* s.v. I.B1b; for writing described as *pulcher*, see *OLD* s.v. 1c.

he experiences *dolor*, if not because he versifies a reality that grieves him then because he fashions before his eyes – and thus, before our own – a φαντασία of one which rouses the emotions it portrays.⁴⁸² Propertius will never be free of this pain (2.25.5-8): it makes him immortal. Be he as aged as Nestor (cf. 2.13.46) or Tithonus, his song will continue from beyond his grave (*at me ab amore tuo deducet nulla senectus | siue ego Tithonus siue ego Nestor ero*, 2.25.9-10), tortuous as this existence shall be:

nonne fuit satius duro seruire tyranno
 et gemere in tauro, saeue Perille, tuo?
 Gorgonis et satius fuit obdurescere uultu,
 Caucasias etiam si pateremur aues?

2.25.11-14

These *exempla* Propertius offers are not only useful *comparanda* for his suffering but also serve as a commentary on his poetics. Like Perillus (11-12), Propertius is tortured by the *ardor* of his own creation – though in his case, it is no different from the *dura* (11) *domina* that subjects him to it. Perseus, meanwhile, avoided lithification by keeping his eyes off the Gorgon as he fought her; but Propertius has instead hardened (*obdurescere*, 13), having begun to avoid his beloved as he fights for her love.⁴⁸³ Nonetheless, like Prometheus (14), he shares his *ardor* with others: he may have only tried to hide rather than steal it in 2.14 by feigning its lack,⁴⁸⁴ but his tricks still lead to a tortured existence.

Propertius, however, will withstand this torment. He is valiant – and perhaps ironically so:

sed tamen obsistam. teritur robigine mucro
 ferreus, et paruo saepe liquore silex.
 at nullo dominae teritur sub crimine amator:
 restat et immerita sustinet aure minas.

⁴⁸² Cf. Cic. *De Or.* 2.73 for *dolor* as the pathos to which the orator subjects his audience.

⁴⁸³ Cf. Ov. *Ars* 2.177-8 (*si nec blanda satis, nec erit tibi comis amanti | perfer et obdura: postmodo mitis erit.*) and Ov. *Am.* 3.11a.7-8 (*perfer et obdura! dolor hic tibi proderit olim; | saepe tulit lassus sucus amarus opem.*)

⁴⁸⁴ Hesiod only alludes to the fact that Prometheus hid fire from Zeus as he stole it (*Theog.* 565-7); Apollodorus, *Bibl.* 1.7.1 is more explicit: ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς [*sc.* ἀνθρώποις] καὶ πῦρ, λάθρα Διὸς ἐν νάρθηκι κρύψας.

ultra contemptus rogat, et peccasse fatetur
laesus, et inuitis ipse redit pedibus.

2.25.15-20

Unlike rusting iron or eroding flint (15-16), a lover is not worn away. Here, Propertius may be recalling the end of *DRN* 4,⁴⁸⁵ in which Lucretius dismisses ‘divine power of Venus’ arrows’ as reasons for why one might fall in love with ‘a woman of inferior looks’ (*nec diuinitus interdum Veneris sagittis | deteriore fit ut forma muliercula ametur*, 4.1278-9): it is ‘habit that breeds love’ (*consuetudo concinnat amorem*, 4.1283), just as drops of water eventually break through stone (*nonne uides etiam guttas in saxa cadentis | umoris longo in spatio pertundere saxa?*, 4.1286-7). If so, Propertius recalls the intertext only to invert it: he is in love with a *pulcherrima* of a *notissima forma*, all thanks to the divine shafts of his *Amor*. Nor does his love arise from custom: rather, he has grown accustomed to his love (cf. *nos, ut consuemus, nostros agitamus amores | atque aliquid duram quaerimus in dominam*, 1.7.5) – though not enough to be worn down by it completely. With time, he has hardened instead: his resistance to amatory torture (*obsistam*, 15; *restat ... sustinet*, 18) has taken on a different form; he may make a request voluntarily after being spurned (*ultra contemptus rogat*, 19), but he may simply spurn voluntarily too (cf. *contemnite, amantes*, 2.14.19).⁴⁸⁶ So while his resistance may lead him to return to his beloved ‘with unwilling feet’ (*inuitis ipse redit pedibus*, 20), his poetic feet can also return him to sing of amatory resistance, as he does next:

tu quoque, qui pleno fastus assumis amore, 21
credula, nulla diu femina pondus habet.
...
tu tamen interea, quamuis te diligat illa,
in tacito cohibe gaudia clausa sinu. 30
quamuis te persaepe uocet, semel ire memento: 33

⁴⁸⁵ Fedeli (2005, 715) also cites the parallel at Ov. *Ars* 3.91 (*conteritur ferrum, silices tenuantur ab usu*) where Ovid asks his female addressee what she has to lose by being deceived. See Gibson (2003) 122-4.

⁴⁸⁶ Though Propertius suggests he would admit to a fault (*et peccasse fatetur | laesus*, 19-20), he pointedly refuses to do so when he learns that Cynthia will leave him to go abroad with a *praetor*, chiding the *leuitas* of beauties like her instead (*non quia peccarim (testor te), sed quia uulgo | formosis leuitas semper amica fuit*, 2.16b.25-6).

inuidiam quod habet, non solet esse diu.

31-2 *suspexit Baehrens, om. Heyworth*⁴⁸⁷

2.25.21-2; 29-30, 33-4

In 2.14, Propertius altered the Theocritean paradigm by advocating disdain; here, he changes it further by suggesting that one go only once (*semel ire memento*, 33). The advice may no longer be as radical, but it remains ‘comically overstated’,⁴⁸⁸ and not just because Propertius’ earlier success did not stop others from trying to emulate it (*pulsabant alii frustra dominamque uocabant*; | *mecum habuit positum lenta puella caput*, 2.14.21-2). The circumstances which brought about Propertius’ earlier enlightenment is quite unlike that experienced by this addressee, who is already loved and summoned often (*quamuis te diligit illa*, 29; *quamuis te persaepe uocet*, 33); and while Propertius might have been better off had he himself followed the specific advice he gives here,⁴⁸⁹ it would only lead to the dissolution of the reciprocity enjoyed by his addressee. And that may well be the point: *illa* hints at the possibility that this is not just some beloved but Cynthia herself,⁴⁹⁰ making this addressee a rival and Propertius’ advice a mere ploy to dissolve their requited relationship; this *praeceptor* would thus break yet another’s *fastus* (21) by making his addressee’s love like his elegiac own.⁴⁹¹ But if this presents Propertius with an opportunity to win back his beloved, he will perhaps be no more successful than before:

⁴⁸⁷ See Heyworth (2007b) 219.

⁴⁸⁸ Heyworth (2007b) 219.

⁴⁸⁹ For self-address, cf. 2.8.17-18. Propertius also alludes to the failure of 2.14 through the sailing metaphor at 2.25.22 (*an quisquam in mediis persoluit uota procellis*, | *cum saepe in portu fracta carina natet?*): Propertius was then wrong to wonder whether his ship would sink overburdened or come to port (2.14.29-30); clearly, even ships that return can be wrecked.

⁴⁹⁰ See Heyworth (2007b) 219-20, citing Booth (1996) 232-47 for a similar reading of Tib. 1.8 and 1.9 (on which also see Caston 2012, 68-9).

⁴⁹¹ Cf. 1.7.25 (*tu caue nostra tuo contemnas carmina fastu*) and 1.13.27-8 (*nec tibi praeteritos passa est succedere fastus*, | *nec sinet: addictum te tuus ardor aget*).

at si saecla forent antiqua his grata puellis,
 essem ego quod nunc tu: tempore uincor ego.
non tamen ista meos mutabunt saecula mores:
 unus quisque sua nouerit ire uia.

35 antiqua his grata *Dousa* £] antiquis grata *Ω*: gratis antiqua *ς*

2.25.35-8

Suggesting that his addressee has found success through modern means of seduction, Propertius now expresses his resistance to amatory torture in terms of an adherence to the ways of old.⁴⁹² Again, then, the addressee should hesitate before following Propertius' advice: it comes from a different world, one indebted to the humble love of Theocritean pastoral set in a time before his own. But while modern times may not change his *mores* (37), Propertius can clearly change his own: he briefly learned to walk the path that shone before his feet (*ante pedes lucebat semita nobis*, 2.14.17), even if he now returns to tread the path allotted originally to him by his *Amor* (38; cf. 1.1.18). This *praeceptor*, then, is as much defeated by time (*tempore uincor ego*, 36) as by the poetic conceit with which he once began, and he returns to preach singular dedication in the poem's final lines:

⁴⁹² On the text of 35, see Fedeli (2005) 725-7, and Heyworth (2007b) 219-20. The latter translates as 'but if ancient ways were pleasing to today's girls'; the former argues that *saecla* in the sense of *mores* is impossible, despite Shackleton-Bailey's (1956, 115) citation of Luc. 10.110 and Tac. *Germ.* 19.3.

at uos qui officia in multos renouatis amores,
quantus sic cruciat lumina uestra dolor! 40
uidistis pleno teneram candore puellam
uidistis fuscam; ducit uterque color.
uidistis patria Argiuas prodire figura,
uidistis nostras, utraque forma rapit.
usaque plebeio uel sit sandycis amictu, 45
haec atque illa mali uulneris una uia est.
cum satis una suis insomnia portet ocellis,
una sat est cuiuis; femina multa malum.

39 renouatis *Barber*] reuocatis Ω

42 fuscam *Müller*] fusco Ω

43 patria *Heyworth* (*uel* grata)] quadam *NW*: quendam *ΠΤΣ/ΚΥC* | Argiuas *Housman*] Argiua Ω

44 lacunam ante 45 *Heyworth*

45 usaque *Barber*] illaque Ω

47 suis *Foster*] tuis *NITTYC*

48 sat est ζ] sit et Ω | malum *Carutti*] mala Ω

2.25.39-48

The *praeceptor* now turns to admonish those who turn their attention to many *puellae*: one is enough (47-8). As Propertius earlier addressed Calvus and Catullus, and *uos* (39) may suggest poets as well as lovers too:⁴⁹³ *amores* are loves lived or written, while *officia* alludes both to sexual favours⁴⁹⁴ and to the poet's task.⁴⁹⁵ Like Propertius (2.25.1), they are led by their eyes to a *dolor* brought about by the φαντασῖαι they see, whether loving, writing, or even reading: a *forma* (44) as Propertius has suggested, may be brought out by *libelli* (3); *figurae* (43) may refer as much to physical characteristics as the letters comprising a text, whether Latin or Greek (43-4).⁴⁹⁶ This list, moreover, may serve as yet another echo of the close of *DRN* 4, in which

⁴⁹³ As might *renouatis*: both Calvus and Catullus appear to have been νεώτεροι (Cic. *Att.* 7.2.1), or *poetae noui* (Cic. *Orat.* 161); see Lyne (1978). Cf. also Catull. 96.6 (addressed to Calvus): *quo desiderio ueteres renouamus amores*.

⁴⁹⁴ *OLD*s.v. 1c; this reading is favoured by Enk (1962, *ad loc.*). Cf. McKeown (1989) *ad Ov. Am.* 1.10.57, citing *Her.* 20.144, and *Ars* 1.152, 1.255, 2.333.

⁴⁹⁵ Cf. Hor. *Ars P.* 306 ([*sc. poetae*] *munus et officium ... docebo*). Cf. also Maur. 2830-1 for *renouare* used of poetic composition (*carmen suaue dedistis Olympiades mihi Musae: | infandum, regina, iubet renouare dolorem*).

⁴⁹⁶ Cf. Luc. 3.220-1 (*Phoenices primi ... ausi | mansuram rudibus uocem signare figuris*); Maur. 1303-4 (*quinque contenta est figuris Romuli latinitas: | η et ω longas enim nos non habemus litteras*). Martial suggests authorial

me licet et Thamyrae cantoris fata sequantur,
numquam ad formosas, inuide, caecus ero.

20

4 et nimis Heyworth] o nimis N, P ras., TSJWY: o ninus uel sim. F: omnia in exitium ... meum ζ

5 aliqua in Markland] aliquis Ω | diducit Passerat: deducit Ω

11-12 seclisit Housman

post 20 finem carminis indicauit Heyworth⁴⁹⁹

2.22a.1-10; 13-20

This is a gallingly different Propertius, pleased by many girls – and equally! (*multas pariter placuisse puellas*, 1) – and drawn to their beauty through the very means of the modern age, whether in theatres (3-6) or by their dress (7-10). If in 2.25 Propertius is a recalcitrant subject of a single, tormented love, then here he refuses to change his libertine ways despite the ‘many evils’ that they bring him (*multa uenire mala*, 2): his ‘eyes seek a wound for themselves’ (*nostri quaerunt sibi uulnus ocelli*, 7; cf. *haec atque illa mali uulneris una uia est*, 2.25.46), paradoxically keeping him from ever being ‘blind to beauties’ (*numquam ad formosas ... caecus ero*, 2.22a.20). Once again, Propertius expresses his sight – and love – in terms of poetic composition by comparing himself to ‘the singer Thamyras’ (*Thamyrae cantoris*, 19), who, having boasted that he could out-sing the Muses, lost the contest to which he challenged them, and was blinded by them as a result; had he won, he would have slept with them all.⁵⁰⁰ Propertius, however, does not need to see to have *formosae* before his eyes: as the subjects of his song, they are already present as φαντασῖαι.

Yet 2.22a is as much an amatory as a didactic inversion. Propertius may here set out to inform Demophoon about his love, but Demophoon already knows it all (*scis here ... | scis mihi* 1-2); and he dismisses the one question he is asked (*cur sim tam mollis in omnes*, 13) on the grounds that *amoris* is inexplicable (14). Instead, Propertius offers a question of his own (15-16), in which he compares his *mala* to the self-harm undertaken to the tune of maddening songs during worship of Cybele (*Phrygis insanos caeditur ad numeros*, 16); and while this serves as a reminder that his pain, now or elsewhere, is ultimately the self-inflicted consequence of his poetic devotion to love, it also reinforces Demophoon’s association with the eponymous

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. Heyworth (2007b) 202-3.

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.3.3.

mythological hero.⁵⁰¹ Having married Phyllis, Demophoon left for Cyprus, promising to return; he never did, and Phyllis killed herself. But when he opened the casket she gave him before his departure – which bore the sacraments of Mother Rhea,⁵⁰² that is, Cybele – he died a frenzied death.⁵⁰³

Demophoon's story is thus instructive for a poem in which Propertius so stridently reneges on an adherence to a single love – and yet instead of learning from this *exemplum* and undertaking the *seruitium* that would have saved his addressee, Propertius calls Demophoon *inuide* (20). Especially since it is juxtaposed with *caecus*, the vocative points to the active sense of *inuidere* as 'fascinare oculo',⁵⁰⁴ 'to bewitch with the evil eye': Demophoon's very eyes are suggested as a means of affecting Propertius' amatory reality.⁵⁰⁵ Propertius had last addressed someone as *inuide* when rejecting Bassus' irksome praise of other *puellae* in favour of an equal relationship with his own (*inuide, tu tandem uoces compesce molestas | et sine nos curso quo sumus ire pares*, 1.5.1-2); but with the two lovers hardly remaining *pares* for long, Propertius playfully makes Bassus responsible for the unhappy nature of his love. In 2.22a, the conceit is turned on its head as Propertius militates against Demophoon's surprise at how he can be equally attracted to many girls (*pariter* 1, 13); and with his addressee assuming a didactic role as a source of knowledge and an advisory mythological *exemplum* himself, Propertius even stands to have a taste of his own medicine by having his amatory reality affected by a teacher's (envious) eyes – as his had once served to re-write Gallus'.⁵⁰⁶ Like Thamyras, Propertius will be a poet defeated through his own poetry, his ravenous desires unfulfilled: while he may never be blind to *formosae*, still he will return to see and write one of a *notissima forma* (2.25.3).

⁵⁰¹ Cf. 2.24b.44.

⁵⁰² Apollod. *Bibl.* E.16 Wagner: Φυλλίς ... δίδωσιν αὐτῷ κίστην, εἰποῦσα ἱερὸν <τῆς> μητρὸς Ῥέας ἐνεῖναι. For the story of Phyllis and Demophoon, see also Ov. *Her.* 2; there is likewise a fragmentary reference at Call. fr. 556 Pf.

⁵⁰³ And possibly overcome by a φάσμα: while Frazer (1921) and Wagner (1894) print φόβῳ κατασχεθεῖς, Tzetzes' commentary on Lycophron (495) has φάσματι κρατηθεῖς. The *LSJ* gives φάντασμα as a synonym φάσμα, and as a synonym for φαντασία for Plato (s.v. A.II).

⁵⁰⁴ See *TLL* s.v. I, and also Fedeli (2005) 639 for his discussion of Demophoon as a 'iettatore', or jinx. Cf. Catull. 5.12 with Fordyce (1961) *ad loc.*, and see *TLL* II.A2 for apotropaic inscriptions (often involving a phallus) against the 'evil eye'.

⁵⁰⁵ For seeing by – and of – *Inuidia*, cf. Ov. *Met.* 2.768-86, and see Keith (1992) 124-31, and Salzmänn-Mitchell (2005) 41 for the play on the power of sight.

⁵⁰⁶ A power also hinted at in 2.25.34: *inuidiam quod habet, non solet esse diu.*

Thus, adopting a didactic tenor in the second half of 2.25, Propertius develops the association between sight and poetic composition while pointing to the balance between the malleability of his elegiac world and his dedication to his original amatory conceit. Internal allusions to two instances of poetic development, themselves both undertaken in a didactic context and expressed through the rhetoric of sight, serve as reminders of rejected modes of love and writing. Propertius' control over his written world may allow him to escape the amatory subservience he has created for himself, but he does not yet abandon it: enlightenment is possible, but Propertius does not teach it. He wishes to be captive to the φαντασία of his one beloved and to the composition to which she gives her name – and so, to be blind both to reality and to the other realities of his verse.

vi. 2.34

Such a reading then informs the final poem of what once was, presumably, Propertius' third book. 2.34 begins by foregrounding sight within a didactic context which is further developed later in the poem:

Cur quisquam faciem dominae iam credat amico?
 sic erepta mihi paene puella mea est.
 expertus dico: nemo est in amore fidelis;
 formosam raro non sibi quisque petit.

1 amico ζ] amori Ω

2.34.1-4

Propertius calls himself *expertus* for the first and only time in the collection – and means it. He does not only speak from this recent experience (he is *fidelis* now, but his dedication has not remained constant): he has already played both his and his addressee's roles, as both that of the lover anxious about being cheated, and that of the lover of many *formosae* (cf. 2.22a.20). Here, he confronts his addressee as the former, yet suggests power over his beloved that he might not be expected to have: her *facies* (1) is his to entrust; and he implies that she was at his house – not he at hers – through the subsequent comparison of his addressee's actions to

those of Paris and Jason (7). Furthermore, while the *facies* of the beloved is her ‘beauty’,⁵⁰⁷ the word was understood to have been derived from *facere*,⁵⁰⁸ as the appearance given to something made. In other words, this may well be read as the *facies* of a ποίημα,⁵⁰⁹ the text that we see: either the letters which comprise it,⁵¹⁰ or the φαντασία it paints in the mind.⁵¹¹ So, as Propertius agonizes once more about the detrimental effect of another’s eyes on his love, it remains contextualized in terms of composition – and with a smile: Propertius does not want to lose control over his *Cynthia*; yet by retaining it, he will remain under the control of his Cynthia. This play continues as the addressee’s name is finally revealed:

Lynceu, tune meam potuisti, perfide, curam
 tangere? nonne tuae tum cecidere manus?
 quid si non constans illa et tam certa fuisset?
 posses tu tanto uiuere flagitio?

12 posses tu *Markland*] posses in *NA*: posses et in *LP*: posset et in *F*

2.34.9-12

As with Demophon, Lynceus recalls a mythological namesake – or two. One is an Argonaut, famed for his extraordinary sight;⁵¹² the other is Hypermnestra’s husband, one of fifty brother grooms for fifty sister brides. By recalling the former, Propertius jestingly recalls the start of the poem: his Lynceus may have seen the *facies* with which Propertius entrusted him, but his sight led him nowhere; the *puella* was not *erepta*. The latter Lynceus, meanwhile, was spared by his *casta puella*.⁵¹³ whether because he let her keep her virginity,⁵¹⁴ or because she simply

⁵⁰⁷ Cf. 2.2.3, and see *OLD* s.v. 8a.

⁵⁰⁸ Cf. Varro, *Ling.* 6.78: *proprio nomine dicitur ‘facere’ a ‘facie’, qui rei quam facit imponit faciem. ut factor cum dicit ‘fingo’, figuram imponit, quom dicit ‘formo’, formam, sic cum dicit ‘facio’, faciem imponit; a qua facie discernitur, ut dici possit aliud esse uestimentum, aliud uas, sic item quae fiunt apud fabros, fictores, item alios alia. Cf. also Gell. NA 30.2-3: sicuti quidam ‘faciem’ esse hominis putant os tantum et oculos et genas, quod Graeci πρόσωπον dicunt, quando ‘facies’ sit forma omnis et modus et factura quaedam corporis totius, a ‘faciendo’ dicta, ut ab ‘aspectu’ ‘species’ et a ‘fingendo’ ‘figura.’*

⁵⁰⁹ Cf. *Aetna* 36 (*discrepat a prima facies haec altera uatum*), where *facies* refers to untrustworthy poetry (cf. *fallacia uatum*, 29).

⁵¹⁰ Cf. *Man.* 755-6; *Quint. Inst.* 1.1.25.

⁵¹¹ Cf. *Quint. Inst.* 8.3.63-6.

⁵¹² Cf. *Ap. Rhod. Argon.* 1.153-4.

⁵¹³ Cf. *Ov. Her.* 14.50: *castaque mandatum dextra refugit opus.*

⁵¹⁴ Cf. *Apollod. Bibl.* 2.5: αὔτη γὰρ Λυγκέα διέσωσε παρθένον αὐτήν φυλάξαντα. Cf. also *Hor. Carm.* 3.11.

could not go through with the murder. As Ovid's Hypermnestra complains of her Lynceus,⁵¹⁵ Propertius' own did not care for chastity, having drunkenly (cf. 2.34.22, below) tried to fondle the object of his desire (10). But his hands gained him no more favour than his eyes – for what he touched remains no less poetic. As noted earlier, *cura* can refer to a literary work, and it is this, unlike his beloved, that is *constans* and *certa* – at least as the physical object to be touched.⁵¹⁶ For, while Propertius claims to forgive Lynceus on account of his drunkenness (*una tamen causa est qua crimina tanta remitto: | errabant multo quod tua uerba mero*, 21-22), his poem reveals the *flagitium* (12) that he apparently avoided: just as he repaid Gallus' trust by telling all his amatory secrets (1.10.11-12), so Lynceus' *perfidia* (9) is paralleled by Propertius' own, making the poet about as *constans* and *certus* as his beloved. Even more punishment is soon to come; but before it does, Propertius turns from poeticizing his *puella* to poeticizing himself:

lecto te solum, lecto te deprecor uno:
 riualem possum non ego ferre Iouem.
 ipse meae solus, quod nil est, aemulor umbrae;
 stultus, quod falso saepe timore tremo.

19 meae ... umbrae *Heinsius*] meas ... umbras Ω

20 falso *Heyworth*] stulto Ω : ficto *Richmond*

2.34.17-20

Propertius begs Lynceus away from his couch (*lecto ... lecto*, 17), suitable both for sex and study:⁵¹⁷ he is jealous (*aemulor*, 19) even of his own shadow. Having just invited Lynceus to become a *dominus* of his estate (15-16), Propertius tempers his disquiet with further self-effacement by now admitting to his own foolishness (*stultus*, 20), as he trembles with 'false fear' (*falso timore*, 20) at something 'which is nothing' (*quod nil est*, 19). Such vulnerability recalls the poem's start, when Propertius revealed his exploitation by his addressee; and as before (*expertus*, 3), he here hints again at the development his poetry has undertaken.⁵¹⁸ The cause of Propertius' fear is not just his shadow but himself: he portrayed himself as an *umbra*

⁵¹⁵ *Ov. Her.* 14.69: *dum petis amplexus sopitaque brachia iactas.*

⁵¹⁶ See *TLL* s.v. I (*constans*) and *TLL* s.v. IV.A2a (*certus*).

⁵¹⁷ See chapter 1, 43 and n.180.

⁵¹⁸ Cf. *Ov. Ars* 1.29: *usus opus mouet hoc: uati parete perito.*

thanks to *Amor*'s relentless assault in 2.12; if he still remains indistinguishable from his *umbra*, the absurdity of his fear is enriched even further. Yet by making himself out as an *umbra* in 2.12, Propertius also pointed to his existence as a φαντασία no different from the painter's god or the beloved that he writes, making himself as malleable as the *Amor* which rules over him or the *Cynthia* through which his affair is portrayed. While this may allow him to change the terms of his teaching suddenly – as he does in 2.14 and 2.22a – these new written selves also become rival means of versifying love. This connection between *timor* and composition may be taken further still. In calling his *umbra* a 'nothing' while suggesting it as a possible cause of his amatory downfall, Propertius echoes Lucretius' rhetoric concerning the fear of death – and inverts the didactic intertext once again (*quod nil est*, 2.34.19; cf. *nil igitur mors est ad nos*, Lucr. 3.830).⁵¹⁹ Propertius does not just fear as a fool: while his *umbra* may be nothing but a φαντασία – whether an imagined rival or the written self that fears it – he turns this nothing into something by portraying it in verse, realising his amatory nightmare like Lucretius' ignorant addressee (*mortua cui uita est prope iam uiuo atque uidenti*, | *qui somno partem maiorem conteris aeui* | *et uigilans stertis nec somnia cernere cessas* | *sollicitamque geris cassa formidine mentem*, 3.1046-9).

But unlike Lucretius' addressee, Propertius is at least aware that he is *stultus* and is in control of his nightmare: he remains blind to reason because he keeps before his eyes the elegiac reality of poetic and amatory *furor*. His *timor* is *falsus*, not simply false but also contrived;⁵²⁰ and while his addressee's eyes may have not led him to consummate his desire, his own can do it for him. He may have fallen prey to Lynceus' *perfidia*, but he will never be deceived by 'the frown of a strict way of life' (*sed numquam uitae fallit me ruga seuerae*, 2.34.23); having retained control of his beloved's *facies*, his attention now turns to gazing upon that of his addressee. Lynceus' life has made his own *facies* appear the way it does – but by exposing it now to the poetry through which he lives his own life, Propertius can begin to remake it in his own image.

⁵¹⁹ See also Cairns (2006, 305), who adduces the intertext as part of a broader Epicurean reading of 2.34, and sees Lynceus as Varius Rufus.

⁵²⁰ This may, then, constitute a case for reading Richmond's *facto*, but cf. also Ov. *Met.* 14.358-60: *dixit et effigiem nullo cum corpore falsi* | *figit apri praeterque oculos transcurrere regis* | *iussit ...*

‘[E]veryone now knows how good it is to love’, he thus proceeds (*omnes iam norunt quam sit amare bonum*, 2.34.24), and immediately writes a new reality for his addressee:⁵²¹

Lynceus ipse meus seros insanit amores; 25

serum te nostros laetor adire deos.

quid tua Socraticis tibi nunc sapientia libris

proderit, aut rerum dicere posse uias?

aut quid Cretaei tibi prosunt carmina plectri?

nil iuuat in magno uester amore senex. 30

tu potius memorem Musis imitere Philitan

et non inflati somnia Callimachi.

...

incipi iam angusto uersus includere torno, 43

inque tuos ignes, dure poeta, ueni;

26 serum te *Bergk*] solum te Ω

29 plectri *Palmer*] lecta Ω

31 potius *Schrader*] satius Ω

2.34.25-32; 43-44

Treacherous though Lynceus may have been (*perfide*, 9), Propertius made him out as his friend (*amico*, 1; *amice*, 16); now, however, he also makes him his own (*meus*, 25) as he grants him what he desired and resumes the stance of *praeceptor*. Lynceus’ name becomes a further source of irony: unlike those of the Argonaut, the eyes of this Lynceus bring him into danger – for unlike Hypermnestra’s husband, this Lynceus is hurt by his dalliance (*insanit*, 25). This sudden *volte-face*, moreover, is actualised in a didactic narrative that appears as a kind of reprise of those in Book 1: like Gallus in 1.5, Lynceus is warned off Cynthia only to become entangled within the elegiac reality of *Cynthia*; like Gallus in 1.10, he is the subject of Propertius’ sardonic happiness (*laetor*, 26; cf. 1.10.1-4); like Gallus in 1.13, his treachery (cf. *perfide*, 1.13.3) is followed by infatuation; like Ponticus, he comes to know Propertius’ gods (*nostros ... deos*, 26; cf. *quam nolim nostros te uiolasse deos*, 1.7.16) and is taught to reject ‘heavy’ forms of writing

⁵²¹ Barber (1953) and Giardina (2005; 2010) print Barth’s conjecture of a new poem at 25; see Fedeli (2005) 954; Heyworth (2007b) 262-4; and O’Rourke (2011) 461 and nn. 15-17.

in favour of 'slight' Alexandrian elegy (27-42; cf. 1.9.9-12). This poem thus continues to look back to those written before.

Sight appears significant to Lynceus' introduction into this elegiac world too. Propertius rejects the amatory efficacy of philosophies both Socratic (27) and, seemingly, Epicurean (*rerum ... uias*, 28),⁵²² each of which offers to bring its adherents to see the true nature of the world – albeit in opposing ways. Socrates dismisses sense-perception in favour of reasoning that brings one away from the illusory world of shadows towards a view of immaterial Forms;⁵²³ Lucretius instructs one away from gloomy ignorance towards a materialist world-view based on sense-perception.⁵²⁴ In Propertius' elegiac world, however, one is to understand not through reason or sight but, like Callimachus (*somnia*, 32), through the dream-like state of an elegiac existence (cf. 2.1.11-12).⁵²⁵ This *praeceptor* will not free his student but only shackle him further to the amatory servitude he creates with his *Cynthia* (*nec tu tam duros per te patieris amores: | trux tamen, a nobis ante domandus eris*, 49-50);⁵²⁶ enlightenment is unnecessary when elegiac

⁵²² Boucher (1958, 313), views *rerum ... uias* as possible allusion to the *clinamen* (a specificity rightly rejected by Fedeli 2005, 966), while Cairns (2006, 308-11) takes it as part of a broader play with Philodemus. More plausibly, Nelis (2005, 241-2) argues that, especially given the call-out later in the poem, this constitutes a double allusion both to Virgil's *Georgics* (2.490-4) and to Lucretius, who is recalled in that passage.

⁵²³ Cf. Pl. *Phd.* 100c-102a, where Socrates argues that αἴτια constitute Forms (though *contra* Yonezara 1991): notably, he uses the metaphor at 2.34.19 as part of his argument (σὺ δὲ δεδιὼς ἄν, τὸ λεγόμενον, τὴν σαυτοῦ σκιάν; for the metaphor across ancient and Renaissance literature, see García Romero, 2013). At 97b-99c, Socrates rejects the conception of αἴτια as proposed by Anaxagoras and Empedocles, against whom Lucretius explicitly argues at 1.716-920; Socrates' metaphor about the ignorant groping around in the dark (ὁ δὴ μοι φαίνονται ψηλαφῶντες οἱ πολλοὶ ὥσπερ ἐν σκότει, 99b) is likewise reminiscent of that used by Lucretius (see n.524, below).

⁵²⁴ Cf. Lucr. 2.55-8 (and 3.87-93; 6.35-41): *nam ueluti pueri trepidant atque omnia caecis | in tenebris metuunt, sic nos in luce timemus | interdum nilo quae sunt metuenda magis quam | quae pueri in tenebris pauitant finguntque futura.*

⁵²⁵ If the common theme in lines 27-32 is sight, there may be a case for reading *Arateis* in 29 following Nairn (1899, 393-4), who argues that this provides a link to the astronomical observations outlined in lines 51-2; φαντασίαι, meanwhile, were a crucial epistemological concept in Stoicism (Diog. Laert. 7.49-51; see Watson 1988, 38-58, and n. 374, above), a philosophy whose influence on Aratus' *Phaenomena* is well-recognised (see, e.g., Kidd 1997, 10-12). Heyworth (2007b, 269) argues that Callimachus' praise of Aratus in Call. *Ep.* 27 Pf. makes the latter 'too closely connected with the Callimachean aesthetic for him to be an attractive candidate to contrast with Callimachus and Philitas in 31-2'; yet Callimachus qualifies 'delicate utterances' (λεπτὰ | ῥήσιες, 3-4) as originating from his ἀγρυπνίη (4), a 'wakefulness' which allows him both to observe the night sky and to compose (about) it.

⁵²⁶ Cf. Pl. *Rep.* 514a-15c (Allegory of the Cave), where prisoners are freed from bondage; and Lucr. 1.62-79, where Epicurus breaks through the gates of nature.

puellae have no interest in knowledge or reason (51-4). Cynthia looks down on the grand gods of epic (*despicit et magnos nostra puella deos*, 46); Lynceus should keep his eyes on his master by following him in versifying the elegiac world to which he succumbs:

aspice me, cui parua domi fortuna relictā est
nullus et antiquo Marte triumphus aui,
ut regnem mixtas inter conuiuia puellas
hoc ego quo tibi nunc eleuor ingenio.
me iuuat hesternis positum languere corollis,
quem tetigit iactu certus ad ossa deus;

2.34.55-60

Having earlier offered Lynceus the position of *dominus* (16), Propertius now assumes that of *rex* (57). Didactic authority once more becomes a means for poetic authority over the addressee: as with Ponticus, the *praeceptor* struck by *Amor*'s unerring bow (60) rises above his student in terms of *ingenium* (58) by writing him into the same divine torment with humble elegiac verse (*te quoque si certo puer hic concusserit arcu*, 1.7.15; *me non humilem mirabere saepe poetam*; | *tunc ego Romanis praeferar ingeniis*, 21-2). Both here and there, *ingenium* is a loaded concept (as it was in 2.1): unlike Lynceus and Ponticus, Propertius has the inspiration to write the elegy that they ought to embrace; unlike them, this poetic production brings Propertius celebrity (57; cf. 1.7.23-4); and unlike them, Propertius is in control of this elegiac reality, making (cf. *poetam*, 1.7.21; *poeta*, 1.7.23) it in his own image.

In this reality, one can be a *rex* without prosperity or martial pedigree (55-6); but it is one that can be changed for *praeceptor* and student alike. In hinting at the life that stands behind his verse, Propertius is also commenting on his own poetics: he has no battle-hardened predecessors (56) not least because he writes in the elegiac tradition; he has little prosperity at home (55) not least because he is dedicated to a versified reality of tormented love – where, as at the start of this poem, even unruly guests can threaten the temporary reciprocation that he enjoys. Yet succeeding with one *puella* no longer prohibits success with many (57). If Propertius' *ingenium* was earlier lauded by *iuuenes* (1.7.23), now it leads him to rule 'among mingled girls' (*mixtas ... inter puellas*, 57): they not only read his poetry but – as in 2.22a –

form part of it, too; these *conuiuæ* lie on his *lectus* as groupies and verse. While he may enjoy (cf. *laetor*, 26) writing Lynceus into his new elegiac reality using didactic narrative that looks back to earlier poetry, he no less enjoys ‘languishing on yesterday’s garlands’ (*me iuuat hesternis positum languere corollis*, 59), the symbols of drunken revelry testing the strength of his attachment to his beloved by giving him the scope to pay attention to others.⁵²⁷ Thus, by encouraging Lynceus to see the control he exercises over his own elegiac world, Propertius reminds us once again that his dedication to *Cynthia* need not be the same as dedication to Cynthia.

Such poetic development in turn anticipates the lengthy digression on the works of other poets which concludes the poem, and especially that of Virgil (61-82),⁵²⁸ whose progression towards epic (61-6) from the *Georgics* (77-80) and *Eclogues* (67-76; 81-2) is portrayed within ‘a tribute that doubles as a *recusatio*’.⁵²⁹ However much of the *Aeneid* Propertius can be deduced to have known from his description of Virgil’s new project,⁵³⁰ he is unambiguously delicate in his overview of the other works, appearing at first glance to dedicate four lines to the four books of the *Georgics* and ten lines to the ten poems of the *Eclogues*⁵³¹ – and yet, Propertius has subjected these to a clear ‘flattening and misrepresentation’.⁵³² Most significant is the transformation of their relationship to love: firstly, the *Aeneid* is made out to be exclusively martial; secondly, the summary of the *Georgics* points solely to the content of its first two

⁵²⁷ And not just because it leads a drunk Lynceus to make moves on her (cf. 2.34.22); *corollae* appear three times elsewhere in the *corpus* and each time point to unsatisfied love. At 1.3.21, Propertius puts *corollae* on Cynthia’s temples only for her to rebuke him for abandoning her; at 1.16.7 *corollae* hang on the closed door of a *dura domina*; at 2.15.51, wilting *corollae* portray the approaching end of life, and thus, lovemaking.

⁵²⁸ Like Goold (1990, 214), Heyworth (2007b, 276) follows Ribbeck in transposing 77-80 before 67; Virgil’s career thus progresses in reverse, from the *Aeneid*, to the *Georgics*, to the *Eclogues* (and becomes a mirror image of Varro’s poetic development in 85-6). Camps (1967, 232) accepts that the lines could have moved given the shared initial *tu canis* (67, 77), but sees ‘no cogent reason’ why they should be transposed; Butrica (1997, 201-4) argues that 67-80 may be a transposition from another source; Fedeli (2005, 999-1001) accepts that Ribbeck’s transposition is ‘ingegnosa’ but argues against it, noting also that Virgil’s career moves from the *Aeneid* to the *Eclogues* at Ov. *Tr.* 2.533-8 (Servius’ commentary similarly moves from the *Aeneid* to the *Eclogues* and then to the *Georgics*). O’Rourke (2011, 481-2) intriguingly suggests that there is a stichometric allusion to *Georgics* 1.54 (*hic segetes, illic ... uuæ*) at line 54 of Propertius 2.34 if a new poem begins at line 25 and 77-80 are left untransposed (*quo seges ... quo uiret uua*, 78). For the division, see n. 521.

⁵²⁹ Knox (2006) 137.

⁵³⁰ O’Rourke (2011) 464-73, with citations.

⁵³¹ See Thomas (1996) 243-4 and n.31.

⁵³² O’Rourke (2011) 477.

books (tacitly suppressing the amatory torments in Books 3 and 4),⁵³³ and that of the *Eclogues* ‘gives an impression of Virgilian *amor* that is uncomfortably facile’.⁵³⁴ Propertius does not refer to *Eclogue* 8, in which Damon plays the part of a singer committing suicide after failing to win the heart of his beloved;⁵³⁵ he also alters the homoeroticism of *Eclogue* 3 when remarking that ‘ten apples can seduce girls’ (*utque decem possint corrumpere mala puellas*, 69) ‘to reinstate the heterosexual relations’ of Theocritus’ *Idyll* 3, but thereby ‘reverses the fruitlessness’ of this Hellenistic intertext ‘as if to emphasise a reciprocity in Virgilian *amor* that is alien to its more angst-ridden Theocritean and Propertian counterparts’.⁵³⁶ Finally, he presents Tityrus and Corydon as jarringly cheery in a clear echo of the double *makarismos* at *Georgics* 2.490-4:

felix qui uiles pomis mercaris amores;
 huic licet ingratae Tityrus ipse canat.
 felix intactum Corydon qui temptat Alexin
 agricolae domini carpere delicias.

2.34.71-4

Propertius inverts Tityrus’ lament (*Ecl.* 1.33-5, complaining about his lack of profit from going to market; cf. especially *ingratae ... urbi*, 1.34) and Corydon’s amatory hopelessness (*Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin*, | *delicias domini, nec quid speraret habebat*, *Ecl.* 2.1-2) to make both representatives of a quasi-Lucretian ἀταραξία. Where Virgil had acknowledged, but rejected, the Lucretian world-view in favour of ‘irrational pastoral religiosity’,⁵³⁷ Propertius accepts the amatory tranquillity that, according to him, pervades the *Eclogues* (and *Georgics*) without preferring it to the irrationality of his elegiac world.

⁵³³ An omission made all the more galling by Propertius’ earlier allusion to, and inversion of, Verg. *G.* 3.206-11 at 2.34.47-50. See O’Rourke (2011) 483.

⁵³⁴ O’Rourke (2011) 477.

⁵³⁵ So O’Rourke (2011, 479-80), arguing that Propertius has cut out an *Eclogue* that ‘has the greatest affinity with the elegiac tradition.’

⁵³⁶ O’Rourke (2011) 476. In Theoc. *Id.* 3, the ‘ten apples’ (δέκα μᾶλα, 3.10) are rejected by Amaryllis.

⁵³⁷ O’Rourke (2011) 478. For the tensions between Lucretian reason and Virgilian rustic piety, see Barchiesi (1982); Hardie (1986) 33-51; and Gale (2000) 171.

While such reworking of Virgilian material may be read in Bloomian terms to make ‘Propertius ... look upon Virgil as a confrère and rival in elegiac poetics’,⁵³⁸ it is also illustrative of Propertius’ poetic process in this poem more broadly. The didactic context within which Propertius has rewritten Lynceus’ elegiac reality to make it more akin to his own also serves as the point of congruence between Propertius and his Virgil. Virgil ‘sings the teachings of the old Ascrean’ (*tu canis Ascreaei ueteris praecepta poetae*, 2.34.77), and ‘make[s] the sort of song on [his] learned lyre’ as that guided by Apollo’s fingers (*tale facis carmen docta testudine quale | Cynthus impositis temperat articulis*, 2.34.79-80);⁵³⁹ Propertius is forced to dwell in an Ascrean land (*Ascreum ... habitare nemus*, 2.13.4), composing a *Cynthia* to be read by a *docta puella* (2.13.11) and played on the lyre with poetic fingers of her own (*siue lyrae carmen digitis percussit eburnis*, 2.1.9). Like Propertius, moreover, this Virgil comes to sing his poetic world from the one he also composes. Propertius (*tu canis umbrosi subter pineta Galaesi | Thyrsin*, 2.34.67-8) alludes to Virgil’s *sphragis* at the end of the *Georgics* (*Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi*, 4.566) which itself echoes the start of the *Eclogues* (*Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi*, 1.1). Propertius maintains the ambiguity of *sub tegmine fagi* in the *Georgics*, ‘which may be connected with Virgil as much as with Tityrus’ and suggests Virgil as a character in the *Eclogues* with *umbrosi subter pineta Galaesi*,⁵⁴⁰ making Virgil out as composing the *Eclogues* from the terrain of the *Georgics* (cf. *Galaesus*, 4.126) – a terrain which, for Virgil, now exists solely as an image in the mind (*memini me ... uidisse*, 4.125-7).⁵⁴¹ Connecting thus the worlds of the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* as Virgil had playfully done before him, Propertius presents his Virgil as his own φαντασία, shadowed (cf. *umbrosi*, 67) by his own, ‘agro-pastoral’ world.

Teaching, to be sure, also serves as the foundation for the two poets’ divergence. Propertius’ Virgil preaches materiality over poetic composition, and tranquillity over torment. The *praecepta* that are made out to matter in the *Georgics* are those that concern the *seges* and

⁵³⁸ O’Rourke (2011) 481. He reads 2.34 through Bloom’s (1973) concept of the ‘anxiety of influence’.

⁵³⁹ An allusion to *Ecl.* 5.45-6, as noted by O’Rourke (2011, 485-6; see his n.108 for further references). However, in Virgil’s poetry it is only Orpheus – traditionally, taught by Apollo – who sings on a *testudo* about his *amor* (*G.* 4.464); associating Virgil with Orpheus at this point may be a further means for Propertius to play at this detached similarity with his poetic counterpart through a possible hint towards 2.13, where Propertius rejects the specifics of Orpheus’ poetic powers while undertaking them in his own elegiac context.

⁵⁴⁰ Nauta (2006) 308.

⁵⁴¹ See n.39.

uuae (78) of Books 1 and 2, not the digressions on the destructive love of Books 3 and 4. In the *Eclogues*, meanwhile, reciprocation can be bought with apples and a weaned kid, with verse not an end in itself, but only a means for the delivery of such gifts (69-72). This is, to be sure, a simplistic perspective of Virgilian poetry, made all the more so by Propertius' silence on Orpheus' versified lament for his beloved Eurydice (played on a lyre of his own; cf. *caua ... testudine*, *G.* 4.464) and Nysa's scorn for Damon's song (*dum tibi est odio mea fistula*, *Ecl.* 8.33) – connections between poetry, love, and death which might be thought instructive for Propertius' own collection.

But in privileging the aesthetic value of Virgilian poetry over the didactic in matters of love (*non tamen haec ulli uenient ingrata legenti | siue in amore rudis, siue peritus erit*, 81-2), Propertius nevertheless points to the lack of educational potential in his own teaching and to its use instead as a poetic tool. Thus far, Propertius has rewritten Ponticus' and Gallus' elegiac realities within didactic contexts (as well as his own); now, he has done the same to Lynceus before pivoting to rewrite Virgil too. Propertius adopts a didactic pose not for others' enlightenment but for his own poetic renown – and for the poetic development it also demands. Speaking about Virgil's works, Propertius may well also be speaking about his own. Choose the works of either poet, then: *non tamen haec ulli uenient ingrata legenti*.⁵⁴²

So, while Propertius cannot change the reality of the *Aeneid's* creation, he can alter the Virgil that exists in his own elegiac reality, rewriting the path that takes him to epic as he writes out his journey from the *Aeneid* to the *Eclogues*. And in so doing, he hints that a new path is being forged for himself too. He turns to list other poets and the beloveds through whom they gained their renown: Varro and Leucadia (85-6); Catullus and Lesbia (87-8); Calvus and Quintilia (89-90); Gallus and Lycoris (91-2); thus, Propertius hopes for his Cynthia to live praised by his verse 'if fame wishes to place [him] among these poets' (*Cynthia quin uiuet uersu laudata Properti, | hos inter si me ponere Fama uolet*, 93-4). But none of these poets were solely dedicated to these pursuits: as Propertius notes, Varro first wrote an *Argonautica* (*sic quoque perfecto ludebat Iasone Varro*, 2.34.85); though he leaves it unsaid, Catullus, Calvus, and

⁵⁴² This, in turn, may support O'Rourke's (2011, 489-90) view that the ambivalence in 81-2 might be deliberate (for him, it is 'a function of poetic anxiety').

Gallus all experimented too.⁵⁴³ Cynthia, then, may very well live – but the *Cynthia* that grants her life in our minds is also primed to leave her behind.

⁵⁴³ Gallus appears to have imitated, if not translated, Euphorion (who wrote hexameters; see scholia *ad Verg. Ecl.* 10.50-1 in Lightfoot 2010, 212). Ross (1975, 46) and Zetzel (1977, 252-3) argue that his poem on the Grynean grove (as suggested by *Ecl.* 6.72) need not have been in hexameters (though Zetzel considers it possible that Gallus wrote epyllia); however, *contra* Heyworth (1992, 51). For Calvus' verse, see Hollis (2007, 49-86).

Elegy Confidential: Trustworthiness in Books 3 and 4

Having now discussed the ways in which Propertius plays on the theme of sight when assuming a didactic guise both to point to the fictional nature of his elegiac world and to express his control over its direction, it is now time to consider Propertius' teaching in Books 3 and 4 from another perspective: the theme of trustworthiness, and in particular, *fides*. As with sight in the previous chapter, Propertius' interaction with this theme has already been mentioned as part of the discussion on the poems of Gallus. In 1.10, Propertius thanked Gallus for trusting in him (*non es ueritus concredere nobis*, 11) and offered him something more than *fides* in return (*est quiddam in nobis maius, amice, fide*, 14); in 1.13, Propertius accused Gallus of treachery (*perfide*, 3) and hoped that he would be a victim of the deceitfulness with which he pursues his affairs (*fallere te numquam, Galle, puella uelit. | dum tibi deceptis augetur fama puellis*, 4-5). Both times, this rhetoric is accompanied by Gallus' integration into, and transformation within, Propertius' poetry, associating *fides* not just with instruction but also with Propertius' control over his written world. Thus, Gallus' evolution becomes viewable in terms of the poet's own guile: just as, in these poems, Propertius cannot be trusted to keep the details of Gallus' affair secret or invariable, so he cannot be trusted to keep Gallus away from *Cynthia* in 1.5, or Hylas safe from the rapacious nymphs of 1.20.

This theme will now be considered in terms of Propertius' own evolution in Books 3 and 4. To be treated, again, are poems in which Propertius plays with a didactic tone: as an explicator of his own poetics (3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 – where he also appears as a *praeceptor amoris*); as a prospective student and proponent of Epicurean and Empedoclean physics (3.5, in combination with 3.4); as an instructive *dominus* (3.6, 3.23); as a tour guide and recipient of divine advice (4.1a, 4.1b – where he again appears as a *praeceptor amoris*); and as the victim of a *lena's* instructions to a *puella* (4.5). As with Gallus' development in Book 1 and Propertius' in 'Book 2', the change which occurs in these books is not linear but circular: each time Propertius embarks on a new poetic path, it threatens to lead him back whence he came.

i. 3.1

While Propertius opened Book 1 with Cynthia, a different ‘C’ opens Book 3 and recalls the poetic pair Lynceus had been encouraged to emulate in 2.34 after falling in love:

Callimachi manes et Coi sacra Philitae,
in uestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus.
primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos
Itala per Graios orgia ferre choros.

3.1.1-4

Now, Propertius seeks to be let into their grove. Having already outlined his dependence upon them for his written affair, he now suggests a deeper interaction grounded in poetic experimentation. He approaches their grove as a *sacerdos*, a role he assumes for the first time in his collection and which mirrors Horace at *Carm.* 3.1.3, where, as here, *sacerdos* is placed at the end of the line.⁵⁴⁴ Moreover, he does so willingly and unaccompanied by *Amor*, who had previously forced him to dwell in a Hesiodic grove (*Ascraeum ... nemus*, 2.13.4) following an attempt at loftier, epic verse in 2.10. But unlike the self-confident Horatian *persona*, Propertius portrays himself as someone who still has much to learn, marking out his entry into this grove within a didactic context, just as he had done in 2.13 when dwelling in an *Ascraeum nemus*.⁵⁴⁵

dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro?
quoue pede ingressi? quamue bibistis aquam?

3.1.5-6

These questions constitute further experimentation upon previous self-characterisation. In 1.1, Propertius had no chance to ask questions before *Amor* taught him to ‘hate chaste girls/Muses’ (*donec me docuit castas odisse puellas*, 1.1.5) and thus forced him to write elegy, the only verse

⁵⁴⁴ See Nethercut (1970) 386.

⁵⁴⁵ Given the forthcoming interplay with *Georgics* 3 (see below), it may be worth recalling that Virgil is also explicit about his Hesiodic credentials: *ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontis, | Ascraeumque cano Romana per oppida carmen* (*G.* 2.175-6).

fitting for love. Here, *Amor* is nowhere to be seen as Propertius directs his newfound inquisitiveness towards the poetic principles of his idols,⁵⁴⁶ suggesting a more fundamental interest in them than that shown before and, consequently, a reconfigured approach to his own poetry too. Propertius has not simply exchanged delinquency for priesthood and purity (*puro de fonte*, 3.1.3; cf. πίδακος ἔξ ἱερῆς, Call. *Hymn* 2.112), but also admiration for a different sort of relationship: *Amor*'s didactic oppression forced Propertius into one defined by imparity,⁵⁴⁷ now Propertius seeks to learn from two equals (*pariter*, 3.1.5). To be sure, just as Propertius stressed his poetic uniqueness by being taught by an *Amor* forgetting to follow known ways (*nec meminit notas, ut prius, ire uias*, 1.1.18), so he continues to do so again (*primus ego*, 3.1.3), making his didactic self-characterisation once more a means for developing his poetic authority. Yet this claim to poetic authority through primacy is complicated by the rich tradition of poetic priesthood in which Propertius follows – and this complication mirrors that of the poet's didactic authority in the subsequent reply to his questions:

a ualeat, Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis,
exactus tenui pumice uersus eat.

3.1.7-8

Not only does this couplet not answer any of the earlier questions, but it raises another – who speaks? Is it Callimachus and Philitas, or Propertius – and whoever does speak, why do they withhold the information queried? Ultimately, of course, it is through Propertius' poetry that we receive this reply, the necessary intermediary between us and the poet(s), of which we are reminded by the expression of poetic principles through the language of publication (*tenui pumice*, 8). At the same time, we recall that Propertius asks not Callimachus and Philitas but their 'shades' and 'rites', that is, the poets' representations, immortalised through their worship but deriving nonetheless from their poetry, leaving their selves no less hidden from us than the poet whose work we read. The ambiguity of who speaks is thus enhanced by the literary barrier separating us from whoever does, a barrier which both simultaneously equates Propertius to the other literary figures from whom he seeks answers, and his role as a *sacerdos* (an intermediary between the audience and the divine) with his poetic medium (the intermediary

⁵⁴⁶ See Camps (1966) 53-4.

⁵⁴⁷ As Propertius suggested in his appeal to other lovers: *sitis et in tuto semper amore pares* (1.1.32).

between us and him). Whatever truth is proffered by the couplet above therefore stands to be reckoned against these shifting poetic sands, along with the intertext these questions and answer also recall:

Ζηνὸς ἔοι τί κεν ἄλλο παρὰ σπονδῆσιν αἰίδειν
λώιον ἢ θεὸν αὐτόν, αἰεὶ μέγαν, αἰὲν ἄνακτα,
Πηλαγόνων ἐλατῆρα, δικασπὸλον οὐρανίδησι;
πῶς καὶ μιν, Δικταῖον αἰείσομεν ἢ Ἐλυκαῖον;
ἐν δοιῇ μάλα θυμός, ἐπεὶ γένος ἀμφήριστον. 5
Ζεῦ, σὲ μὲν Ἰδαίοισιν ἐν οὐρεσὶ φασι γενέσθαι,
Ζεῦ, σὲ δ' ἐν Ἀρκαδίῃ· πρότεροι, πάτερ, ἐψεύσαντο;
“Κρηῆτες αἰεὶ ψεῦσται” καὶ γὰρ τάφον, ὃ ἄνα, σεῖο
Κρηῆτες ἐτεκτήναντο· σὺ δ' οὐ θάνες, ἐσσί γὰρ αἰεὶ.

Call. *Hymn* 1.1-9

Like Propertius in 3.1, Callimachus begins his first hymn in a priestly guise (σπονδῆσιν, 1); this he will take up more fully in the *Hymn to Apollo* (2.1-8), to the end of which Propertius has already alluded. In the *Hymn to Zeus* cited above, Callimachus wonders as to Zeus' true origin – Arcadian or Cretan? – with his questions then followed by a paradox attributed to the Cretan Epimenides: ‘Cretans are always liars’. Zeus' double provenance is matched by the pairing of Propertius' addressees; just as they are posed three questions, so he is thrice addressed (Ζεῦ ... | Ζεῦ ... πάτερ, 6-7). And as in 3.1, the question of who speaks hangs over line 8: Zeus, Callimachus, or even Epimenides may be said to be speaking. At the same time, the full version of Epimenides' paradox (Κρηῆτες αἰεὶ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί, fr. 1 D-K), echoes the Muses' infamous proclamation to Hesiod:⁵⁴⁸

“ποιμένες ἀγραυλοῖ, κάκ' ἐλέγχεα, γαστέρες οἶον,
ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα,
ἴδμεν δ' εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν ἀληθέα γηρῦσασθαι.”

Hes. *Theog.* 26-8

⁵⁴⁸ For a brief discussion on the connection between Epimenides and Hesiod in this fragment and beyond, see Hunter (2014) 30-2.

Thus, as Goldhill argues, ‘Callimachus’ apparent appeal to authority for his quelling of doubt is itself a paradox on the nature of truth statements. His quotation of Epimenides ... not only puts the provenance of the answer in doubt, but also plays with the notion of giving an answer. Callimachus offers not so much a proverbial [γνώμη] ... as a joking reference to another writer’s paradox.⁵⁴⁹ Callimachus seemingly proceeds to use this paradox to dismiss Zeus’ Cretan provenance and to argue for the Arcadian tradition (10ff.) and continues to problematize his didactic and poetic authority when dismissing his predecessors’ views on the way by which Zeus came to rule in Olympus: for him, ‘the long-lived poets did not speak wholly truthfully’ (δηναιοὶ δ’ οὐ πάμπαν ἀληθέες ἦσαν ἀοιδοί, 59); he, meanwhile, wishes that ‘[he] tell lies that persuade the listener’s ear’ (ψευδοίμην αἰόντος ἃ κεν πεπίθοιεν ἀκουήν, 64). Goldhill continues: ‘we see Callimachus drawing on the tradition of poetic attitudes to truth and falsehood, but once more at the moment when he appears to proclaim the value of his poetic utterance, he does so in language the ambiguity and irony of which blocks the security of our reading.’⁵⁵⁰

Propertius places himself in this chain of poetic play. Invoking the text of one of his addressees, he puts both on the pedestal previously afforded to Zeus (who are, like Zeus, immortal – though precisely because of the poetic tombs they have left),⁵⁵¹ and subsequently encourages us to view the replies to his questions in terms of poetry’s affinity with falsehood as developed by Callimachus through questionable play of his own. Moreover, Propertius’ ‘window reference’ to Hesiod through Callimachus reinstates Hesiod in the grove to which Propertius seeks access and contextualises the embrace of poetic innovation within the tradition of his own verse,⁵⁵² which has already linked change with deceit in a didactic context: Propertius’ relocation to the *Ascraeum nemus* in 2.13 gave way to novel instruction in 2.14 based on a guileful pretence of disdain for the beloved. Furthermore, just as Hesiod and Callimachus taught the reader about his world through origin stories of the divinities foundational to it, so Propertius now teaches

⁵⁴⁹ Goldhill (1986) 27.

⁵⁵⁰ Goldhill (1986) 29.

⁵⁵¹ The epitaph for (and by?) Callimachus is preserved at *AP*7.415 (= *Ep.* 35 Pf.). For a discussion of possible play with Archilochus through the combined *topos* of wine-drinking and composition, see Kyriakou (2018) 302-3; King (1981, 177) sees it as a useful intertext for the final lines of 2.1 (75-8). The epitaph for Philitas is preserved by Athenaeus (*Deipn.* 9.405e = *FGE* 1612-3); see the discussion below.

⁵⁵² ‘Window reference’ is the term used by Thomas (1986, 188) with reference to Virgil’s *Georgics*. See also McKeown (1987, 37-45) on ‘double allusion’ in Ovid’s *Amores*.

the reader about his own elegiac world through the poetic origins of the divine figures upon whom he depends. Yet, by suppressing these origins and offering instead a reply to an unasked question, Propertius offers a couplet which reminds us of the dangers of trying to find truth in his verse. At this juncture in the collection, marked by poetic self-redefinition, Propertius suggests that deceit, once so central to his written affair with Cynthia, will continue to remain central to the verse he now turns to write.

The scope of poetic innovation is gradually revealed as the poem progresses, where it continues to be viewable through the lenses of teaching and deceit. As Stahl has noted,⁵⁵³ the first part of the answer offered (*a ualeat, Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis*, 7) not only adheres to Propertius' well-known distaste for martial themes, but also pointedly calls to mind a poet whose *arma* (2.34.63) he had recently used as a foil for his elegiac principles. Now, Propertius re-engages with Virgil through their shared Callimachean predecessor:

quo me Fama leuat terra sublimis, et a me
nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis, 10
et mecum in curru parui uectantur Amores,
scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas.
quid frustra immissis mecum certatis habenis?
non datur ad Musas currere lata uia.
multi, Roma, tuas laudes annalibus addent,
qui finem imperii Bactra futura canent;
sed, quod pace legas, opus hoc de monte Sororum
detulit intacta pagina nostra uia.
mollia, Pegasides, date uestro sarta poetae:
non faciet capiti dura corona meo. 20

3.1.9-20

⁵⁵³ Stahl (1985) 190.

Propertius here alludes to the opening of *Georgics* 3,⁵⁵⁴ where Virgil too rides a chariot in a planned poetic triumph celebrating his epic to come. For his part, Virgil recalls the *Victoria Berenices* at the beginning of *Aetia* 3,⁵⁵⁵ which brings us to Propertius through his earlier worship of the *Callimachi manes*, and his imitation of Callimachus here by giving birth to his Muse (*nata ... Musa*; cf. fr. 1.19-20 Harder) and journeying along a narrow track (14; cf. fr. 1.25-8). Propertius thus reaches out to both Callimachus and Virgil, but it is the latter poet with whom the play stands out: like Virgil, Propertius writes a triumph not for someone else but for himself: both simultaneously aim for loftiness (*temptanda uia est, qua me quoque possim | tollere humo uictorque uirum uolitare per ora*, *Georgics* 3.8-9) and bring back their work to their audience (*Aonio rediens deducam uertice Musas*, *G.* 3.11); like Propertius, Virgil stresses his primacy (*primus ego ... primus*, *G.* 3.10, 12) and makes himself something of a priest, constructing, and attending to, a temple for Caesar (*templum ... templumque*, *G.* 3.13, 16; cf. *delubra* at 3.23), which comes to symbolize the forthcoming epic (3.24-39). As Thomas argues, *deduco*, with which Virgil specifies the downward direction of this triumph, also means ‘to compose in attenuated, Callimachean style’,⁵⁵⁶ echoed by Propertius with *detulit* (3.1.18).⁵⁵⁷ The overall triumph, however, Thomas reads not as a plan for an oxymoronic Callimachean epic but as an epic that will outdo the Callimachean model he clearly values,⁵⁵⁸ for Virgil rejects a list of Alexandrian themes (3.3-8) and proclaims that ‘all Greece’ will leave Olympia and Nemea to compete in Rome (3.19-20),⁵⁵⁹ establishing literary superiority that is not beholden to the models upon which it improves.

To be sure, Propertius is not following Virgil precisely: he is instead taking Italy to Greece (3.1.4), and does so worshipping not Caesar but Callimachus and Philitas; correspondingly, while he wishes to be crowned a champion like Virgil (cf. *uictor ego ... caput tonsae foliis*

⁵⁵⁴ See Nelis (2005) 239-40 for a systematic comparison of the linguistic similarities between the two passages. See also Wimmel (1960) 216-18, and Thomas (1983) 101-3.

⁵⁵⁵ See Thomas (1983) 92-101; at 101-3, he briefly discusses the relationship to Propertius 3.1.

⁵⁵⁶ Thomas (1988b) *ad* 3.11.

⁵⁵⁷ A parallel noted by Wimmel (1960) and accepted by Nelis (2005) and Thomas (1983). Cf. *Lucretius* 1.118: *detulit [sc. Ennius] ex Helicone perenni frone coronam*.

⁵⁵⁸ Thomas (1988b) *ad* 3.11: ‘*deduco* specifies this as a *stylistic*, not a generic affiliation ... only the themes of Callimachus are to be rejected’ (emphasis his own). See also Nelis (2005) 240.

⁵⁵⁹ See Thomas (1988b) *ad* 3.19-20 on the interplay with *Hor. Carm.* 3.4, and Hinds (1998) 52-63 on Virgil’s interplay with Ennius.

ornatus oliuae, *G.* 3.17, 21), it is as a poet of un-epic verse (3.1.19-20), having written something to be read in peace (3.1.17). But with Virgil's temple only an oblique picture of the *Aeneid* he eventually wrote, his triumph remains an instructive *comparandum* for the ambiguous direction of Propertius' own poetry. His *Amores* will ride with him, giving them the place normally afforded to a *triumphator's* children; but while these *liberi* are presumably his *libri*, it is yet unclear whether they point only to poetry written or to poetry to come too. These children are joined by another, a *Musa* born from Propertius (*a me | nata*, 3.1.9-10; cf. *Cynthia nata meo ... dolori*, 2.25.1), and no less representative of his elegy than his beloved – and yet unlike her, this *Musa* is anonymous, a blank poetic canvas suggesting novelty and a break with previous verse. Furthermore, if this *Musa* journeys with Propertius, and Propertius journeys upwards to the Muses (14), then she will soon be one among many who surround Propertius, leaving him thronged like Virgil (*G.* 3.11), but also multiplying the poetic directions he upon which he can embark.⁵⁶⁰ Capping this all is Propertius' subsequent comparison of the fame he desires to that gained by Homer (25-32). So while Propertius may use Virgil as a foil for his own adherence to the Callimachean model that Virgil seeks to overcome, the difficulty in understanding the poetry Propertius will be brought to write by such a triumph suggests that he will remain a *praeceptor* from whom one does not straightforwardly learn.

The relationship between amatory themes and the professed poetic allegiance is likewise complicated by the *inuida turba* of writers (3.1.12), who, unlike the soldiers that ordinarily followed a *triumphator*, compete with Propertius in chariots of their own (3.1.13-14). Who are they? Perhaps they are other elegists.⁵⁶¹ Propertius has instructed others to follow him in writing elegy – most recently in 2.34, when he encouraged Lynceus to write in the manner of Callimachus and Philitas. Lynceus was competing for Cynthia too, though only until he fell into the love Propertius wrote for him; by casting his elegiac followers as competitors, Propertius could be read as furthering the suggestion that he is now reconfiguring the amatory and didactic principles held before. But given the play with the *Georgics*, these writers may

⁵⁶⁰ To be sure, the narrative does not lend itself to logical analysis – and that may well be the point: see Wallis (2018, 27), who argues that Propertius presents an 'elusively metamorphic persona which seems to resist reduction at each point into any one stable identity'.

⁵⁶¹ So Camps (1966) *ad loc.*

well suggest Virgil, who promises to drive ‘a hundred four-horse chariots’, hardly fitting for Propertius’ path (*centum quadriugos agitabo*, *G.* 3.18), and who would continue to inform the poetic experimentation upon which Propertius embarks. Propertius’ path is not simply narrow but untrodden (*opus hoc ... | detulit intacta pagina nostra uia*, 17-18), a feature which recalls not Virgil’s triumph but his subsequent return to the *Georgics* – to the ‘Dryads’ woods and untrodden glades’ (*siluas saltusque ... | intactos*, *G.* 3.40-1). By competing with Virgil and alluding to his untrodden paths in this way, Propertius would suggest that he is also about to return as a teacher to a poetic world at odds with extra-textual reality; but as the triumph Virgil plans for the future (e.g. *deducam ... referam ... ponam*, etc., *G.* 3.11-13) Propertius celebrates now (e.g. *leuat*, 3.1.9), this return will also coincide with a novel poetic direction – the specifics of which may for now be equally difficult to discern, but which will at least be revealed in the same book of verse.

Propertius continues to develop the way in which he will blend experimentation with previous poetry in the couplets that follow:

at mihi quod uiuo detraxerit inuida turba
 post obitum duplici faenore reddet honos.
 omnia post obitum fingit maiora uetustas;
 maius ab exsequiis nomen in ora uenit.

22 honos ς] onus Ω

3.1.21-4

Propertius refers to the *turba* again, which is now *inuida* – a characterisation which recalls Callimachus’ own detractors,⁵⁶² and reaffirms Propertius’ dedication to his novel poetic course. He develops this dedication by making death the catalyst of the fame he seeks (notwithstanding the suspect repetition of *post obitum*) – and in so doing, calls to mind his previous amatory self-characterisation, when he made himself out as love’s corpse (e.g. *lapsus*, 1.1.25; *non ego, sed tenuis uapulat umbra mea*, 2.12.20) and his poetry his tomb (e.g. 2.13.35-6). So how alive is he now? If Propertius remains a part of the elegiac world he has constructed in earlier poetry, then the *honos* he expects will come *post obitum*, has, in his world, already come; his triumph

⁵⁶² Camps (1966) *ad loc.*

fittingly caps it. In short, Propertius may be said to be writing himself into the fame that comes from entering the grove of his poetic idols, which reinforces not only his claim to the mantle of *sacerdos*, but also allows him to outdo Virgil – for Virgil’s fame, like his triumph, is only to come. We have already seen Propertius collapse the future into the present, and a number of echoes take us back to such passages. Propertius has used *faenus* only once elsewhere in the collection (again with *honos*; if the reading is right) when he told Ponticus to beware of spurning elegy (*tu caue ... | saepe uenit magno faenore tardus honos*, 1.7.25-6) – a poem in which he guilefully wrote Ponticus into a love made clear only in 1.9. As for *exsequiae*, these last appeared when Propertius wished for a humble funeral procession (*adsint | plebei paruae funeris exsequiae*, 2.13.23-4) which turned out to comprise his *tres libelli* – eliminating the distinction between the ongoing poem and the future procession, and writing Propertius into the death he anticipates. Thus, Propertius suggests that he will continue to leverage the written foundations of his elegiac world to shape its reality now, grounding his poetic experimentation within the amatory context he has already written. Rightly then, does his *honos* return with a *duplex faenus*: arising from a written world structured by the two-part elegiac couplet, it is to be cashed in by a two-faced Propertius, who looks forwards and backwards and continues to write poetry portraying no truth other than the one it creates.

The closing couplets reiterate this connection between fame and the written world from which it is sought:

meque inter seros laudabit Roma nepotes:
 illum post cineres auguror ipse diem.
 ne mea contempto lapis indicet ossa sepulcro
 prouisum est Lycio uota probante deo.

3.1.35-8

Having played *sacerdos* in the poem’s third line, Propertius now plays *augur* in the third line from its end (36), prophesying the reverence that Romans will feel for him *post cineres*. But as with *post obitum*, *post cineres* is ambiguous: the conceit of 2.13 means the phrase may be taken either with *illum ... diem* or with *auguror ipse*. Propertius will have been cremated already (*ubi suppositus me fecerit ardor*, 2.13.31; cf. *cineri nunc medicina datur*, 2.14.16), decorated his

tomb with laurel (2.13.33), and inscribed it with his verses (2.13.35-6, again) – thereby winning himself Apollo’s favour (3.1.38) and giving himself an epitaph (3.1.37). What Propertius prophesies and what has been foreseen (*prouisum*, 38) is thus also what has already been written, tacitly reminding us of imagination’s role in constructing his elegiac reality too.

This, to be sure, is no simple Apollo: *Lycio* recalls the god’s epithet in the *Aetia* (Λύκιος, fr. 1.22 Harder), called as such when he instructs the budding poet to ‘keep the Muse slender’ (fr. 1.24). This allusion neatly brings us back to the *Callimachi manes* with which the poem began and makes Propertius a mirror image of his predecessor: both poets gained Apollo’s favour as their imagined selves, Callimachus in his youth – though he narrates the encounter as an old man – and Propertius as the corpse of a young lover. But this reasserted Callimacheanism still does not clarify the shape of poetry to come, for the echo of 2.13 alongside which it is espoused recalls both Propertius’ dedication to his beloved and his separation from her, reaffirmed by the *duritia* of 2.14 which does not result in a union any more long-lasting than before. We did not realise what sort of poet Apollo then favoured any more than we do now: while a beloved continues to reappear in this book, Cynthia’s name is withheld until 3.21 – and in 3.24-5 she is denounced as a fictional construct.

ii. 3.2

So if Propertius was taught dedication to Cynthia in 1.1, in 3.1 he teaches that his poetry has scope to experiment while maintaining a connection to the elegiac world of before. This connection is not simply amatory: there is a continued fusion of life and poetic composition, keeping Propertius in a world whose reality remains as malleable to his whim as before; and his renewed didactic tone helps less to enlighten us than to keep us wary about the centrality of deceit to his poetry and the difficulty in extracting truth from his art. In 3.2, meanwhile, Propertius continues to flesh out his new poetic direction but offers an equally complex picture. The poem begins thus:⁵⁶³

⁵⁶³ See Thomas (1983, 102-3), who argues that *interea* continues the allusion to *Georgics* 3: as Virgil returned to his poetic world in the *Georgics* (*interea*, 3.40), so does Propertius; the allusion is strengthened by their joint reference to Cithaeron (3.43; 3.2.5) for the first and only time in their corpus.

Carminis interea nostri redeamus in orbem

gaudeat ut solito tacta puella sono.

2 ut ζ] in Ω: et ζ

3.2.1-2

A *carminis orbis* (1) may be a poetic cycle, but it is also the elegiac world Propertius constructs and inhabits. Ostensibly, the poet returns to tread a familiar path (*redeamus*, 1) and to enunciate a familiar sound (*solito ... sono*, 2); poetry is again conceived as a means to charm a beloved (*gaudeat ut ... tacta puella*, 2). But the couplets that follow suggest that a transition is nevertheless underway:

Orpheus detinuisse feras et concita dicunt

flumina Threicia sustinuisse lyra;

saxa Cithaeronis Thebanam agitata per artem

sponte sua in muri membra coisse ferunt;

quin etiam, Polypheme, fera Galatea sub Aetna

ad tua rorantes carmina flexit equos:

miremur, nobis et Baccho et Apolline dextro,

turba puellarum si mea uerba colit?

5 Thebanam *Heinsius*] thebas Ω

3.2.3-10

Propertius lauds the power of his song (9-10) after three *exempla* which echo his role as a *praeceptor*. The first takes us back again to 2.13, where Orpheus' power over wild animals and nature (5-6) were rejected by Propertius in favour of being applied to his *Cynthia* (7-8); now, it is used as a *comparandum* without hesitation. Amphion comes next, whose poetic *ars* leads rocks to assemble a wall of their own accord: he recalls 1.9, when Ponticus was instructed to abandon 'harsh verse' in love (*quid tibi nunc misero prodest graue dicere carmen | aut Amphioniae moenia flere lyrae?*, 1.9.9-10). But as with Orpheus, Propertius again turns positive what was a negative *exemplum* before: having invoked Amphion to get Ponticus to do the right kind of weeping (*flere*, 1.9.10), Propertius now suggests he may not weep as before.

This play persists in the final *exemplum*, where a novel poetics may well be suggested by the very fact that Polyphemus has successfully wooed Galatea: Propertius appears to be our first extant literary source for this particular myth.⁵⁶⁴ And while he may have drawn upon another lost literary, or a pictorial, work, he nevertheless confuses the two stories told by Theocritus. In *Idyll* 11, Polyphemus' song became the cure for his love as it turned him away from his fixation upon Galatea (and possibly only temporarily); it was rather in *Idyll* 6 that Polyphemus was sure of winning her over, but only because he practised indifference, not song – and even then, his faith in it seemed misplaced. By this point in the collection, moreover, the myth of Polyphemus may evoke as much Propertius' instruction that a *puella* is best wooed with elegy as its sudden abandonment in favour of the *duritia* preached in 2.14. Returning from triumphalism in 2.10 to the *puella* in 2.13 did not prevent a poetic evolution; returning now to the *carminis orbis* following the triumph of 3.1 may not do so either.

At the same time, Propertius' freshly espoused Callimachean adherence encourages this final *exemplum* to be viewed against Callimachus' own epigram on Polyphemus, in which both song (αἱ Μοῦσαι τὸν ἔρωτα κατισχναίνοντι, *Ep.* 46.3 Pf.) and hunger (λιμός, 5) constitute a cure for love (φάρμακον, 4). Possibly addressing a doctor like Theocritus in *Idyll* 11,⁵⁶⁵ Callimachus doubles down on the curative power of poetry suggested by Theocritus while adding a personal touch: hunger chimes with his self-characterisation as a poor poet (cf. *Iambi* fr. 193) whose poetic direction is not influenced by an offer of food (*Aetia* fr. 137b9 Harder),⁵⁶⁶ Propertius, meanwhile, proceeds to remark on his own lack of riches (11-14). The intertext leads to further ambivalence for Propertius' future: while it may suggest that poetry can bring Propertius out of his amatory *carminis orbis* as much as it brings him back into it, Callimachus supposes his cures to cut the wings of his *Amor* (τουτί, παῖ, κείρευ τὰ πτερὰ παιδάριον, 8), leaving him resembling the god who once harrassed Propertius and kept his eyes captured by Cynthia's own (*sed certe pennas perdidit ille suas*, 2.12.14).

These *exempla* thus complicate a full-throated dedication to the love that it once represented, a complication, in turn, further developed by Bacchus, who now appears as the god of poetry

⁵⁶⁴ See Heyworth and Morwood (2011) *ad loc*, and Fedeli (1985) 96.

⁵⁶⁵ So Fantuzzi (2016) 283; Callimachus addresses his epigram to a Φίλιππος (3).

⁵⁶⁶ Faulkner (2011) 183; on *Iambus* 3 see Kerkhecker (1999) 64-82. Callimachus notes his poverty in *Ep.* 32 Pf.

and accompanied not by *Amor* but by Apollo (9). As the wine the god can also represent, he is no more conducive to amatory stability:⁵⁶⁷ Propertius notes that ‘through wine a girlfriend often does not know her man’ (*uino saepe suum nescit amica uirum*, 2.33b.34); and as it leads Lynceus to profess interest in Cynthia (*errabant multo quod tua uerba mero*, 2.34.22), it is thus also the cause for the elegiac demise into which Propertius writes him. Bacchus also remains associated with wine in 3.17, where Propertius looks to him as a ‘potential source of forgetfulness and a new direction’ to cure him of his passion (5-6).⁵⁶⁸ The god, therefore, may be said to be conducive to the poetic reconfiguration with which Propertius is currently engaged – a suggestion developed by his tacit association with all three *exempla*. Orpheus charmed nature until he was torn apart by Bacchantes; these also tore apart the Theban Pentheus at the god’s behest. Polyphemus, meanwhile, was blinded by Odysseus after drinking wine and falling asleep (*peristi, | necnon Ismario tu, Polypheme, mero*, 2.33b.32). Having the god by his side thus makes Propertius’ return to his *carminis orbis* no simple matter.

As the poem progresses, moreover, Propertius’ focus shifts away from his single *puella*, first to a *turba puellarum* (10),⁵⁶⁹ and then to the general reader (15):

at Musae comites, et carmina cara legenti,
et defessa choris Calliopea meis.

15 comites ̄] comitis *M* : comiti *Π*

3.2.15-16

Though *puellae* would scan at the end of line 15, *legenti* is written instead; the rejoicing girl (2), meanwhile, has been replaced by a dancing Calliope (16); and even the *puellae* of line 10 may be read as glossed by *Musae*, turning them rather into *Puellae* (cf. 1.1.5). Though he returns to his *carminis orbis*, the closed circle of the *puella* inspiring and judging Propertius’ verse has been widened: Apollo and Calliope, who once gave her the gift of song and lyre (*cum*

⁵⁶⁷ For the unhappy pairing of the god with love, see also Callimachus *Ep.* 45 Pf. (Ἄκρητος καὶ Ἔρως μὴ ἠνάγκασαν, 3) and Propertius 1.3 (*duplici correptum ardore iuberent | hac Amor hac Liber*, 13-14). Callimachus is blamed for a too public display of love (1); Propertius is charged with indifference despite his best intentions (39-40).

⁵⁶⁸ Heyworth and Morwood (2011) *ad* 3.2.9-10.

⁵⁶⁹ Though not explicitly mentioned then, Propertius has already been accompanied by such a *turba* at 2.34.57-60; for a discussion of its implication for poetic experimentation see chapter 3, 161-2.

tibi praesertim Phoebus sua carmina donet | Aoniamque libens Calliopea lyram, 1.2.27-8), and who were rejected as the immediate causes of Propertius' talent (2.1.3-4), now (together with Bacchus) supplant the girl at all stages in the creative process. She fades further in the following couplet even though Propertius turns to address her directly:

fortunata meo si qua es celebrata libello:
 carmina erunt formae tot monumenta tuae.

17 es 𐀀] est Ω

3.2.17-18

Now she becomes only *si qua* (17); and while Propertius monumentalizes her beauty with his verse, this only increases his distance from her. It may be straightforward to understand *formae* (18) as a dative, but it is ambiguous enough to be taken as a genitive too: the *forma* of the written *puella* is Propertius' *carmen*. As for *monumenta*, these suggest the end of her life is at hand.⁵⁷⁰ Propertius goes on to list the pyramids, the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, and the Mausoleum as *comparanda* (19-22) – three of the ancient wonders chronologically ordered: but the first and the third were constructed for deceased rulers, and the second, for one divorced from the mortal realm. Propertius' beloved remains the *domina* of his *carminis orbis* – but how present is she in it?

The uncoupling of Propertius from his beloved is then suggested again as he returns to the theme of *ingenium*:

at non ingenio quaesitum nomen ab aevo
 excidet: ingenio stat sine morte decus.

3.2.25-6

Poetry may preserve a *nomen* (25) forever, but this poem pointedly does not: if 3.2 is one of the *tot monumenta*, it is ultimately as enigmatic as the pyramids, representing a ruler whose likeness it shrouds. The closing statement, meanwhile, is complicated by the implication of lines 17-18. *decus* stands *sine morte* because Propertius' verse is immortal: as he notes (23-4),

⁵⁷⁰ The reference to *monumenta* is also an echo of Hor. *Carm.* 3.30.1-7; see Nethercut (1970) 387.

Aetia (and through it, of Hesiod): Propertius will also go on to encounter Apollo and Calliope in this poem. While the *nemus* in 3.1 recalled that of 2.13, the injection of epic themes into this particular Heliconian terrain takes us back to 2.10, however different the horseplay:

... sed tempus lustrare aliis Heliconae choreis
et campum Haemonio iam dare tempus equo.
iam libet et fortes memorare ad proelia turmas
et Romana mei dicere castra ducis.
quod si deficient uires, audacia certe
laus erit: in magnis et uoluisse sat est.
aetas prima canat Veneres, extrema tumultus:
bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est.

5

2.10.1-8

Given that Propertius is dreaming, there need not be logic behind his desire to sing Ennian strains; but if it is viewed as a consequence of his recent preoccupation with *decus*, the parallel with 2.10, in which he sought *laus* (6), would be further strengthened. And while 2.10 flirted with Augustan, not historical themes, Propertius has already blurred the lines between the two in 3.1 by following Virgil and casting the latter's Augustan triumph in Ennian terms.⁵⁷³ So if the intertext serves as a useful backdrop to 3.3, Propertius may well also be encouraging us to wonder whether he has entered an *aetas extrema* (7): with his girl monumentalized with his verse, has she been written up? We do not have to wait long for an answer. As 2.10 was followed by a return to elegiac themes, so this poem turns on its head as an Ennian dream becomes rather more Callimachean:

⁵⁷³ See Heslin (2018) 230-1.

cum me Castalia specularans ex arbore Phoebus
 sic ait aurata nixus ad antra lyra:
 ‘quid tibi cum tali, demens, est flumine? quis te
 carminis heroi tangere iussit opus?
 non hinc ulla tibi speranda est fama, Properti:
 mollia sunt paruis prata terenda rotis,
 ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus
 quem legat exspectans sola puella uirum.

17 hinc ε] hic Ω

3.3.13-20

Apollo is again watching over Propertius’ poetry, taking up the authoritative pose afforded to *Amor* in 2.13 and telling him to charm a *puella* with verse. She has something of Cynthia’s fickleness, willing to turn her attention to another while waiting on her man. But she is also anonymous, and her relationship with Propertius is conceived as strictly literary: Propertius is to be in her lap solely as a book, one which she does not appear to inspire, nor hear him read. Even her very reality may be in question: if Propertius is dreaming as the written character of his verse, the world into which he stands to wake – and in which he is to continue to charm – is that of his poetry; given that such a world can be changed at the stroke of a stylus, Apollo’s intervention therefore does not straightforwardly return Propertius to Cynthia in this way either. And as *Amor*’s instructions in 2.13 were followed by the evolution of 2.14, so Apollo here leaves the door open to further thematic development:

cur tua praescriptos eucta est pagina gyros?
 non est ingenii cumba grauanda tui.
 alter remus aquas, alter tibi radat harenas;
 tutus eris: medio maxima turba mari est.

21 praescriptos eucta ... gyros *Lipsius*] praescripto secta ... gyro Ω

3.3.21-4

praescripti gyri (21) refer to previous poetry; but thanks to the shared metaphor, they more specifically recall the *carminis orbis* to which Propertius had returned in 3.2 – and which he has shown need not wholly depend on the *puella*’s survival. And while Apollo’s sailing

metaphor is evocative of the elegiac couplet (*alter ... alter*, 23), the kind of poetry it also suggests is not so much safe and un-epic as one that simply dithers, neither setting off from, nor moored in, port: delay may be a characteristic theme of an elegist's affair, but it is also evocative of Propertius' ambivalent poetics at the start of this book. Nor can Propertius seek *fama* (17) by wholly avoiding the *turba* (24). There has already been a *turba* in 3.1.12, first competing with, then envious of, him after he took on the new guise of *sacerdos* to Callimachus and Philitas; there was also a *turba* in 3.2, comprising *puellae* – or perhaps, *Puellae* – whose appearance signalled a diminishing focus on the single *puella* noted at the start of the poem. And Propertius cannot escape a *turba* in this poem either. He goes on to encounter a *turba* of doves dipping their beaks into the epic stream of Hippocrene (*et Veneris dominae uolucres, mea turba, columbae | tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu*, 3.3.32), a stream from which Propertius has already drunk in his dream (3.3.2-5): their actions point to the generic play with which this poem began and which has been suggested thus far in this book;⁵⁷⁴ the doves themselves, meanwhile, may also recall Propertius' role as an *augur* at 3.1.36.⁵⁷⁵ So, while the *maxima turba* of epic may be discouraged, an elegiac *turba* will be sought instead, with all the experimentation that this may entail. The two-fold nature of the elegiac couplet is, in fact, informative for the thematic oscillation that has occurred in the book thus far: Propertius began with a triumph (3.1) and followed with a *puella* (3.2); in 3.3, Propertius attempts epic before he is redirected towards a *puella* once more by Apollo (20); Calliope goes on to discourage him from epic (40-46), and then turns his attention towards *puellae* (47-50).⁵⁷⁶ 3.4, in turn, begins with *Arma deus Caesar* (3.4.1) and ends with Propertius watching a triumph from the bosom of his *puella* (15-16). There is, therefore, something to be said for the circularity implied by the *praescripti gyri* and the *carminis orbis*: but going round in circles need not mean Propertius will be treading the same water as before.

Apollo's advice, moreover, is presented in a dreamscape peppered with details that suggest it is hardly the setting to provide a clear understanding of the poetry to come. No sound comes out as Propertius tries to sing of kings and their deeds (*hiscere*, 4). The order of the Ennian topics

⁵⁷⁴ See Wimmel (1960) 242-3, and Nethercut (1970) 392.

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. McKeown (1989) 33-4, who notes that Venus is also 'frequently portrayed in a chariot drawn by doves' (46), citing *Met.* 14.597, *Apul. Met.* 6.6, *Claud.* 22.354, and *Carm. Min.* 25.104. In *Am.* 1.2.23-6, Ovid also echoes 3.1 by portraying Cupid in a triumphal chariot drawn by doves.

⁵⁷⁶ For this oscillation in 3.3, see Wallis (2018) 43 and n.54.

he lists is garbled; all also concern deceitful military actions.⁵⁷⁷ Propertius then encounters not only the Muses (3.3.29, 33-6) but also Silenus and Pan, who appear as a mask (*Sileni patris imago* | *fictilis*, 3.3.30) and pipes respectively (*et calami Pan Tegeae, tui*, 3.3.30). Silenus, Bacchus' teacher, reminds us that Propertius sings in the company of a *Liber* (3.2.9) who complicates a simple return to previous love;⁵⁷⁸ Pan points to the bucolic connections established in earlier poems such as in 2.34 and 1.20,⁵⁷⁹ as well as to the allusion in the poem's first line to the opening lines of the *Eclogues*, broadening the generic foundations that this poem looks to establish. But the indirect presence of Silenus and Pan also matches the increased distance at which Propertius' self-portrayal operates in this poem. He is dreaming – or more literally, he is seen (*Visus eram*, 1) – first by himself, then by us. The language of sight thus again points to an explicitly imaginary existence, and this then comes to be glossed by Propertius' description of himself as lying in the shade (*recumbans ... in umbra*, 1). Propertius had suggested before that being turned into an *umbra* by *Amor* (2.12.20) not only brought him closer to death but made him into a φαντασία too; now, as the amatory guise he had adopted before threatens (again) to come to an end, the dream setting turns him into a φαντασία once more. And Propertius' leisurely pose is by now evocative not only of Tityrus but also of Virgil (*tu canis umbrosi subter pineta Galaesi* | *Thyrsin*, 2.34.67-8), whom Propertius had earlier made out to be a poet singing from within the agro-pastoral world he composes; Propertius, meanwhile, is to charm a *puella* as his own book (*tuus ... libellus*, 19). Virgil, of course, went on to compose epic (2.34.61-6), a turn which Propertius here struggles to match: but by appearing as a φαντασία of an epicist at the start of the poem, Propertius nevertheless reaffirms that he need not only compose with his beloved before his eyes.

Calliope then enters the fray⁵⁸⁰ – or at least so Propertius thinks, who puns on her name while couching her instructions within uncertainty before they are even given (*me contigit una dearum* | (*ut reor a facie, Calliopea fuit*), 37-8). She tells him to avoid colouring the Hesiodic

⁵⁷⁷ Cole (2019) 22-4.

⁵⁷⁸ See Fedeli (1985) 139-40, and Álvarez Hernández (1997) 227-8. One of the Muses is also gathering ivy for *thyrsi* (35); cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 1054-5.

⁵⁷⁹ Silenus is also the subject of *Ecl.* 6 (13-86), which begins with Apollo advising the poet to sing a 'fine-spun song' (*Cynthus aurem* | *uellit et admonuit: 'pastorem, Tityre, pinguis* | *pascere oportet ouis, deductum dicere carmen*, *Ecl.* 6.3-5).

⁵⁸⁰ See Cairns (1984, 149), who notes Calliope's frequent association with epic verse; Calliope danced to the tune of Propertius' poetry at 3.2.16.

grove with martial hue (*ne tibi sit ... | ... Aonium tingere Marte nemus*, 3.3.41-2),⁵⁸¹ and to sing what he knows:

quippe coronatos alienum ad limen amantes
nocturnaeque canes ebria signa morae,
ut per te clausas sciat excantare puellas
qui uolet austeros arte ferire uiros.

48 morae Heyworth] fugae Ω⁵⁸²

3.3.47-50

Ostensibly, Calliope's instructions add specificity to Apollo's own and recall the power of elegiac teaching over reality. With *canes* used transitively, it is as if Propertius' poetry is itself to carry lovers to the door of their mistress (47) and beyond it (48); learning then becomes part of this amatory process (49-50), as Ponticus and Lynceus found out once Propertius rewrote their reality. But Ponticus and Lynceus were also left seeking their *puella's* reciprocation on their own, and this difference in elegy's power is accompanied by another subtle shift in the teaching Propertius is to offer: no longer aimed at merely charming (*excantare*, 49) a *puella*, it is also meant to 'deceive stern husbands' (*austeros ... ferire uiros*, 50).⁵⁸³

More broadly, it might also be added that what Propertius is to sing is evocative of, and complicated by, his current poetics. The *amantes* he most clearly sings into elegiac existence are himself and his *puella*: yet Propertius has just been crowned (cf. *coronatos*, 47) not as a party-goer but as a *triumphator*, accompanied by a different sort of *Puella* (*a me | nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis*, 3.1.9-10; cf. *mollia ...serta*, 3.1.19) who brings him and the beloved he writes to the threshold of different verse than before (cf. *alienum ad limen*, 47). By this

⁵⁸¹ *tingere* echoes the doves dipping their beaks in water (*tingunt*, 3.3.32), an image which 'belongs to art' (Hubbard 1974, 80); it may be said, then, that Propertius not only recall his previous interplay with painting (cf. 2.6, 2.12) but also re-emphasises the artistic foundations of his amatory reality. See Scioli (2011-12) 156-7 on the similarity between the doves in 3.3 and those depicted on a mosaic in Hadrian's Villa, and *passim* for the links between 3.3 and visual art.

⁵⁸² See Heyworth (1986) 202-3.

⁵⁸³ The far more common meaning of *ferire* is, however, 'to strike': Calliope's language thus subtly reframes Propertius' guise of *militia amoris* along with the details of his teaching, and even re-tinges his grove with a martial hue despite her claim to the contrary. See Cole (2019, 24-5), who argues that the deceitful actions of Ennian *militia* at the start of the poem foreshadow the deceitful *militia amoris* Propertius is here asked to teach.

point, moreover, *ebria signa* (48) may evoke not just symposiasts' garlands but also the ambivalent poetry written under the influence of this *Liber*, and *nocturna mora* (48), not just a 'night-time dalliance' but also the poetic delay perpetuated by this dreaming Propertius. Like Apollo's instructions, then, Calliope's do not provide a straightforward return to the elegy written before. We might well come to learn how to charm shut-in beloveds and deceive their stern husbands, but we also deceive ourselves if we think we know at this point what verse is to come from a poet who can alternately shut his beloved away from, or charm her out onto, his page.

Elegiac teaching thus once again serves as the context through which Propertius expresses his power to shape the course of his poetic world, and now becomes directly linked with deceit – a connection which may also be tentatively suggested at the poem's end:

talia Calliope, lymphisque a fonte petitis
ora Philitea nostra rigauit aqua.

3.3.51-2

We might have grown more hesitant about the course of poetry to come, but Propertius has become more certain: Calliope's name is now repeated without the playful disclaimer that came before. Her continued presence reaffirms Callimachus' tacit influence over the setting of this poem (while the start of her name recalls his own: *Calli-*); now he is finally joined by Philitas to form a pair that brings us back to the start of 3.1 and frames these three opening poems as a programmatic unit.⁵⁸⁴ Philitas is not only a model of Alexandrian stylistics but, like Callimachus, is figured as a predecessor by the Latin elegists: drinking his waters reinforces the surface meaning of Calliope's instructions that amatory themes are to come. Yet – again, like Callimachus – Philitas wrote different kinds of verse, and so, especially in light of the ambivalent course of Propertius' poetry, these waters may be no less a signal of further experimentation;⁵⁸⁵ quite what waters touch Propertius' mouth given the earlier presence of

⁵⁸⁴ See Wallis (2018) 42.

⁵⁸⁵ Wallis (2018, 43) notes that *rigauit* (3.3.52) 'recalls uncannily the verb *riguit* ('hardened')'.

epic streams has caused some scholarly consternation, however.⁵⁸⁶ The (almost complete) absence of Philitas’ poetry prohibits a deep consideration of the literary connections between the two poets;⁵⁸⁷ but Philitas was also known for the epitaph to him (preserved by Athenaeus) – an intertext not irrelevant for Propertius, who had earlier sought association with the poet’s *sacra* as a *sacerdos* (3.1.1-3) and may be playing at a death and revival of his own poetics:

ξείνε, Φιλίτας εἰμί· λόγων ὁ ψευδόμενός με
ᾤλεσε καὶ νυκτῶν φροντίδες ἐσπέριοι.

Stranger, I am Philitas. The “lying word” killed me, as did night’s evening concerns.

Athen. 9.401E

Philitas was obsessive, pedantic: a true Alexandrian who died over night-time labours.⁵⁸⁸ But he was also finished off trying to solve the Liar’s paradox (ὁ ψευδόμενός),⁵⁸⁹ attributed to Eubulides:⁵⁹⁰ the statement ‘I am lying’ will be a lie if it is true, and true if it is a lie.⁵⁹¹ In essence, the paradox is quite like that of the Cretan Epimenides (‘Cretans are always liars’), which appeared in Callimachus’ *Hymn to Zeus* (Κρηῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται, 8) and which Propertius, as I argued earlier, had offered as an intertext by suppressing the source of the proclamation at 3.1.7-8. Another frame would thus form around the first three poems, now by echoing a paradox through Callimachus at the start of 3.1 and through Philitas at the end of 3.3; but Philitas’ demise may also appear instructive for the ambiguous direction of Propertius’

⁵⁸⁶ See discussion in Álvarez Hernández (1997) 231-3; he views as central Calliope’s intermediary role between Propertius and the epic waters, foreshadowing poetry that is not quite as epic as Ennius’, but no longer beholden to amatory *seruitium* either.

⁵⁸⁷ On Philitas’ influence on 3.3, see Bowie (1985) 83-4.

⁵⁸⁸ See Spanoudakis (2002) 68-9.

⁵⁸⁹ So Cameron (1991) 536, and Spanoudakis (2002) 340; see also *LSJ*s.v. 5. Whitmarsh (2005, 148 n.18) argues that ὁ ψευδόμενός λόγος can refer to ‘any argument deemed fallacious’, citing the manuscript reading of Arist. *EN*1146a (where ψευδόμενός has been marked by Coraes as a dittograph; the emendation is accepted by most editors) and Diog. Laert. 7.44 (ὅν εἶναι ψευδομένους λόγους καὶ ἀληθεύοντας; paradoxes, however, are later listed among these, and note the lack of a definite article).

⁵⁹⁰ Diog. Laert. 2.108: ὅς καὶ πολλοὺς ἐν διαλεκτικῇ λόγους ἠρώτησε, τόν τε ψευδόμενον ...

⁵⁹¹ Different versions of the Liar’s paradox have survived from antiquity; see Rüstow (1910) 40 for a collection, divided into three categories according to phrasing.

poetry. Propertius had once presented himself as a victim of night-time affairs with a beloved *ψευδομένη* of his own;⁵⁹² a monument has been built to this life. Now, however, his foray into a different form of verse appears to have been brought to an end by the same poetic dream in which it begins, thanks to advice from Apollo and Calliope that is, nonetheless, not unambiguous. Has some form of Propertius been killed off, and if so, is it the one of the previous or current poetics? As when confronting a paradox, certainty seems out of reach: can we trust Propertius to have taught us a definitive lesson about his own verse?

iv. 3.4 and 3.5

The fourth and fifth poems, whose programmatic affinity with the first three is well-known,⁵⁹³ echo Propertius' didactic self-characterisation and reaffirm his commitment to a new poetics. As before, these poems are variable within themselves and between each other. 3.4 begins with *Arma deus Caesar*, jolting us away from amatory themes towards yet another 'C'; but it ends with Propertius watching the triumph and reading out the names of captured cities from the bosom of his girl (3.4.15-16). This *recusatio* is then followed by another, dubbed by Conte a 'humorous *recusatio*' of Lucretian philosophy,⁵⁹⁴ which Propertius leaves as something to occupy him in old age; for now, however, he is to continue embracing a life of love (3.5.23-26). Nevertheless, as 3.4 presents Propertius' love co-existing with Augustan war – or, perhaps, even depending on it⁵⁹⁵ – so the extent of his digression on Lucretian topics (3.5.25-46) is indicative of the waning commitment to Cynthia.⁵⁹⁶ The motley of indirect questions comprising this digression echo the poet's curiosity at the start of 3.1, itself evocative of Callimachus in the *Hymns* and the *Aetia*. And binding these poems together is Empedocles: as Propertius shifts from *Arma deus Caesar* (3.4.1) to *Pacis Amor deus est* (3.5.1), he echoes Empedocles' theory of Love and Strife.⁵⁹⁷ The theory, evoked by Lucretius in his proem,⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹² Cf. 2.17.1-2: *mentiri noctem, promissis ducere amantem, | hoc erit infectas sanguine habere manus.*

⁵⁹³ See, e.g., Solmsen (1948) 105; Nethercut (1970) 406; Hubbard (1974) 71; and Frost (1991) 253-4.

⁵⁹⁴ Conte (2000).

⁵⁹⁵ So O'Rourke (2014) 19, with reference to Keith (2008) 60-63.

⁵⁹⁶ See Conte (2000) 309: '[t]he *recusatio*, in fact, becomes a *praeteritio*'.

⁵⁹⁷ O'Rourke (2014) 19.

⁵⁹⁸ On Empedocles, see Sedley (1998) 16-34, who builds on the arguments of Furley (1970) and Clay (1983), and Trépanier (2004) 38-46, who offers a useful rebuttal of Sedley's attempt to reconstruct the Empedoclean original.

proposes endless cycles of creation and destruction and casts these two poems within an overarching didactic framework.

Empedocles' theory, as well as the accompanying Lucretian intertext, appears to be an instructive lens through which to view not just the poems' pairing but even their individual narratives. In 3.4, Mars (11) and Venus (19) frame Propertius' wish to see Augustan victory spoils on the Via Sacra; with Lucretius portraying the former in the lap of the latter (Lucr. 1.32-40), the deities come to function as *comparanda* for Propertius' embrace with his beloved.⁵⁹⁹ Propertius is hardly a Mars; but he has been a *miles amoris* and has begun to be more accepting of more orthodox *militia* too. If his beloved is to be viewed as his Venus, meanwhile, it might also be remembered that Lucretius eventually demythologizes the goddess,⁶⁰⁰ and Propertius appears to be slowly writing his away, too – for again she is unnamed, appearing as a *puella* (3.4.15) and *domina* (3.5.2). As for 3.5, martial imagery colours the poem despite the *pax* with which it begins: Propertius portrays himself fighting love's *proelia dura* (3.5.2),⁶⁰¹ while strife envelops mankind in the world above (11-12) and is remembered in the one below (15-16). Even Prometheus, by being depicted as the creator of humankind (see below),⁶⁰² is evocative of the four principal elements of Empedoclean cosmogony: he was held to have formed humans out of clay (earth and water),⁶⁰³ before breathing life into them (air),⁶⁰⁴ and giving them fire.

It may also be said, however, that the cyclicity central to Empedoclean physics and represented by the flitting between *Arma* (3.4) and *Amor* (3.5) also echoes the oscillation in this book's opening poems. In 3.5, at least, the strife described functions as a commentary on Propertius' new poetics:

⁵⁹⁹ O'Rourke (2014) 16, 18.

⁶⁰⁰ Cf. Clay (1983) 231, and Gale (1994) 211-2.

⁶⁰¹ O'Rourke (2014) 18.

⁶⁰² For Prometheus the creator, cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.16.13 with Nisbet and Hubbard (1970) *ad loc.* Even in this role he is not free from association with deceit: cf. Pl. *Prot.* 320c-322a, where he steals the τέχνηαι of Hephaestus and Athena.

⁶⁰³ Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.45; Ov. *Met.* 1.82-6.

⁶⁰⁴ Ov. *Met.* 1.363-4.

o prima infelix fingenti terra Prometheo!
 ille parum caute pectoris egit opus;
 corpora disponens mentem non uidit in arto:
 recta animi primum debuit esse uia. 10
 nunc maris incauti uento iactamur, et hostem
 quaerimus, atque armis nectimus arma noua.

9 in arto *Housman*] in arte Ω : inertem ζ

11 incauti *Alton*] in tantum Ω

3.5.7-12

Propertius bewails Prometheus' blunder: he endowed humanity with too little sense; this has led to strife. Lovers may venerate peace (*pacem ueneramur amantes*, 3.5.1) but as humans, they are no less the victims of Prometheus' blunder (it might be added that Lucretius considers warfare and lovers senseless too). It is fitting, then, that lines 11-12 should be expressed in the first-person plural: both types of *militēs* are tossed about at sea (*nunc maris incauti uento iactamur*, 11); seek an enemy (*et hostem | quaerimus*, 11-12); and join one war to the next (*atque armis nectimus arma noua*, 12).⁶⁰⁵ Propertius' poetic skiff is moving from being tossed about by the vagaries of love to keeping in view the *turbæ* in his quest for *fāma* (3.3.21-4); the enemy so dominant before now accompanies him in his triumphal chariot (*et mecum in curru parui uectantur Amores*, 3.1.11); and Propertius clearly continues to wage *proelia dura*, even if they are now being celebrated with a triumphant reassertion of Callimachean/Philitean poetics. No less self-reflexively might we even view Propertius' comment on the Underworld, where 'conqueror and conquered are intermingled together among the shades' (*uictor cum uicto pariter miscetur in umbris*, 15): having become a *triumphator* in 3.1, Propertius has just tried to sing Ennian *militia* from the shade (*in umbra*, 3.3.1) before he was told to return to the world of love written before – where he had once appeared as Love's shadowy victim (*umbra mea*, 2.1.20). Propertius may, for now, leave aside the question of whether the terrors of the Underworld are nothing but a made-up story (*an ficta in miseris descendit fabula gentes | et timor haud ultra quam rogus esse potest*, 3.5.45-6), but by the end of this book he will reveal instead that the *fabula* of his affair revolves around a beloved no less contrived.

⁶⁰⁵ The Lucretian intertext remains informative: cf. *Lucretius* 2.1-13.

Thus in the opening five poems Propertius portrays his novel poetics within an oscillation between martial and amatory themes, characterized by a didactic tone and a subtle flirtation with deceit. Since these programmatic poems inherently teach us about the evolution of Propertius' poetry, their oscillation may itself be viewed in didactic terms too – for it serves as repetition, a powerful instructional tool. Lucretius uses repetition relentlessly as part of a broad rhetorical toolkit to convince his audience of the true, Epicurean *rerum natura*.⁶⁰⁶ he pointedly symbolizes his persistence with the threat to follow to the edge of the universe whomever disagrees that it is infinite, and to keep asking them what happens to the spear hurled from its edge (*hoc pacto sequar atque, oras ubicumque locaris | extremas, quaeram quid telo denique fiat*, Lucr. 1.979-80). But for all the value of repetition as an explanatory and educational aid, it has also been used in didactic contexts to bring attention to deceit too. Hesiod notably tells the story of Prometheus' theft of fire and Zeus' creative retribution in both the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days*: in both cases deceit is made out to be fundamental to the world about which Hesiod teaches, revolving, as in Propertius, around a constructed woman; the difference in details, meanwhile – Pandora is only named in the *Works and Days* – invites questions about Hesiod's own credibility, even if his song again originates from the Muses and is now even overseen by Zeus. Virgil also uses repetition in the *Georgics* to highlight the difficulty in taking his teaching at face value. He ends the work with an ἄρτιον of the infamous *bugonia*, framing it by initially outlining the practice himself (*G.* 4.295-314) before repeating it by narrating Cyrene's instructions to Aristaeus (*G.* 4.531-47) and then Aristaeus' execution of them (*G.* 4.549-53). The details differ each time, grounding the fantastical nature of the practice and its mythological origins within a confusing didactic narrative and emphasising the discrepancy between Virgil's world and our own.⁶⁰⁷

v. 3.6 and 3.23 (and 3.24-5)

The nexus of teaching, deceit, and poetic experimentation offered in these opening poems then brings us to 3.6, in which Propertius seemingly returns us to a more familiar elegiac world by

⁶⁰⁶ On repetition in Lucretius, see, e.g., Classen (1968) 98, with n.37 and n.38, and Ingalls (1971).

⁶⁰⁷ It might be added that while Propertius points to Bacchus' influence over his novel poetics in 3.2 and 3.3, so Virgil hints at the god's connection to regeneration when he ends the didactic portion of the *Georgics* by portraying Aristaeus' new bees gathering into grape-clusters (*iamque arbore summa | confluere et lentis uuam demittere ramis*, *G.* 4.557-8), having already addressed the god at the start of Book 2 (1-8).

reprising his role of a lover anxiously living the written reality of his affair. This sketch comprises three characters: Propertius, his slave Lygdamus, and the beloved – about whom Propertius instructs Lygdamus to tell him the truth (*quae ... uera*, 3.6.1). Lygdamus is an intermediary between the two lovers: the poem’s central section (19-34) comprises his report of the beloved’s despair at Propertius’ behaviour; and it concludes with Propertius now instructing him to convey his apology (35-42). The intimacy of this scene, however, is both enhanced and belied once again by the beloved’s anonymity (*puella*, 3.6.1, 35) while the extent to which this poem signals a return to the *carminis orbis* is complicated by the poem’s play with trustworthiness. Lygdamus’ *fides* is a concern for both lovers (*fidem*, 3.6.6; 3.6.20), who are distrusting of each other and, as we shall see, appear even untrustworthy themselves. But as Wallis has argued, Propertius also makes Lygdamus his ‘authorial surrogate ... embedding representation of his mistress within a report brought to him by his slave’.⁶⁰⁸ We are thus ‘invited to reflect upon [Lygdamus’] transformation ... into an allegory for the poetic text itself, while ‘the mutual suspicions held by the poet and mistress ... offer commentary upon the fraught relationship of trust between reader and writer, and the ways in which this relationship affects the reader’s attempts to extract “meaning” from the poetry.’⁶⁰⁹

Wallis’ metapoetic reading of *fides* ultimately leads him to view this poem as underpinning the trend towards poetic experimentation within an overarching amatory context.⁶¹⁰ But while he rightly downplays idealized readings of amatory *fides*,⁶¹¹ he does not show that his views come on the back of a long tradition of scholarly interest which has laid the foundations for making *fides* the lens through which to view Propertius’ poetics and teaching. As has been noted, Propertius uses *fides* and its cognates more than any other elegist,⁶¹² and we have already come across *fides* – and its opposite, *perfidia* – in 1.10 and 1.13. Davis once argued that Propertius ‘chose this concept as the central theme’ of Books 1 and 4,⁶¹³ while Boucher, who dedicated an entire chapter to it in his study,⁶¹⁴ took *fides* not only to govern the relationship between

⁶⁰⁸ Wallis (2018) 48.

⁶⁰⁹ Wallis (2018) 47-8.

⁶¹⁰ Wallis (2018) 61-2. Curiously, he does not connect 3.6 to his views on the experimentation set up by 3.1-3, but only looks forward to his discussion of 3.7, 3.9-11, and 3.20.

⁶¹¹ Wallis (2018) 53 n.14, with reference to Lilja (1965) 172-86, and Lyne (1980) 65-7.

⁶¹² Caston (2012) 141, who counts 32.

⁶¹³ Davis (1967) 170. For Grimal (1953, 46) *fides* is the uniting theme of Book 4.

⁶¹⁴ Boucher (1965) 85-104.

Propertius and Cynthia, but also extended it to Propertius' poetics and connected it to his didactic pose. He argued that just as Apollo calls Ovid the *lasciui amoris praeceptor* (*Ars* 2.497), so Propertius may be called a *fidi amoris praeceptor*, and that '[l]a *fides* est alors un fait tragique, le fait essentiel de la vie du poète', by which 'le poète affirmera sa supériorité sur un rival ... l'amant, par sa fidélité, attire la femme aimée'.⁶¹⁵ In order to account for the fluctuations in the relationship, meanwhile, he ascribed to *fides* a moral quality transcending the amatory, finding his poetry to portray 'la recherche d'une union morale entre deux êtres'.⁶¹⁶ This governs his reading of the 'cycle de la *nequitia*' of 2.22-4 (in which Propertius announces his interest in other *puellae* and prostitutes): 'la *nequitia* n'est qu'une compensation à la *fides* indissoluble; la *nequitia* reste du domaine des actes et ne porte pas atteinte à la *fides* qui les dépasse de toute par sa valeur idéale'.⁶¹⁷ To be sure, Boucher offered an idealizing perspective, taking the relationship at face value – but seeing *fides* permeate the collection was an important step nonetheless.

Allen, meanwhile, connected *fides* with poetics by making it a tool of reader-response criticism, arguing that we should 'restrict our attention to the elegists as poets [*uiz.* not the extra-textual authors], and concern ourselves with the effect of their style'.⁶¹⁸ Viewing *fides* as 'sincerity',⁶¹⁹ he proposed that '[t]he sincerity which we can look for in them is the kind of sincerity which lies in a consistency between the style of their poetry and the emotional condition their elegy depicts'.⁶²⁰ Like Boucher, Allen subsequently saw unity in disunity in 2.23-4, arguing that '[i]n each of these elegies, if viewed in isolation, *fides* is maintained, since the style is proper to the sentiments expressed. But, because of its departure from the usual character of the Propertian lover, 23 seems insincere'.⁶²¹ Allen, then, made elegy itself part of the *fides* it portrayed, his

⁶¹⁵ Boucher (1965) 88-90.

⁶¹⁶ Boucher (1965) 92.

⁶¹⁷ Boucher (1965) 94.

⁶¹⁸ Allen (1950) 153.

⁶¹⁹ Allen (1950) 146. He qualifies this with the observation that *fides* 'contains simultaneously the ideas of "sincerity" and "persuasiveness", drawing from the findings of Heinze (1929) whose study found the term to possess a 'subjective element' ('ein Stück Persönlichkeit'; dubbed 'sincerity' by Allen) and 'an objective element' ('Wert in den Augen anderer'; 'persuasiveness'). I consider that 'trustworthiness' is a suitable amalgamation of both.

⁶²⁰ Allen (1950) 153.

⁶²¹ Allen (1950) 156.

reader-based approach also accommodating Propertius' teaching (even if he did not question the discrepancy between the worlds of the poet and the reader), noting: 'in the poet's experience every lover can recognize the pattern of his own love'.⁶²²

More recently, Caston has connected Propertius' amatory *fides* with his elegiac form to argue that the 'Propertian narrator draws out comparisons between infidelity in love and the absence of *fides* in ... the relationship between narrator and audience'.⁶²³ Among the poems she discusses is 2.6, in which Propertius decries painters' corrupting influence and 'complains ... that he is an innocent victim of widespread infidelity': she finds that he 'ends up provoking infidelity even where he hopes to attack it', and in noting 'the skepticism [Propertius] provokes in his readers about his credibility on erotic matters', she suggests a connection to his didactic role too.⁶²⁴ That said, 2.6 does not contain *fides* or its cognates, and her perspective ultimately subordinates the literary to the social, where the notion that '[a]rtists ... are to blame for the problem of infidelity' extends to 'the larger social sphere in a critique that covers present-day Rome and even the entire Greco-Roman heritage from its beginnings'.⁶²⁵

Wallis' reading of *fides* in 3.6 thus stands on the shoulders of others, and it may also be worthwhile to consider it in light of 1.16. In the preceding poem, Propertius had bewailed Cynthia's *perfidia* (1.15.2, 34); now, in a play on a *paraklausithyron*, a *ianua* acts as the poem's narrator and relates the anguish of a locked-out lover who calls it *perfida* (1.16.43). Like 3.6, this poem comprises three sections – the first and last spoken by the *ianua*, the middle, by the lover whose complaint it reports – and constitutes the first instance in Propertius' collection when words are attributed to a speaker other than Propertius or Cynthia (and an inanimate one at that). On the one hand, the poem thus draws 'attention to the fictionality and conventionality of the elegiac world',⁶²⁶ which stands developed by the ambiguous identity of those the *ianua* separates. On the other, the speaking door becomes 'a mouthpiece for the author as much as an independent character', allowing 1.16 to serve as a comment 'as much on

⁶²² Allen (1950) 157.

⁶²³ Caston (2012) 156.

⁶²⁴ Caston (2012) 149-50.

⁶²⁵ Caston (2012) 150-1.

⁶²⁶ Nappa (2007) 59.

Propertius' overall project as an elegiac poet as it does on the relationship with Cynthia'.⁶²⁷ Its personification, moreover, endows it with responsibility of 'a full participant in the erotic games played around it', and by withholding its mistress from the *exclusus amator*, it also becomes 'a potential mistress in its own right' – which only increases the fictionality of the beloved herself.⁶²⁸ For in the end, the door addresses its audience more broadly (*haec ille et si quae miseri nouistis amantes* | ... *obstrepit*, 1.16.45-6), aligning the readers with the frustrated lover and suggesting that 'as the *amator* fantasizes [about the beloved] because of the door that bars his desire, so do we ... and so the elegy makes us complicit in the construction of the elegiac mistress'.⁶²⁹

Thus, the door takes up the roles played by Propertius and Cynthia, and like Cynthia, represents the elegiac medium through which their relationship is conducted and which serves as the impassable barrier between the realities of the reader and that of the elegiac world. The door certainly points to its place as a poetic *locus*: it is a recipient of verses written and declared (*obscenis tradita carminibus*, 10; *has inter grauibus cogor deflere querelis*, 13; *ille ...* | *arguta referens carmina blanditia*, 15-16; [lover speaking] *tibi saepe nouo deduxi carmina uersu*, 41). The poem also concludes with the door bewailing its own defamation by, alternately, 'the vices of the mistress' and the 'tears of the lover' (*nunc dominae uitii, nunc semper amantis* | *fletibus, alterna differor inuidia*, 47-8)⁶³⁰ – verses which make the *ianua* thematically and metrically representative of the collection of which it is part.⁶³¹ But like Cynthia, she is also *perfida*, rejecting gifts offered by the lover with 'covered hands' (*debitaque occultis uota tuli manibus*, 1.16.44), the sort of secrecy evocative of the worship of *Fides*:⁶³² it is a medium that cannot be

⁶²⁷ Nappa (2007) 61, with reference to Jones (1992).

⁶²⁸ Nappa (2007) 70-1.

⁶²⁹ Nappa (2007) 72.

⁶³⁰ *alterna* is Markland's conjecture for the transmitted *aeterna*, printed by Heyworth (2007a) and Goold (1990); for a discussion, see Heyworth (2007b) 76. Camps (1961), Richardson (1976), and Fedeli (1980) print *aeterna*, the latter citing Rothstein (1920, 168), who argues that 'während die Liebhaber wechseln, bleibt das schändliche Treiben immer dasselbe, daher *aeterna inuidia*'.

⁶³¹ It may be worth noting that in being a poetic *locus*, the *inuidia* experienced by the *ianua* also makes it the subject of others' (malicious) sight; cf. discussion on *inuidia* in chapter 3, 154. As in 1.4, *inuidia* is again connected with the iambic genre (cf. *obscenis tradita carminibus*, 10).

⁶³² See Corbeill (2005) 86, who also argues that the mysterious *ianua* is that which stood at the entrance to the Temple of *Fides*. While a seductive reading, Corbeill does not adequately explain how the transmitted *Tarpeiae ... pudicitiae* in line 2 (which he accepts; Heyworth prints *Patriciae ... Pudicitiae*) explains identification with *Fides*. While he takes *Tarpeiae* as an adjective that 'refers to the Capitoline hill through an epithet that predates

trusted. Then again, we distrust it at our own risk – for like the liar of Eubulides’ paradox, it is *perfida* only because it reports itself to be so.

1.16 therefore provides valuable context for 3.6 and the developing connection between deceit and poetic experimentation at the beginning of Book 3. Like 1.16, 3.6 revolves around an intermediary standing between two lovers and brings up the written nature of their communication: first when Lygdamus describes seeing *scrinia* (3.6.14) lying by the feet of the beloved’s couch,⁶³³ and then when Propertius orders Lygdamus to carry back the instructions he outlines at the end (*mandata reporta*, 3.6.37). Our attention is thereby drawn to the materiality of the poem: it can be read as the correspondence through which Propertius makes his case to the *puella*, for the *mandata* are within the poem conveying their existence. However, this theme remains in the background to the poem’s central questions: whether Propertius (3.6.1-2, 5-6) and the *puella* (3.6.19-20) can trust Lygdamus to be a true witness, whether Propertius can trust the *puella* (3.6.35), and whether the *puella* can trust Propertius (3.6.19-20, 39-40).

As noted above, Propertius begins by immediately asking Lygdamus to tell him the truth (*quae ... uera*, 3.6.1) about the *puella* – who is jointly theirs (*nostra*, 3.6.1). By telling Propertius what he desires, Lygdamus can have her yoke taken off him (*sic tibi sint dominae ... dempta iuga*, 3.6.2), but he will remain beholden to Propertius nonetheless:

omnis enim debet sine uano nuntius esse,
maioremque metu seruus habere fidem.

3.6.5-6

The question of trustworthiness set out from the start is thus wrapped in the rhetoric of flexible authority similar to what we have seen before: Propertius exerts pressure on Lygdamus as his

the term *Capitolium*’ (81 and n.10, citing Varro *Ling.* 5.41), there is a notable slippage in terms when he argues that ‘when the door of Fides refers to its past as a time of *Tarpeia pudicitia*, she recalls a golden time of “Capitoline chastity,” when the temple proudly and prominently symbolized fidelity to the city below’ (88). *Pudicitia* was a goddess herself; see *OLD* s.v. 1b.

⁶³³ Cf. Heyworth and Morwood (2011) *ad loc.*, noting that *scrinia* need can mean both ‘perfume-boxes’ and ‘book-roll containers’.

master, but also empathises with him as another in service to the *puella*. This flexibility is in turn mirrored by Lygdamus' role being somewhere between that of a messenger and the message itself: *nuntius* may convey either sense; something, as well as someone, may convey (*referens*, 4) information; and slaves were, of course, property too. This is not to say that Lygdamus is wholly objectified – the first word of the poem is *dic*, a verb repeated soon after (*ab origine dicere prima* | *incipi*, 3.6.7-8), and he is capable of mental inference (*sensti*, 3.6.1) and emotional states (*metu*, 3.6.6). But we should not ignore Lygdamus' materiality given Propertius' propensity for intermeshing lived experience with the verse medium in which it is portrayed. Lygdamus is already written insofar as he is present in this poem, and his intermediary place between Propertius and the *puella* corresponds to his intermediary place between a messenger and a message, between the spoken and the written.

Lygdamus' intermediary stance in turn recalls the start of 3.1, where Propertius the *sacerdos* conflated himself with his poetry while showing both to be the intermediaries between us and the poets he worships.⁶³⁴ As then, Propertius bombards his addressee with questions (five in total, 9-12; 3-4) and also proposes a Callimachean (and Hesiodic) background to the narrative by asking Lygdamus to begin from the first αἴτιον and marking his forthcoming response as something to be drunk:⁶³⁵

nunc mihi, si qua tenes, ab origine dicere prima
incipi: suspensis auribus ista bibam.

3.6.7-8

As Propertius' questions earlier pointed to the problem of seeking truth from his verse, so Lygdamus' intermediary identity complicates the trustworthiness demanded of him. To be sure, he appears reliable. Lygdamus is at the behest of both lovers, recalling that the *puella* pressured him into taking her side and corroborating her claim to truth: Lygdamus was once a witness (*te teste*, 3.6.19) to a promise made by Propertius, and 'there is punishment for breaking a promise even when the witness is a slave' (*est poena et seruo rumpere teste fidem*, 3.6.21).

⁶³⁴ See the discussion at 169-70 in this chapter.

⁶³⁵ Given the enigmatic origin of the response in 3.1.5-6, it may be notable that the change of speaker to Lygdamus at 3.6.13 is not marked in the transmitted text either; see Heyworth (2007b) 304-5 for a discussion of the problem.

Lygdamus does not contradict her; Propertius does not disagree. Lygdamus also becomes party to an oath taken by the *puella*: that Propertius will pay a penalty if her ‘dreams do not turn out to be false’ (*si non uana cadunt mea somnia, Lygdame, testor, | poena erit ante meos sera sed ampla pedes*, 3.6.31-2). So, Lygdamus’ trustworthiness is corroborated by his role as a witness to both lovers’ oaths, the contents of both of which are also known to the other party – not least because they have now been written down in the poem which attests to their existence, though conceived of as being spoken of by Lygdamus after being spoken of to him.

But Lygdamus’ reliability is nonetheless couched within a broader discourse of deceit. Propertius portrays himself as two-faced even when demanding completely truthful subordination from Lygdamus: he is unable to hide his pleasure at hearing Lygdamus’ initial report that Cynthia is distraught, suspecting instead Lygdamus’ desire to please his master at any cost (*num me laetitia tumefactum fallis inani | haec referens quae me credere uelle putas?*, 3.6.3-4). But when he buys into Lygdamus’ report by the end of the poem, Propertius asks him to convey contrition he evidently does not have: to visit Cynthia *multis lacrimis* (3.6.37) and to tell her that his love only has room for anger, not deceit (*iram, non fraudes, esse in amore meo*, 3.6.38). Propertius thus feigns his sincerity through his reliable intermediary Lygdamus, who is to assume a *persona* which his master does not – a ruse which the *puella* will spot if the *mandata* are the poem which reveals them. If Propertius used to be cloaked by his poetic medium, now it is as if it reveals him for who he really is – further complicating the relationship between poetry and truth.

Propertius’ behaviour is all the more egregious because his *puella* suspects his machinations: she asks Lygdamus whether Propertius rejoices (*gaudet*, 3.6.23) that she is ‘wasting away alone on an empty bed’. But what about her? Propertius asks Lygdamus whether she ‘complained sincerely’ (*quae tibi si ueris animis est questa puella*, 3.6.35), and this recalls the ambiguity of her own oath:

si non uana cadunt mea somnia, Lygdame, testor,
poena erit ante meos sera sed ampla pedes:

31 cadunt c] canunt Ω

3.6.31-2

uanus (31) means ‘without substance’, whether literally or metaphorically: the dreams may be ‘false’ or ‘non-existent’. Overall, the word appears only seven times in the collection, but now it appears for the second time in the poem: earlier, Lygdamus was encouraged to be a medium ‘without deceit’ (*sine uano*, 5); its repetition may suggest another meaning should be considered here. The dreams of the beloved (25-30), after all, do not turn out to be ‘non-existent’: Propertius has written them into his verse. On this reading, punishment is to follow – and being at her feet, it will fittingly be no less poetic (*ante ... pedes*, 32). But however inevitable it may be, it will not come immediately (*poena erit ... sera sed ampla*, 32), indefinitely suspending the trustworthiness of her oath nonetheless.

Another oath then ends the poem: Propertius promises that Lygdamus will be ‘free’ *liber* (3.6.42) if he manages to establish a ‘happy peace’ (*felix concordia*, 3.6.41) between him and the *puella*. But it is empty: Propertius has shown that peaceful love is still governed by *proelia dura* (3.5.2), and in the next poem to a *puella* (3.8), Propertius delights in her abusing him verbally (1-2) and physically (3-4). So it is no surprise that Lygdamus remains in their service in the following book (4.7.35-6; 4.8.37, 68-70), where Cynthia blames him for Propertius’ infidelity and demands that he be sold (4.8.79-80); he has been a faithful slave indeed. Nonetheless, Propertius’ language in 3.6 retains a sting in the tail. Though Lygdamus may not come away as *liber* (free), he does as a *liber* (book),⁶³⁶ as a slave written into the poetic collection. So Propertius keeps his word after all – if only his elegiac metre allowed.

Thus, a didactic tone, marked by Propertius’ desire to learn and his instructions to Lygdamus, once again explicates the inherent untrustworthiness of Propertius’ poetry. Remnants of this tone are also found in 3.23,⁶³⁷ which may be read as a companion piece to 3.6: it interweaves writing with trustworthiness but now makes the former the principal theme. There, Propertius bemoans the loss of his writing tablets – which contained a reply from his *puella* and which he twice calls ‘trustworthy’ (*fidem*, 3.23.4; *fideles*, 3.23.9) – and, as in 3.6, concludes with an instruction:

⁶³⁶ The pun is also noticed by Wallis (2018, 47).

⁶³⁷ Parallels between 3.6 and 3.23 are also noted by La Penna (1977, 73-4), and Wallis (2018, 51).

i puer, et citus haec aliqua propone columna
et dominum Esquiliis scribe habitare tuum.

3.23.23-4

The final lines of 3.23 upend the poem's narrative by throwing into question the very nature of the poem. They clearly echo the conclusion of Hor. *Sat.* 1.10 (*i, puer, atque meo citus haec subscribe libello*), but *haec* is ambiguous: for Horace, *haec* refers to the whole poem; for Propertius, *haec* 'more obviously means the notice about the reward',⁶³⁸ but we are invited to view the whole poem as the notice nonetheless. So the poem is more than first meets the eye – or ear. Poetry could – and can – be received either way.⁶³⁹ The final lines are spoken to a *puer*, but transmitted as part of a written poem and are apparently to be written as part of a notice, which also can be read or read out loud, further confounding attempts for a straightforward reading. Running alongside all of this, of course, is the irony that there exists in written form a poem concerning the loss of writing tablets.

The poem's complexity has been viewed in relation to its tone, recalling the reader-based approach advocated by Sullivan. Pelling has proposed two parallel readings of 3.23, one if it is read as a standalone composition, another if as part of the collection. In the former case, the poem concerns 'a continuing, light, amiable relationship', where 'we need not take too straightforwardly the instruction to the boy'; he reads the poem as one in which 'the woman has retained [the tablets] and Propertius has to find the right language to tease them back'.⁶⁴⁰ Propertius is therefore 'a man whose versified courting is still very much in the present, and this very poem is part of it', writing without any of the aggression of Catullus 42, in which the protagonist vigorously demands back his *hendecasyllabi* from his *puella*.⁶⁴¹ The second reading is more downbeat: here, 'the tablets are most definitely lost', and the poem's place among the closing poems of Book 3 suggests 'how wrong the poet, and reader, was to think that the affair was like that', that is, like the tongue-in-cheek play that colours the first reading.⁶⁴²

⁶³⁸ Heyworth and Morwood (2011) *ad loc.*

⁶³⁹ See Clay (1998) 28-34 on the way in which literacy and the development of libraries affected the relationship between poet (and poetic *persona*) and audience in antiquity.

⁶⁴⁰ Pelling (2002) 175.

⁶⁴¹ Pelling (2002) 175-6.

⁶⁴² Pelling (2002) 180.

Pelling notices Propertius' characterisation of the *tabellae* as trustworthy, but considers it as an aesthetic means for Propertius to differentiate himself from Catullus. Yet their *fides* is programmatic, and the various readings Pelling proposes are but one consequence of the intricate play between Propertius, his *puella*, his medium, and his audience. These *tabellae* are *fideles* because of the messages inscribed into them by the lovers: having been worn down with use, they clearly belonged to them even if left unsigned (3.23.3-4). So deep is Propertius' trust in them, in fact, that he portrays them acquiring a life of their own: immediately described as 'dead' and 'learned' (*doctae ... periere tabellae*, 3.23.1), they know how to appease girls and speak skilful words in his absence (*sine me norant placare puellas | atque eadem sine me uerba diserta loqui*, 3.23.5-6). Like Lygdamus, they are both human and artificial, and lowly like him too: they are not plated with gold, consisting rather of humble box-wood and dirty wax (3.23.7-8). And in that regard, these *tabellae* also resemble Lygdamus in serving as an extension of Propertius' self: they not only speak for him – as Lygdamus was to cry for him – but their physical appearance is also evocative of the lowly nature of elegiac verse.

And as in 3.6, the trustworthiness of the intermediary is complicated by the lovers' intrigues. Propertius promises gold as the reward (*auro*, 3.23.21), and muses who would prefer to keep mere wood with that dangled before them (*quis pro diuitiis ligna retenta uelit?*, 3.23.22): the parenthetical remark suggests that Propertius suspects the *tabellae* have been retained by their original recipient, and is now needling the *puella* into facilitating their return. Perhaps gold is what this *puella* desires; but Propertius' beloved is a *non stulta puella* (3.21.17), and such *puellae* prefer poetry over wealth. So this *puella* should not be the greedy miser that Propertius whimsically fears now possesses his *tabellae* (*auarus*, 3.21.19): she should return them, writing into them not accounts but her feelings (*rationem scribit*, 3.21.19), and to stop being a *dura puella* by keeping them among cruel account-books (*duras ... ephemeridas*, 3.21.20). Then the lovers may continue doing what they both like: spending time in charming banter (*garrula cum blandis ducitur hora iocis*, 3.21.18), just like Catullus and Calvus (*multum lusimus in meis tabellis*, 50.2). Charm helped Propertius succeed before in getting his *puella* prefer poetry over wealth (cf. *blandi carminis obsequio*, 1.8b.40) – and so it might help him now too.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴³ Cf. Pelling (2002) 177.

But charm and deceit go hand-in-hand. Propertius has already warned Ponticus to avoid the ‘constant charms’ (*assiduas ... fuge blanditias*, 1.9.30) of his beloved, and has lamented that ‘it is not safe to trust any charms’ when railing at Cynthia’s infidelity (*non ullis tutum credere blanditiis*, 1.15.42). In 3.23, this guile necessarily extends to the medium which sustains their *blanditiae*, for these are personified *tabellae*, endowed with – and inscribed with – their lovers’ characteristics. Like them, these *tabellae* are *doctae*; they can also portray *duritia*. Worse still, they can lie on their lovers’ behalf:

forsitan haec illis fuerunt mandata tabellis:

‘irascor quoniam es, lente, moratus heri:

an tibi nescioquae uisa est formosior? an tu

non bene de nobis crimina ficta iacis?’

aut dixit: ‘uenies hodie, cessabimus una:

15

hospitium tota nocte parauit Amor;’

14 bene ζ] bona Ω

15 cessabimus ζ] cessauimus Ω

3.23.11-16

Perhaps she accused him of spreading slander; perhaps she gave in to his charm. His is a fickle *puella*, and the reality she helps to write into being is no less fickle than she. As Pelling has noted, these multiple possibilities are not contradictory: just as Propertius’ poetic experimentation keeps bringing him back to his affair, so the infidelity of lines 12-14 does not preclude the reunification offered by lines 15-16.⁶⁴⁴ Yet possible as it may be, it is still only imagined; and for Propertius, writing is an untrustworthy representation of reality. We are reminded of this not only by the *puella*’s words (*ficta*, 14) but also by those uttered earlier by Propertius:

et mea cum multis lacrimis mandata reporta:

iram, non fraudes esse in amore meo.

3.6.37-8

⁶⁴⁴ Pelling (2002) 175, citing Williams (1968, 492), who takes the opposite view.

Lygdamus was to hide Propertius' *laetitia* with tears – to lie for him that his love has room only for anger, not deceit. Having feigned their disappearance, will this *puella* entrust the *tabellae* with a depiction of anger any more real, or a love any more true? Her anger is changeable; her summons may be equally deceitful. Her words may lead Propertius up to her threshold, but whether she opens her door remains to be seen. Trustworthy, then, these *tabellae* certainly are – like Lygdamus, they can be trusted to deceive us to the truth of what they portray.

It is in light of this, then, that Propertius turns to a *puer* and extends the questions of his *tabellae*'s trustworthiness to that of the poem itself. The reality we have read has shifted: we suddenly have a scene reminiscent of 3.6. Back then, it was as if we saw the real Propertius, beyond the medium through which he leads his affair. But how stripped of his *persona* is Propertius now, having been stripped of his personified *tabellae*? Again we peer behind the curtain, finally learning where the poet lives (*Esquilii*, 24): but can we trust him not to be toying with us?

These questions are complicated further still by the *puer*. He is as much an extension of Propertius as his *tabellae*: he publishes (*propone*, 23) and he writes (*scribe*, 24), becoming the intermediary between us and the poet and perhaps even bringing these *tabellae* back to life, whether because his notice helps their return or because it shows them to have never perished. But while it is easy to take him as a slave owned by his *dominus* Propertius – and thus, as another Lygdamus – this poem has shown the risk in taking Propertius at his word. In fact, the *puer* in Propertius' poetry is much more often Cupid,⁶⁴⁵ the *puer* who, together with his beloved *domina*, enslaved him together at the very start of his collection. Propertius began this book as the head of a household with *Amores* by his side (3.1.11), and in its final poem he will cast off Cynthia's dominion over him and his poetry by revealing her fictionality. Making himself Cupid's master, Propertius would, once again, be pointing to the poetic development undertaken within a continued dependence on amatory themes; he would also be teasing out the connection between his love and deceit given the relationship of 3.6 that remains in the background.

⁶⁴⁵ Cf. 1.6.23; 1.7.15; 1.19.5; 2.9a.38; 2.12.1, 13, 18; 2.29a.3; 3.10.28; 4.1b.138.

But perhaps a *puer* can also just be that – a boy, perhaps one who loves a *puella*. In 3.9, addressed to Maecenas, Propertius wished that his ‘writings inflame boys and girls’ (*haec urant pueros, haec urant scripta puellas*, 3.9.45) and lead them to worship him as a god (*meque deum clament et mihi sacra ferant*, 3.9.46). Having been a *praeceptor*, he gives instructions as a *dominus* now: not how to succeed in love, but how to keep his own love going. Propertius may give initial life to his *tabellae*, but it is his readers who keep them (and him) alive, whether by recalling him in their own elegies or simply circulating his own. They should write up *haec*, and in so doing, keep his deceitful *carminis orbis* spinning around: having learned so much about it, it is their turn to spread Propertius’ teaching to others. Ovid will go on to encourage his students to write that he was their master (*NASO MAGISTER ERAT*, *Ars* 2.744; 3.812); Propertius’ should make sure that he is remembered as their own, too.⁶⁴⁶

In 3.6 and 3.23, then, Propertius twice adopts an authoritative and instructional pose and shows that the untrustworthiness that permeates his relationship is a characteristic of the elegiac medium that portrays it. And so it is right that *fides* remains central to the final poem of Book 3 (24-5), which Propertius begins by telling Cynthia that her trust in her own form is misplaced (*Falsa est tuae, mulier, fiducia formae*, 3.24.1): she is an amalgam of many (*mixtam te uaria laudauis saepe figura*, 3.24.3). Propertius has ‘served her faithfully for five years’ (*quinque tibi potui seruire fideliter annos*, 3.25.3), and she will often lament his fidelity (*meam ... saepe querere fidem*, 3.25.4): the value of *fides* also notably shifts from the amatory to the poetic; he cannot be trusted to return to his *carminis orbis* anymore. And he will not ‘be moved by tears’, having been ‘ensnared by such artfulness’ (*nil moueor lacrimis; ista sum captus ab arte*, 3.25.5): her weeping is always guileful (*semper ad insidias, Cynthia, flere soles*, 3.25.6). Though he weeps too, he will depart because ‘injustice prevails over weeping’ (*flebo ego discedens, sed fletum iniuria uincit*, 3.25.7); and he will leave behind the weeping threshold and the door, unbroken despite his anger (*limina iam nostris ualeant lacrimantia uerbis | nec tamen irata ianua fracta manu*, 3.25.9-10).⁶⁴⁷ Tears all round, then – but they are crocodile tears. Cynthia and her treachery cannot be separated from the poetry that bears her name, despite Propertius’

⁶⁴⁶ See Sharrock (1994, 21-86), who argues that Ovid’s reader in the *Ars* 2 ‘is subliminally forced to play *puer delicatus* to Ovid’s sexual and poetic seductive power’ (27) turning the poet-teacher into a ‘pederastic pedagogue’ (30).

⁶⁴⁷ Cf. 1.1.28 (*sit modo libertas quae uelit ira loqui*), and discussion in chapter 1, 24.

suggestion to the contrary: she weeps because she is his elegy, his *ars*, and he weeps because he writes her. Hence the *limen* weeps too: this unyielding intermediary, the symbol of his unrequited love, likewise stands for the poetry which separates poet from *puella*, and us from them; it may weep but it stays shut, as treacherous as the one who keeps it so (cf. *perfida*, 1.16.43). Thus, the book closes not only with a poignant fictionalisation of Cynthia but also with a reassertion of elegy's inherent untrustworthiness. Cynthia's *fiducia* (3.24.1) is necessarily *falsa*: her form is written; her written form can be changed. Though Propertius weeps leaving her, he also leaves her because he weeps.

vi. 4.1a and 4.1b

The pair of poems which open Book 4 continue to stress the untrustworthiness of *fides*, doing so now from a more explicitly didactic perspective. As at the start of Book 3, at stake is the poetry Propertius will now turn to write. With Cynthia rejected, Propertius begins by singing aetiology; but in the poem that follows, Propertius is addressed by Horos the horoscope seller, who stresses his own credibility and then reports Apollo's previous instructions to the poet. While in 4.1a Propertius says that he will try to 'arrange fortifications in righteous verse' (*moenia ... pio conor disponere uersu*, 4.1a.57), and thus to ditch *militia amoris* in favour of warfare more suited to his new genre, Horos' Apollo has predicted that this will not be possible: the poet will continue to endure the *militia* 'under the charming arms of Venus' (*Veneris blandis patiere sub armis*, 4.1b.137). The same question arises as before: can Propertius' poetry be trusted to inform us about that which is to come?

The opening couplet of 4.1a, in turn, hints at further play with trustworthiness:

Hoc quodcumque uides, hospes, qua maxima Roma est
ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit,

¹ qua ζ] quam Ω

4.1a.1-2

We are looking at Rome – a great Rome – but its foundations are shaky. The two pronouns at the start, one of them indefinite (*Hoc quodcumque*, 1), obfuscate the imagination as soon as

they engage it. It is enough to make a Roman a *hospes* in his own city, much like a reader might think himself a *hospes* in a Propertian book opening with *maxima Roma*;⁶⁴⁸ and before this *hospes* can find his bearings, Propertius takes him to a rural landscape before its founding that is no less vague. This opening couplet thus puts us at once in two places, the past and the present, and serves as a kind of analogy for the way in which Propertius contextualised poetic evolution in terms of previous verse at the start of Book 3. Though Propertius soon points out a more precise location (*Palatia*, 4.1a.3) to us, the flickering between past and present continues until line 16, when the narrative fades into Rome’s mythical past – only to re-emerge in contemporary Rome in line 26 and initiate more contrasts, now placed less evenly, until line 38.⁶⁴⁹

In line 39, Propertius adopts the role of an augur working in hindsight. First, he makes an interpretation of the favourable omens received by the Trojans (*iam bene spondebant omina*, 4.1a.41); then he weighs up the truth of two prophecies, made by the Sibyl regarding the death of Remus (4.1a.49-50), and by Cassandra regarding the fall of Troy (4.1a.51-2).⁶⁵⁰ If the Sibyl and Cassandra were right, Propertius says, he will say that ‘Troy will fall, and a Trojan Rome will rise’ and turn to ‘sing about the prosperous kingdoms over land and sea’ (*dicam: “Troia, cades, et Troica Roma resurges”, | et maris et terrae candida regna canam*, 4.1a.87-8).⁶⁵¹ Propertius, of course, is hardly profound in this foresight. It is already evident to him and his *hospes* that Rome will rise, for this has formed the subject matter of his poem so far: Propertius is using well-known stories from the past to predict a future already true in the present. Such circular reasoning devalues the approval of line 41; it also undermines the veracity of his commitment as a poet seriously committed to aetiological verse.

This commitment is questioned further by the literary allegiances Propertius espouses. Propertius proceeds to reject Ennian epic, waiving his ‘shaggy garland’ (*Ennius hirsuta cingat*

⁶⁴⁸ Cf. DeBrohun (2003) 37.

⁶⁴⁹ The models Propertius here follows are Tib. 2.5 and Verg. *Aen.* 8; what I term ‘flickering’ Wimmel (1961, 239) more poetically dubs a ‘Pendelschwung’. On Propertius’ play with these intertexts, see the works cited by DeBrohun (2003, 37 n.10), and O’Rourke (2010, 471 n.7).

⁶⁵⁰ These two prophetesses are also mentioned in Tib. 2.5.15-66.

⁶⁵¹ These lines are transposed after 52 by Müller, an emendation accepted by Heyworth (2007b, 421); see Marr (1970) 162-3, and Murgia (1989).

sua dicta corona, 4.1a.61) in favour of Bacchus' ivy (*mi folia ex hedera porrige, Bacche, tua*, 4.1a.62) and makes himself a follower of a familiar poetic model:

moenia namque pio conor disponere uersu:
ei mihi, quod nostro est paruus in ore sonus!
sed tamen exiguo quodcumque e pectore riu
fluxerit, hoc patriae seruiet omne meae, 60
ut nostris tumefacta superbiat Umbria libris,
Umbria Romani patria Callimachi.

57 conor 𐌄] coner Q⁵²

4.1a.57-60; 63-64

Such literary self-fashioning recalls the opening of Book 3. Yet back then, the programmatic rejection of Ennius and devotion to Bacchus and Callimachus resulted in a complex elucidation of a novel poetics which was ultimately grounded in a reengagement with the *carminis orbis* written before. So while Propertius suggests that he will write aetiology because Callimachus did so too, he is not a natural (*conor*, 57), and also reminds us that his previous Callimachean adherence did not free him from amatory poetry.⁶⁵³ And just as he did in 3.1, Propertius contextualises his Callimachean credentials with another echo of Virgil: *pio ... uersu* recalls the Aeneas hinted at earlier (*umeros ... pios*, 4.1a.44), with the final hexameter also modelled on the start of the *Aeneid* (*sacra deosque canam et cognomina prisca locorum*, 4.1a.69). This is to be no simple aetiological verse, then: it will have to accommodate *regna* (4.1a.88) and *arma* (4.1a.54) and remain in touch with the amatory themes now supposedly rejected.

The issue of Propertius' poetic heritage is furthered by the question of his homeland. Propertius begins by playing a Roman; in line 63 he reminds us of his Umbrian roots (cf. 1.21/2); and then reaffirms this ambivalence in line 64, a carefully crafted line summing up the difficulty of expecting patriotic poetry from Propertius. Its purported recipient, Rome, has to contend with

⁶⁵² For the reading of *conor*, see discussion in Fedeli, Dimundo, and Ciccarelli (2015) 265-6, who accept it. The only other time Propertius uses *conor* in the first-person singular is in 1.3, where his attempt to approach the sleeping Cynthia (*molliter impresso conor adire toro*, 1.3.12) is successful only in drawing attention to the fragility of his love affair.

⁶⁵³ Cf. Ov. *Rem.* 759, where Callimachus is to be avoided if one wishes to fall out of love (*Callimachum fugito: non est inimicus Amori*).

Propertius' Umbrian upbringing, and these, in turn, must be accommodated with his Callimachean principles. The poet has three homelands: one of his youth, one of his adulthood, and one of his poetics. The patterning of nominatives and genitives produces an interwoven unit, a wholeness out of different homelands, *e pluribus unum*. Thus, *hospes* was a pointed word. Propertius is himself a *hospes* in the city about which he teaches – and no less a *hospes* to the genre he supposedly now takes up.

Leaving the question of his identity to the end of the poem, Propertius reinforces the ambivalence that surrounds his poetics and permeates the poem right from the start: after all, until the final syllable of *collis* is followed by *et* (4.1a.2), Propertius might well be writing in the epic hexameter appropriate to *maxima Roma*.⁶⁵⁴ Yet he does not: the anticlimactic reveal coincides with a deflation of *maxima Roma* to a humble hill (not even a *mons*!) and patch of grass. And this deflation runs alongside another, for *maxima Roma* becomes ambiguous against the other instances of *maxima* in the poem: the hearth which formed 'the greatest extent of the empire' for Romulus and Remus (*unus erat fratrum maxima regna focus* 4.1a.10), and the 'great population of the Gabii, which is now nothing' (*qui nunc nulli, maxima turba Gabi*, 4.1a.34) place emphasis on the limitation and temporariness of greatness.⁶⁵⁵ To praise *Roma* as *maxima* is therefore also to question whether it has reached its peak – and perhaps whether it is worth writing about, too.

In 4.1b, the astrologer Horos takes this ambivalence to another level. 4.1a ends with Propertius appealing to Rome and its citizens to grant him 'fair omens' (*date candida ... | omina*, 4.1a.67-8), and wishing for the song of a bird propitious to beginnings (*inceptis dextera cantet auis*, 4.1a.68). But Horos problematizes this commitment from the start, asking Propertius where he is going, and warning him of the dangers that will be revealed if he seeks to learn his horoscope (*quo ruis imprudens? fuge discere fata, Properti!*, 4.1b.71): the signs are not favourable (*non sunt a dextro condita fila colo*, 4.1b.72). While 4.1b is here treated as separate

⁶⁵⁴ So also Morgan (2004, 6).

⁶⁵⁵ Cf. O'Rourke (2010) who argues that *maxima Roma* expands Propertius' play with Virgil by constituting an allusion to *Aen.* 5.600-1 and *Aen.* 7.602-3. For him, engagement with the latter intertext, which concerns the opening of the Gates of War – and so, the end of pastoral peace in Latium – allows Propertius 'to signal his own explosion of elegy' in Book 4 (476), and also to play on the generic and narrative ambivalence of the *Aeneid* to preclude a narrow result to his poetic development.

from 4.1a,⁶⁵⁶ this second poem is informative for the poetic direction outlined in the first. One prophet has been exchanged for another – and this prophet is no less keen to assert his trustworthiness. Horos promises to ‘convey certainty through certain authorities’ (*certa feram certis auctoribus*, 4.1b.75), for otherwise it would mean that he does not understand how to use his tools (*aut ego uates | nescius aerata signa mouere pila*, 4.1b.76). And this *uates* is also of a different kind than Cassandra (cf. *Pergameae ... carmina uatis*, 4.1a.51).⁶⁵⁷ He derives his prophetic trustworthiness from his books (*inque meis libris nil prius esse fide*, 4.1b.80) and renowned ancestors (4.1b.77-8): Archytas, the mathematician; Conon, the astronomer feted by Callimachus, Catullus and Virgil;⁶⁵⁸ and the Babylonian Orops, whose name, like Horos’, plays on *horoscopus*.⁶⁵⁹ Yet Propertius has taught us that books are not always a source of reliable information, and this is a prophet who speaks in elegiac verse: he may bewail that the gods have been turned into a source of gain (*nunc pretium fecere deos et fallitur auro | Iuppiter*, 4.1b.81-2), but he is now written into a collection named after a beloved who sold her love to the highest bidder (*ergo muneribus quiuis mercatur amorem*, 2.16b.15).

Horos’ evidence for his prophetic skill is no more persuasive than that of Propertius. The first example concerns Arria and her sons, supposedly named Lupercus and Gallus,⁶⁶⁰ whom she

⁶⁵⁶ See discussion in Heyworth (2007b) 424-5, who is persuaded by Sandbach (1962), Goold (1966), Kidd (1979), and Murgia (1989) among others; he nonetheless accepts that there is ‘play’ between the two poems. Hutchinson (2006, 61) argues for one poem, as do Fedeli, Dimundo, and Ciccarelli (2015, 146-51); Sullivan (1976, 141) holds that 4.1b is ‘certainly’ a ‘continuation’ of 4.1a, but concedes the possibility of a two-part construction.

⁶⁵⁷ Propertius first labels himself *uates* at 2.10.19-20 (*uates tua [sc. Auguste] castra canendo | magnus ero ...*), where the sense is that of ‘poet’ (although Hutchinson 2006, 155 allows ‘some touch of “seer”’). If the order is correct, he next does so at 2.17.3-4 (*horum ego sum uates quotiens desertus amaras | expleui noctes, fractus utroque toro*), a fragmentary couplet (see Heyworth 2007b, 185) but one which allows *uates* to have (more of) a didactic sense: unhappy nights make Propertius write elegies and the experience gained from them makes him a prophet of more to come (see Camps 1967, 137). Propertius becomes *uates* again at 4.6.1, 10 (*sacra facit uates: sint ora fauentia sacris ... | pura nouum uati laurea mollit iter*) where the sense is again that of ‘poet-seer’; at line 9 he wishes that ‘deceit’ be absent (*ite procul fraudes*) but the sense is that of purification, and *fraudes* are probably to be viewed synonymously with the ‘harm’ next mentioned (*alio sint aere noxae*); see Hutchinson (2006) *ad loc.* and Fedeli, Dimundo, and Ciccarelli (2015) 824. For the evolution of the meaning of *uates* in Roman poetry, see Newman (1967) and Wida (2004).

⁶⁵⁸ Cf. Call. *Aetia* fr. 110.1, 7-8 Harder; Catull. 66.1-10; and Verg. *Ecl.* 3.40. See discussion in Fedeli, Dimundo, and Ciccarelli (2015, 300-3).

⁶⁵⁹ Hutchinson (2006) 75. Cf. Lucr. 5.727-8 on Babylon and astrology.

⁶⁶⁰ Nethercut (1968, 94-5) argues that ‘Lupercus and Gallus should be recognised as elegiac paradigms for Propertius’: he notes that like Lupercus, who died after falling from his horse (*equi*, 93), Propertius is (implicitly)

sent on campaign against divine warning (*uetante deo*, 4.1b.90) and who ended up dying: Horos had told her they would not be able to bring their spears back home (*non posse ad patrios sua pila referre Penates*, 4.1b.91); now two tombs confirm his trustworthiness (*nempe meam firmant nunc duo busta fidem*, 4.1b.92). But Horos could not have been wrong: he would have also been right should Arria have listened to him at the start; should they have returned safely, Horos would have avoided using this example. The story, moreover, is a vague one:⁶⁶¹ the *gens* Arria was widespread and the *cognomina* Lupercus and Gallus common;⁶⁶² the latter also call to mind the *Fabius Lupercus* of 4.1a.26 and the Gallus (or *Galli*) seen earlier in the collection. Trusting Horos, we run the danger of doing so because what he says sounds familiar; and this underhandedness cuts into Horos' apparent regret at the mother's greediness (*matris auarae*, 4.1b.97) and at his inability to help his trustworthiness (*uera, sed inuito, contigit ista fides*, 4.1b.98). Propertius once also bemoaned Cynthia's greed, his own faithfulness to her taken out of his hands by *Amor* – and he was hardly trustworthy himself.

His second example is as problematic. He advised Cinara to pray to Juno Lucina during difficulties in labour; once she did, she gave birth, and this success brought renown to his books (*libris est data palma meis*, 4.1b.102). Such advice is hardly profound, and Horos does not say whether the child survived; he also borrows again from Propertius' poetry, using a metaphor akin to the one at the end of 4.1a (*has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus*, 4.1a.70). Furthermore, Horos goes on to claim that advice as reliable as this derives not from typical divination and augury (4.1b.103–6) but from observing the heavens (*aspicienda uia est caeli uerusque per astra | trames et ab zonis quinque petenda fides*, 4.1b.107–8). We might wonder whether Horos actually does so: he is rather reliant on books (*meis*, 80, 102), and it is not even clear if they are ones that he writes or he owns; his *fides* has a textual basis,⁶⁶³ not least because his evidence for it is presented in verse. And in any case, reading the future from heavens or

on a horse at the end of 4.1b (*equus*, 70); meanwhile, the martial themes that Propertius looks to pursue place him poetically in the wrong kind of 'camp', the location of Gallus' death (*in castris*, 95).

⁶⁶¹ Rothstein (1924, 209) and Barber and Butler (1933, 329–30) make vain attempts to place the characters in history. Camps (1965, 66) is more circumspect: 'we cannot tell whether these are fictitious or real persons'.

⁶⁶² See Shepherd (2015) 125–6, and Hutchinson (2006) 77.

⁶⁶³ Stahl (1985, 271) sees Horos' statements at line 98 after the first story (*uera, sed inuito, contigit ista fides*) and at line 102 after the second (*libris est data palma meis*) as looking back together to line 80 (*inque meis libris nil prius esse fide*).

letters means using one's eyes to see a reality that appears solely in the mind: what is to be trusted is not Horos' knowledge but the veracity of his imagination.

It is fitting, then, that as Horos begins to prophesy Propertius' life as written in his stars (*nunc ad tua deuehor astra*, 4.1b.119), the stars reveal a life already written by Propertius. He is from Umbria (4.1b.121-4; the place is described vaguely); his father died (4.1b.127-8); his family lost its wealth (4.1b.128-30); then he turned to poetry (4.1b.31-4). Horos knows no more about Propertius than we do, and he is doubly foolish: believing what he has read; and believing that this makes him trustworthy. Poor Horos even asks whether he lies (*mentior?*, 4.1b.122), a rhetorical question that has no simple answer. We read an untrustworthy character⁶⁶⁴ believing an untrustworthy poet – a belief written up by that very poet too. It might be easier to find an answer to the Liar's Paradox than to the question Horos here asks.

Horos problematizes his and Propertius' trustworthiness still further when quoting Apollo (4.1b.135-46), a narrative turn which evokes that of 3.3⁶⁶⁵ and further contextualises the programmatics at the start of this book in terms of those of its predecessor. In this way too, then, does Horos channel Propertius' verse back at him – and as Apollo's instructions only made us more hesitant at trusting Propertius to clarify the direction of his verse, so they leave us no more clear-sighted about it here:

'at tu finge elegos, fallax opus (haec tua castra),
scribat ut exemplo cetera turba tuo.
militiam Veneris blandis patiere sub armis
et Veneris pueris utilis hostis eris.
nam tibi uictrices quascumque labore pararis,
eludet palmas una puella tuas;

139 pararis *Murgia*] parasti Ω

140 eludet ζ] eludit *NFA* : et ludit *LP*

4.1b.135-40

⁶⁶⁴ For a defence of Horos' astrological credentials, however, see Montanari Caldini (1979).

⁶⁶⁵ That there is a parallel between the Apollo of 4.1b and 3.3 has been noted since at least Rothstein (1924) 188.

Propertius is to ‘compose elegies’ (*finge elegos*, 135); but *ingere* is more aptly to ‘feign’, ‘invent’, or ‘fabricate’,⁶⁶⁶ especially when followed by *fallax*. The paradox thus continues: how deceitful are elegies that call themselves deceitful?⁶⁶⁷ Apollo therefore speaks from, and directs Propertius to, slippery foundations indeed. He is to serve under Venus’ ensign (4.1b.139) while paradoxically being a ‘useful enemy’ (*utilis hostis*, 4.1b.138) to her sons;⁶⁶⁸ and he is to write poetry that is ultimately useless, for the *puella* that the poetry is meant to charm will elude his grasp – and make a mockery of his victories – regardless (4.1b.139-140). And all the while, Propertius is to combine writing with teaching, to be read so that he can be emulated, one *fallax opus* spawning another’s.⁶⁶⁹

Such a didactic role also recalls that encouraged by Calliope in 3.3, when she suggested that Propertius’ poetry be studied to coax out a locked-in beloved (*ut per te clausas sciat excantare puellas*, 3.3.49). As a teacher of a *fallax opus*, he suggests his didactic material will be no different. Apollo ends his prophecy by saying that no number of guards or sealed doors will be able to help Propertius if she has already been ‘persuaded to deceive’ (*nec mille excubiae nec te signata iuuabunt | limina; persuasae fallere rima sat est*, 4.1b.145-6), as if making Propertius a husband whose control over the *puella* elegy is supposed to overcome – and thus pointing to the ultimate irony of elegiac teaching. For by succeeding as a *praeceptor*, Propertius runs the risk of failing as a lover: a student of *Cynthia* becomes a rival for *Cynthia*’s attention, especially if Propertius takes his eyes off her to pursue other projects. Again Propertius’ role as *praeceptor* points to the disintegration of his *carminis orbis*; he instructs us less about our own love than about the inevitable end of his own.

⁶⁶⁶ See *OLD* s.v. 9.

⁶⁶⁷ Stahl (1985, 274) interprets *fallax* as “deceiving” because it will never fulfill its [i.e. the poetry’s] purpose of winning *Cynthia*; Propertius, however, reconciles himself to failure from the start (1.1.17-18), and Stahl does not pursue the implication of this reading for the poet’s implied didactic role in the following line. See Fedeli, Dimundo, and Ciccarelli (2015) 371-4 for a summary of other interpretations. Fedeli views *fallax* as referring to the deceit used in charming the beloved, and the deceit suffered in pursuit of her; so too Hutchinson (2006) *ad loc.*

⁶⁶⁸ See Heyworth (2007b) 432.

⁶⁶⁹ *opus* has a procreative sense attached to it that is not irrelevant for elegy; see Adams (1982) 156-7 for its use in sexual contexts.

4.1b, then, is another poem with an intermediary – this time a *uates* who conveys divine instructions, reprising Propertius’ role as *sacerdos* at the start of Book 3. But while Horos casts himself as a trustworthy intermediary – a sort of Lygdamus of 3.6, perhaps – he is more like the *ianua* of 1.16, throwing the poet’s poetry back at him. So while Propertius problematizes his fidelity to aetiological themes by pointing to the literal duplicity of elegiac form, dedicating himself to them through the complicated identity of an Umbrian *Callimachus Romanus*, and making unreliable proclamations of his own, the character that urges him to amatory themes appears even less trustworthy, and Horos thus leads us to doubt our suspicions that Propertius’ new turn away from amatory topics is only a temporary affair.⁶⁷⁰ Yet while the experience of Book 3 may lead us to think that Propertius has obfuscated the direction of his verse once again, a generic hodgepodge of surprising aetiology, martial topics, social commentary, and even love elegy is what awaits us in Book 4. Might it be time to start trusting Propertius, just when he lays bare the untrustworthy foundations of his verse?

vii. (4.2 and) 4.5

The word *fides* does not appear in the next poem, but questions concerning a teacher’s trustworthiness remain no less relevant. 4.2 is put in the mouth of Vertumnus, a statue of an Etruscan god located in the Vicus Tuscus between the Forum Boarium and the Roman Forum, who divulges his origins and returns us to the aetiological cycle. The third poem of Book 4 is thus unlike that of Book 3: ostensibly, this poem reaffirms the generic departure that occurs in the first poem and then reversed in the second. Yet apparent certainty remains beset by ambiguity, and is now revealed more explicitly than in 3.3. Vertumnus is a manifold god (*qui mirare tot in uno corpore formas*, 4.2.1); different accounts are given for the origin of his name (9-12). While he is the only one who can be trusted to speak about himself (*mendax fama, uaces: falsa es mihi nominis index; | de se narranti tu modo crede deo*, 4.2.19-20), he remains

⁶⁷⁰ See also Sullivan (1976) 144: ‘the oddities of the astrologer and his threats do not ... militate against the interpretation that Propertius is once more refusing ... to commit his talents to the glorification of Augustan Rome’. See Stahl (1985) 266-9 for an overview of scholarly positions on 4.1b; he himself argues that ‘Horos’ claim about Propertius is more serious than appears at first sight’ (272) and argues that his cryptic warning at the end ‘to fear the threatening back of the eight-footed crab’ (*octipedis Cancris terga sinistra time*, 150) alludes to coins minted at the time; Propertius is thus to avoid selling himself (and his love poetry) for the riches that come with writing poetry of political praise.

suites for all kinds of forms (*opportuna mea est cunctis natura figuris*, 4.2.21): dressed in Coan garb, he can be a *non dura puella* (4.2.23); in a toga, a *uir* (4.2.24); or a litany of other characters, including Iacchus and Apollo (4.2.31-2). In these roles Vertumnus recalls past and future subjects and narrators of Propertius' verse, playing 'a mediating role between the book's aetiological and amatory poles',⁶⁷¹ and thus he becomes 'a written statue, both inscribed into the text and, in the end, also the text, counting how many ... verses remain' of the poem's conclusion (4.2.57-64).⁶⁷² As Vertumnus sometimes appears 'to be the statue, sometimes the god, sometimes the poet, and sometimes the text of the poem',⁶⁷³ so he may be read as representative of the multi-faceted and changeable nature of Propertian elegy, its intermeshing of life and composition, and the complicated relationship between the realities of the reader and poet that arises as a result. Sight remains a marker of its complexity, too: Vertumnus is a witness to the events around him (*uidere*, 4.2.6; *uidi ego*, 4.2.53), and remarks that he can be seen in his manifold guises (*cernis*, 4.2.16; *speciem*, 31; *species*, 35).⁶⁷⁴ Vertumnus would have been visible directly as a material statue, but only in the mind as a god who speaks and sees and appears in many forms (all at once): he claims didactic authority as a figment of the imagination. So if we hesitate about trusting a poetic statue once crafted 'with a hastening sickle' (*properanti falce*, 59), the same is surely to apply to Propertius, who began his collection as the victim of a *tardus Amor* (1.1.17) and appears before our eyes as nothing more than words on a page.

Trustworthiness is again an important theme in 4.3 and 4.4,⁶⁷⁵ but it is 4.5 with which this chapter will end. Here Propertius, taking up the mantle of an elegiac lover for the first time in Book 4, addresses and censures a *lena* (4.5.1), a typical character derived from Greek and

⁶⁷¹ O'Neill (2000) 261, with reference to Dee (1974); Deremetz (1986) 122-9; and Shea (1988).

⁶⁷² O'Neill (2000) 270.

⁶⁷³ O'Neill (2000) 270, with reference to DeBrohun (1994) 54-5.

⁶⁷⁴ Cf. O'Neill (2000) 271-2, who reads this reciprocal vision in terms of the erotic 'male gaze'; for him, 'the poet's gaze upon Vertumnus allows him to depict the gender- and role-switching the poet undertakes through the new narrators of book 4, and Vertumnus' gaze upon the people around him discloses the abiding importance of amatory matters in this book' (272).

⁶⁷⁵ In 4.3, Arethusa writes a letter to her husband Lycotas, lamenting their separation while he is on campaign; 4.4 concerns Tarpeia's desire to betray Rome because of her love for the Sabine Tatius. *fides* (or its cognates) occur at 4.3.11, 46; 4.4.8, 87.

Roman comedy that appears in Tibullus' and Ovid's elegies too.⁶⁷⁶ Like Propertius, Acanthis is a *praeceptor*, and with her student being the *puella*, her instructions are conceived as a threat to Propertius' amatory success. Attacking her, then, the poet attempts 'to reassert his ultimate power over her as male and *auctor*'; yet she is also 'less an "other", *altera*, than an alter-ego to elegy's first-person narrator ... [for her] appropriation of the narrative voice is highlighted by her didactic posture, which closely imitates that of the *praeceptor amoris*.'⁶⁷⁷ In this regard, the *lena*, another written woman and *docta* like her student (4.5.5), is not a threat to Propertius' poetry but a means to it: arming the *puella* with advice urging 'the very *artes* that make up the elegiac code',⁶⁷⁸ she keeps the relationship unstable and necessitates further elegy from the poet,⁶⁷⁹ while also pointing to the contradictory untrustworthiness that lies at the centre of his work. For even though his elegies put the beloved on a pedestal in an apparent display of personal affection, they also prostitute her to as many as desire to read her – forcing her into the infidelity of which she is so often accused.⁶⁸⁰

This poem comprises three parts: the first and third are spoken by Propertius; the middle, by the *lena*, whose words the poet reports. The narrative structure of 4.5 thus evokes 1.16, where the speaker is an intermediary too; and while Propertius does not reveal from where he listens to the *lena*'s words, it can be none other than from behind the door to his *puella*'s house (a detail added by Ovid in his version).⁶⁸¹ The trustworthiness of Propertius' account therefore stands complicated by two interwoven questions: how precisely has he managed to overhear this, and if he has done so in the way we expect, can we trust details conveyed through a medium already once labelled as *perfida*?

This chimes with two other inconsistencies. Firstly, Acanthis' threats to his elegiac reality are not straightforwardly borne out by what he claims. Her skill is such that she can make

⁶⁷⁶ The *lena* appears at Tib. 1.5 and 2.6, and Ov. *Am.* 1.8. For discussions of this character, see Myers (1996) and Petrova (2019). See also Yardley (1987) 180–2, and De Caro (2003) 177–8 on the links between 4.5 and Ov. *Am.* 1.8; the former explores these in terms of Roman comedy.

⁶⁷⁷ Myers (1996) 1.

⁶⁷⁸ Myers (1996) 20.

⁶⁷⁹ O'Neill (1998) 63–4.

⁶⁸⁰ Myers (1996) 21.

⁶⁸¹ Ovid also plays on his own trustworthiness as he does so (*me duplices occuluere fores*, *Am.* 1.8.22). The two-fold nature of the doors also evokes the structure of a poet's *tabellae*.

Hippolytus fall in love (4.5.5-6) and make Penelope forsake her marriage to marry ‘lascivious Antinous’ instead (4.5.7-8). But Cynthia is no Penelope, and Propertius is neither a chaste Hippolytus nor an Odysseus who longs to return to his wife: he ‘more properly resembles the lascivious Antinous’.⁶⁸² He was earlier told that his elegy was rather to teach how to charm a *puella* away from her *uir* (3.3.49-50), and when he was given the role of a husband in 4.1b (145-6), the implication was further generic infidelity. And yet Propertius doubles down on his marital guise, blaming Acanthis for blinding ravens ‘so that she could blind husbands alert to her craftiness’ (*posset ut intentos astu caecare maritos | cornicum immeritas eruit ungue genas*, 4.5.15-16). Propertius, however, is no more blind than the doorkeeper (*ianitor ... | surdus*, 47-8) or the *puella* (*istius tibi sit surda sine aere lyra*, 58) are actually deaf to the lover who comes without gifts; as it turns out, in fact, his sight becomes a crucial narrative driver at the end of the poem (*uidi ego*, 67).

Secondly, if Acanthis ‘is a witch, she fails to mention it’.⁶⁸³ She begins by telling the *puella* that if she has an eye for bling she should spurn *fides* (4.5.21-6):

sperne fidem, prouolue deos, mendacia uincant,
frange et damnosae iura pudicitiae,
et simulare moram pretium facit; utere causis:
maior dilata nocte recurret amor.

29 moram Lütjohann] uirum Ω

4.5.27-30

The quest for material gain comes close to absurdity when Acanthis tells her to consider affairs with soldiers, sailors, and even ex-slaves (4.5.49-52) – all roles evocative of Propertius’ self-characterisation – as long as they bring her financial rewards (*aurum spectato, non quae manus adferat aurum*, 4.5.53). While the *puella* should target whomever she can, her behaviour should be a consistent *simulatio* (4.5.29) – one which reinforces her role as a *scripta puella*. She is to play the part not of Medea – the love-struck witch – but of Menander’s Thais, the ‘comic adulteress who tricks crafty slaves’ (*cum ferit astutos comica moecha Getas*, 4.5.44); and she

⁶⁸² Gutzwiller (1985) 108.

⁶⁸³ Gutzwiller (1985) 108.

should make her lover into a terrified suppliant by indifferently busying herself with writings ‘of whatever sort’ (*supplex ille sedet; posita tu scribe cathedra | quidlibet: has artes si pauet ille, tenes*, 4.5.37-8). Her life is to imitate art, and her amatory *ars* is to revolve around writing: like Propertius, she is to collapse the distinction between lived experience and poetic composition (drawing from well-known comic verse as she does so),⁶⁸⁴ and to fulfil her desires by the stroke of her stylus; like Propertius, moreover, she need not show consistent attachment either to her beloved or to what she writes (*quidlibet*, 38). Thus, not only is the *lena* Propertius’ *alter ego*, but the one she teaches is a manifestation of his *Cynthia*: like *Amor* (cf. *docuit*, 1.1.5), the *lena*’s instructions set his verse in motion and make lover and beloved inseparable in their amatory and poetic infidelity (*in mores te uerte uiri: si cantica iactat | i comes et uoces ebria iunge tuas*, 4.5.45-6). Having questioned Propertius’ trustworthiness as a medium for the *lena*’s instructions, our worries have therefore not been assuaged: not only does the *lena* expressly turn the *puella* away from witchcraft, but her instructions mirror Propertius’ own poetics. He need not have heard her to say that this is what she says – this is behaviour straight out of his own book.

It is, on the other hand, Propertius who may be the one practising magic. Once Acanthis’ speech comes to an end, Propertius portrays himself at an altar offering the ‘cut throat of a collared dove’ to Venus (*sed cape torquatae, Venus o regina, columbae | ob meritum ante tuos guttura secta focos*, 4.5.65-6), before changing his narrative into the past tense:

uidi ego rugoso tussim crebescere collo
 sputaque per dentes ire cruenta cauos,
 atque animam in tegetes putrem exspirare paternas:
 horruit argenti pergula curua foco.

67 crebescere Housman] concrebescere Ω

4.5.67-70

The *lena* thus dies, her own death mirroring that of Propertius’ avian offering. The parallel is strengthened in several ways: *focos* is repeated at the end of the line (*focos*, 4.5.66; *foco*, 4.5.70);

⁶⁸⁴ See Myers (1996) 3, and Wheeler (1910b) 447-50; see also Wheeler (1911) 56-77.

Acanthis' name derives from that of a thistle-finch;⁶⁸⁵ *uidi ego* recalls the final couplet of her speech (*uidi ego odoratum uictura rosaria Paestum | sub matutino cocta iacere Noto*, 4.5.61-2). It may appear that Propertius' offering to Venus is a token of thanks for the *Lena's* death; having wished for her demise at the beginning, however, this would indicate a narrative jump. This, to be sure, would not be the first time: we need only remember how Lynceus' reality changed mid-poem. But as O'Neill has argued, the formula of an offering in the present imperative (*cape*, 65) with the subsequent shift to the past tense (*uidi ego*, 67) is evocative of a number of magical papyri, where 'incongruous aorist tenses ... occur in a context which must refer to the *ongoing* action of the spell';⁶⁸⁶ his analysis draws from that of Faraone, who views this as possible evidence for the existence of a 'performative aorist' in ritual contexts, which is commonly accompanied by an imperative address to a deity, and deictic language such as ἐγώ (cf. *ego*, 4.5.67). For Faraone, the force of a 'performative' verb is such that 'it effects some action simply by its utterance':⁶⁸⁷ rather than describing her death, Propertius would be using his poetry to bring it about; his offering to Venus also bears a linguistic echo of her own magic (*ob meritum*, 67; *immitas*, 16). But either way, Propertius' power over his poetic world is such that Acanthis is to be no more because he says so – and Propertius' power over her existence is again expressed through his eyes. The switch from purely empirical (*uidi ego*, 61)

⁶⁸⁵ See O'Neill (1998) 52-5, who discusses the wide-ranging associations of the *Lena* with birds in this poem.

⁶⁸⁶ O'Neill (1998) 68 and n.70. He cites *PGM*IV.2891-2942, 'an offering to the star of Aphrodite' (πρὸς τὸν ἀστέρα τῆς Ἀφροδίτης | ἐπίθυμα 2891-2) and *PGM* 2241-2358, 'a letter to the waning moon' (Δέλτος ἀποκρουστικὴ <ν> πρὸς Σελήνην, 2241). The former begins in the present imperative (ἐπίθυε ... ἔχε ... ἔχε, 2894-7) and, among other things, contains an offering of a white dove (περιστερᾶς λευκῆς, 2892). It ends with an exhortation (2940-2) to look at the star, which contains three aorists: depending on how the star looks, the girl 'has been smitten', 'has come', or 'has already been attracted' (ἐκρούσθη ... ἦλθεν ... ἤδη ἦξεν). See Betz (1986) 94 n.372 for the ambiguity of the final word and 92-4 for the translation, which, however, omits the second possibility printed by Preisendantz (1928); it is also omitted by O'Neill. The latter papyrus begins with a combination of future indicatives and present imperatives (e.g. καλέσω, 2244; ἐλθέ 2246); mentions the blood of a turtle-dove (αἶμα τρυγόνος, 2305) as one of the symbols of the author's summoning power (2310-11); and changes into the aorist tense at the end to suggest the goddess is now at hand (εἰσηλθας; ἦκεις; ὀργίσθητι, παρθένε, 2340). O'Neill also notes 'incongruous aorist tenses' in gold tablets from Pelinna (νῦν ἔθανες καὶ νῦν ἐγένου, τρισόλβιε, ἄματι τῷιδε; see Graf 1993, 239-58, and Faraone 1995, 13 n.42) and two Attic curse tablets against a certain Mikion, both of which employ the same formula although the action is occurring in the present (Μικίωνα ἐγὼ ἔλαβον καὶ ἔδησα, *DTA* 96, 97; see Faraone 1995, 13 n.42).

⁶⁸⁷ Faraone (1995) 3. He is primarily concerned with the performative future, but provides a substantial discussion of the possibility for the existence of a performative aorist at 13 n.42, with references both to papyri and tablets (see n.686 above), and classical texts. See also Lloyd (1999) who views tragic aorists as 'invariably performative' (25).

to performative (*uidi ego*, 67) sight is, in turn, evocative of the only other extant Latin poem (to my knowledge) where this particular phrase is repeated:

quae cano non rumore malo, non augure doctus:

uidi ego. me quaeso teste negare potes?

uidi ego te toto uinctum languescere collo

et flere iniectis, Galle, diu manibus,

1.13.13-16

Propertius here looks back to the events of 1.10 (cf. *uidimus*, 1.10.6). The first *uidi ego* (14) is used to stress the reliability of his own testimony; the second (15), to describe what he saw. But the account he now gives portrays a more tormented affair than before: the dark undercurrents to Propertius' joy in 1.10 have come to the surface. Having begun to write a new reality for Gallus earlier in 1.13, Propertius thus continues the process by leveraging the close relationship between sight and composition with the second *uidi ego*: even if what he saw was different before, what he claims to have seen now becomes what is. In his world, no-one can deny his testimony other than himself (*me quaeso teste negare potes?*, 15).

The questions of the poet's trustworthiness adduced by this intertext may then be read back into 4.5. The *lena* ends her speech with moving realism as she recalls the rose beds of Paestum wilting under the morning heat of the South Wind to encourage the *puella* to seize the day and love as she instructs; but her words also recall Virgil's, who declines a digression on the 'twice-blooming rose beds of Paestum' (*biferique rosaria Paesti*, *Georgics* 4.119) shortly before he subordinates empiricism to the imagination as he recounts the story of the old Corycian (*memini me ... | Corycium uidisse senem*, 4.125-7).⁶⁸⁸ In 1.13, Propertius' first *uidi ego* points to an earlier observation (*uidimus*, 1.10.6) of a secret affair that was not only expressed through his poetry, but that even appears to have been drawn from Gallus' own: in 1.10, Propertius was

⁶⁸⁸ Cf. Heyworth (1999) 90-1, who argues that *odorati ... Paesti* transmitted in the MSS is a scribal error owing to reminiscence of the *Georgics* passage as well as of Ov. *Met.* 15.708 (*tepidi ... rosaria Paesti*); for other references to the roses of Paestum, see cf. Ov. *Pont.* 2.4.27-8 and Mart. 12.31.3. It should also be noted that Propertius ends his opening description of the *lena* by referring to her use of the *hippomanes* (4.5.17-18), which is noted in the *Georgics* (3.280-3) as something to be used in magic rituals at the end of a digression on the ubiquitous power of love.

witness to a φαντασία that he treats as reality; the one he sees in 1.13 becomes reality too. In 4.5, Propertius reports the secret advice of a *lena* whom he does not see (or, at least, by whom he is not seen); and what he witnesses her to have seen resembles a φαντασία shown by the words of another poet. The *lena* thus comes to appear no less *scripta* than the *puella* of Propertius' collection; written into his world, she can be written out of it too. But she is no less a mirror to Propertius himself. Acanthis looks to a written reality to encourage infidelity through artistic guile; Propertius does so to remind us of the untrustworthiness of his elegy.

So, as Acanthis teaches the *puella* to behave rather like the one we have come to know over the course of Propertius' collection, we are reminded that the *puella* 'plays a role constructed for her by the elegy's first-person narrator who demands complete control over the discourse of their relationship'.⁶⁸⁹ The *puella's* *praeceptor* can ultimately be none other than Propertius because he is also the *lena* – and thus the circle completes. The *lena* teaches the *puella* fickle love, while *Amor* has taught Propertius to hate chaste girls: teaching is the means with which infidelity is pushed through their relationship. But since, for Propertius, the amatory is an expression of the poetic, teaching also becomes the means with which the untrustworthiness of elegy is made manifest, both as infidelity to its conceit and to reality itself; Propertius cannot be trusted to teach us anything other than that his elegiac world is beholden to his whim. In that regard, the *lena's* death is a doubly programmatic statement. Propertius' collection is soon to end: he puts a nail in its coffin by killing off the ultimate origin of his poetics. But Acanthis' tomb is to be covered with the very plants that nourish the bird from which she derives her name.⁶⁹⁰ There may have been no more truth to her death than to her existence; Propertius' affair may not be conclusively over. Our suspicions are soon proven right. Cynthia returns as a ghost in 4.7. But her death does not spell the end either – she comes roaring back in 4.8. Propertius writes a fickle love, so much is true: just when we think we are out, he finds a way to pull us back in.

⁶⁸⁹ Myers (1996) 1.

⁶⁹⁰ See O'Neill (1998) 54-58, citing Arist. *Hist. An.* 8.3, 9.1; and Plin. *HN*10.205.

Cynthia finis erit

In this thesis, I have considered how Propertius presents himself as a *praeceptor* over the course of his collection. The reason for my choice of approach is, in one sense, obvious. While it is well recognised that, like other elegists, Propertius portrays himself as a teacher, the only significant study of this self-characterisation dates back over a hundred years, employing analytical methods which do little more than to propose a pattern of linguistic and thematic imitation of earlier texts. The purpose of this thesis, on the other hand, has been not so much to evaluate or update these previous findings as to suggest a new means of reading Propertius' teaching, by viewing his poetry against the backdrop of a wider array of didactic verse, and analysing it in terms of certain shared motifs ('common ground', 'didactic plot', sight, trustworthiness). This has been, then, an approach with intertextuality at its heart, but without the traditional emphasis on direct textual parallels: where necessary, these have supported, rather than served as the focus of, the argument; priority has lain with close readings of Propertius' own poetry, and of subsequent intratextualities pertinent to his didactic pose. The result, in turn, is an investigation of the Propertian *praeceptor* that aligns instruction with narrative development. His teaching is not only a constant amid an increasing tendency towards poetic experimentation, but a means to track it – and possibly to account for it, too.

Meanwhile, the justification for considering Propertius' teaching in terms of a broader generic backdrop may be found in the very flexibility of didactic and elegiac poetry. As noted in the introduction, it has not been my goal to argue that Propertius should be viewed as a didactic poet – not that there has been universal agreement in ancient or modern times on quite who is. Classical scholars with an interest in genre will know that Aristotle disqualifies Empedocles from being a didactic poet; many will also be aware that Diomedes casts him (along with Lucretius) just as such.⁶⁹¹ It feels unnecessary to insist on analytical criteria strict enough to exclude Callimachus' *Aetia* and Ovid's *Fasti* from the genre,⁶⁹² and yet casting a single net around Nicander's dry *Theriaca* and Virgil's *Georgics*, with its concluding epyllion, is no simple

⁶⁹¹ Aristotle, *Poet.* 1447b (οὐδὲν δὲ κοινόν ἐστιν Ὀμήρω καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ πλὴν τὸ μέτρον, διὸ τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν δίκαιον καλεῖν, τὸν δὲ φυσιολόγον μᾶλλον ἢ ποιητὴν); Diom. 1.483 Keil (*didascalice est qua comprehenditur philosophia Empedoclis et Lucreti, item astrologia, ut phaenomena Aratu et Ciceronis, et georgica Vergilii et his similia*).

⁶⁹² As Volk (2002) does; see n. 46.

matter. At any rate, the fusion undertaken by Ovid with his *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* shows that neither didactic nor elegy are generically impermeable, and while Propertius does not adopt the epic scale (in length or in metre) one might expect of didactic in his own collection, he does lay the ground for his elegiac successor by establishing thematic and textual correspondences with that genre. At the start of this thesis, I remarked that it falls outside its scope to examine Ovid's teaching in light of Propertius' own; now at its end, I should add that another regrettable omission comprises a substantial investigation of the way in which Propertius' interplay with didactic accords with his reticence in writing epic verse, a type of poetry of which didactic was seen to be part.⁶⁹³ If Propertius builds his elegiac world against the foil of epic values by adapting them to his amatory conceit, his use of didactic perhaps serves to bridge that generic gap still further; and if Propertius' teaching exposes the imaginary nature of his elegiac reality, one might even be tempted to look in this for a comment on the relationship between epic and the reality that genre itself seeks to portray.

But how to conclude? Propertius, at least, does so with Cornelia (4.11), who defends her illustrious life from beyond the grave before the judges of the Underworld. Daughter of Scribonia and step-daughter of Augustus, she lived a distinguished life (45-6); but while she hopes not to be forgotten, she concedes that she may be replaced (85-90). Such is one of the paradoxes arising from Cornelia's honourable devotion in marriage to Paullus: it not only contrasts with the tormented affair between Propertius and Cynthia, but also with the certainty of their undying love. And though Cornelia may have a place in Roman history, she is nonetheless an elegiac *puella* – and one 'clearly articulated as a work of art'.⁶⁹⁴ Addressing her grieving husband from behind death's door, the opening lines combine the themes of death and the *paraklausithyron* (1-4);⁶⁹⁵ her departure from the world above is evocative of Euripides' Alcestis;⁶⁹⁶ and the Underworld where she is to remain draws from that described by Virgil in

⁶⁹³ Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.51-6, 85-91, 12.11.27; Tac. *Dial.* 23.2.

⁶⁹⁴ Wyke (2002) 110.

⁶⁹⁵ Copley (1956) 80-2.

⁶⁹⁶ See Paduano (1968) and Curran (1968) 135-6; cf. Eur. *Alc.* 348-54 and 4.11.83-4; *Alc.* 354-6 and 4.11.81-2; and *Alc.* 377 and 4.11.75-6. While Alcestis urges her husband not to re-marry (303-16), Cornelia is not so demanding.

the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*.⁶⁹⁷ Cornelia's fictionalisation exacerbates her loss of individuality as a passive adherent to the demands of Roman patriarchal ideals; Propertius' vivacious Cynthia, though a *scripta puella*, appears more alive than she.⁶⁹⁸ Paullus is to speak to her image as though he expects a response (*atque ubi secreto nostra ad simulacra loqueris, | ut responsurae singula uerba iace*, 83-4): as we read (out) Propertius' *Cynthia*, the images appearing in our minds may tempt us to do the same.

Nor does this closing poem provide a straightforward sense of closure. Cornelia may be dead but as she pleads her case to the judges of the Underworld, she remains in transit between the worlds above and below, her journey a reflection of the sense of generic ambivalence so central to this final book; and by ending with this hollow Cornelia rather than the vibrant Cynthia, Propertius invites us to consider his evasion of a definitive *cursus honorum* as we read about Cornelia's feminine own. Having earlier rejected orthodox *militia* in favour of *militia amoris*, Propertius has infused his embrace of aetiology with the themes and the beloved written before, keeping his poetry grounded in its amatory foundations even as it develops away from them. This retrospective character applies also in the final poem, for it is Cynthia that we recall even though Cornelia ends the collection; and as we do so, we may also recall the particular efficacy of Propertius' poetic teaching, since Cornelia, despite her instructions to the contrary, appears ultimately powerless to influence the lives of her husband and children in the world she leaves behind. It is possible to read this poem in light of the conclusions of the works of the didactic poets: Cornelia's lifelessness has something in common with the perfunctory feel of Hesiod's 'Days' and Aratus' 'Signs'; her death, with Lucretius' plague and Virgil's *bugonia*. And while here there may be no Epicurean salvation or magical rebirth to provide an element of circularity to the collection's end, there are, instead, memories of Propertius' beloved and of the lessons derived from the collection bearing her name. Cornelia has died, but she finds a place and a voice in the world Propertius writes and (thus) controls – and one which has never really stopped revolving around his love for his Cynthia.

⁶⁹⁷ Cf., e.g., Verg. *G.* 4.481-4 and 4.11.21-6; *G.* 4.478-80 (and *Aen.* 6.438-9) and 4.11.15-16. For further parallels, see Curran (1968) 134-5, along with a discussion on the identification between Cornelia and Paullus, and Orpheus and Euridice. See also Wyke (2002) 109.

⁶⁹⁸ See Heyworth (2010) 103-4.

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