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GENERIC FLUCTUATIONS:

METAPOETIC WATER IN PROPERTIUS

By

DEIRDRE J. M. CRAIG

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

University of Dublin
Trinity College

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DECLARATION

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SUMMARY

The objective of this thesis is to offer a comprehensive analysis of the role of metapoetic water symbolism in Propertius. The pervasiveness of water imagery in all four books of the corpus, and the poet's artistic indebtedness to Callimachus, for whom water is a significant programmatic metaphor, suggest that such an analysis may provide a useful interpretational tool for this most difficult and enigmatic of poets.

Chapter One surveys the presence of non-metapoetic water symbolism in the elegies that is an intrinsic part of the genre as inherited by the poet. The themes of love and death, so prominent in elegy, are conventionally articulated by water metaphors: the Sea of Love, incorporating metaphorical storm-tossed voyages; the River Styx as a perennial metaphor for the final journey of mortals. Propertius, however, takes these conventional metaphors and develops them to a new level of sophistication, emphasising the capacity of that element to separate the poet from his beloved. For him, water is a *limen*, and this will have significant implications for its application as a metapoetic metaphor. The first half of the chapter deals with water as a metaphor for love, and the second half with death.

Chapter Two provides a brief survey of the literary background to metapoetic water, beginning with Homer and his equation with the sea, and thence to Hesiod, Pindar, Callimachus and Theocritus. This will be followed by a correspondingly brief overview of some Roman predecessors and contemporaries: Ennius, Lucretius, Catullus, Vergil, Horace, and forward to Ovid. The aim of this survey is to show that the elegist is working within an established metapoetic tradition.

Chapter Three begins the analysis of Propertian metapoetic water at the centre of that poet's career. The most overtly programmatic poems of the whole corpus are the opening poems of Book 3, most particularly 3.1 and 3.3, elegies that by their enigmatic complexity have stimulated much scholarly debate, and little consensus. These elegies are examined first, and followed by a slight digression to a consequent analysis of 2.10, whose final couplet has long perplexed scholars. There follows a discussion of the remaining introductory poems of Book 3: 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5, as well as 3.9, the elegy addressed to Maecenas. It is argued that these poems mark what can appositely be termed as a watershed point in the poet's literary career,

and provide a reference point from which one can look back at Books 1 and 2, and forward to Books 3 and 4.

Chapter Four looks at poems in the first two books of the Propertian corpus and is divided into three sections. The first, entitled 'Polemical Posturing' concentrates on 1.8A and B, 1.7, 1.9, 1.6, and 1.14, which reveal a preoccupation with the poet's promotion of his elegiac poetry and concomitant lifestyle over all others. The second, under the heading of 'The Anxiety of Influence', deals with 1.11 and 1.20, two elegies which display the poet's intense engagement with the literary tradition, both within elegy and beyond it. The final section, which is given the broad heading of 'Shipwreck Scenes', gathers together 1.17 and 2.26 A and C. Differences between the two poems in their metapoetic water symbolism reveal in the later poem an incipient shift in Propertius' poetic programme, which is articulated more clearly at the start of Book 3.

Chapter Five then turns to Books 3 and 4 and is divided into two sections. The first section, entitled 'Seafaring', concentrates on those poems in Book 3 in which the sea plays a prominent role: 3.7, in which we observe the poet experimenting with the 'elegiacisation' of subject matter; 3.21, which foreshadows the renunciation of Cynthia; and 3.24, in which the more conventional application of the Sea of Love figure is deployed metapoetically to signal the end of Cynthia-centred elegy. The second section, 'Rhetorical Spaces', takes elegies 4, 6, and 9 from Book 4 and explores how Propertius situates his metapoetic water within the frame of a *locus amoenus*, which he uses in a sophisticated exercise of generic engagement and expansion. By allowing material from the world of epic to transgress the boundaries of elegy, he effects a change in that elegy which elevates it without compromising its essential identity.

The Conclusion sums up the findings of this investigation into Propertius' use of metapoetic water symbolism, which reveal a poet whose literary programme evolved steadily from the beginning to the end of his career.

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D.C.
April 2009
Dublin

ABBREVIATIONS

OLD	P.G.W. Glare (ed.) *The Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1968)
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (Leipzig and Munich, 1900-)

Abbreviations for journal titles generally follow the system used in *Année Philologique.*

A NOTE ON THE TEXTS

Quotations from Propertius are derived from the following edition:

P. Fedeli, (ed.) *Sexti Properti Elegiarum Libri IV* (Teubner, 1994).

Alternative readings are noted as appropriate.

INTRODUCTION

Aqua appears in Delatte's list of keywords in Propertius and he observes that the frequency of this word and of those which are semantically related reveals an imagination that is "obsessed by images in which water recurs in a great variety of contexts. Whether in connection with love, literature, the beyond, the poet's future or his past, water imagery appears everywhere as a leit-motif."[1]

In making such an observation, Delatte neatly synopsizes the dominant themes of Propertian elegy. In point of fact, they can be reduced further into the three main headings of love, death and literature, as the poet's concerns about his past and his future can also be seen as literary ones. To a certain extent, water imagery in relation to the first two themes of love and death can be considered to be inherent components of the genre, as their presence goes all the way back to its epigrammatic origins.[2] Sympotic epigram (and elegy) was pervaded by metaphors that come under the broad category of the Sea of Love, in which love affairs are compared to sea voyages, and women are compared to ships; sepulchral epigram regularly featured the Underworld, with reference to the timeless myth of crossing the Styx in Charon's boat.

Thus, the presence of some of the water imagery in Propertius' elegies can be accounted for as a hereditary feature of the genre, at least in relation to love and death. However, what was for the epigrammatists a store of conventional motifs, became in Propertius' hands the seeds of a rich harvest of elaborate and complex symbolism in which to articulate those two major themes. Moreover, the sheer volume of water imagery in Propertius in comparison to other poets has encouraged scholars to also look elsewhere for an explanation for its persistence in particular poems. Commager, for example, proposed in 1974 that Cynthia was both the name of the character in Propertius' poems and the title of his first book, and increasingly the poet's love elegy has been seen as an artificial creation that lives up to the highest standards of Alexandrianism.[3] His preference as a poet for dramatisation over exposition has encouraged scholars to read his 'biographical' content as what Fantham describes as "encoding statements about the author's poetic career and designs".[4] Thus, since Cynthia, as *scripta puella,* can refer to both *puella* and poetry, making

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[1] Delatte (1967) 52.

[2] On the origins of Latin elegy, see Cairns (1979) 214-230. On Hellenistic epigram, see Gutzwiller (1998).

[3] Commager (1974).

[4] Fantham (2002) 184.

love equates with writing poetry, difficulties in his love affair reflect literary problems, and so the allegorization goes on.

What has emerged from this approach is the recognition that Propertius was preoccupied with the rediscovery of a genre rather than the expression of sincere emotion. In some elegies, such as the opening poems of Book 3, water metaphors are used explicitly to articulate his literary aspirations and aesthetic concerns; in others their message is implicit, but compelling enough to justify metapoetic interpretation, prompting the likes of Gold to write: "Any extended mention of water in Propertius, especially when it includes certain key words (e.g. *mollis*) or references to other poets, should make us wonder whether this is real or metaphorical water."[5]

A metapoetic approach to Propertian studies has been encouraged since the publication in 1927 of Callimachus' polemical *Reply to the Telchines* that stands at the beginning of the *Aetia* and in 1949 and 1953 of Pfeiffer's edition of Callimachus. The discovery of papyri which have contributed so greatly to the extant Callimachean corpus engendered an efflorescence of valuable scholarship on the Cyrenean poet, and this has had a welcome knock-on effect on that of Latin poetry, as it has been recognised that Augustan poets regularly allude to a small number of his programmatic texts in their own self-reflexive passages, most particularly the *Reply to the Telchines*, the epilogue of the *Hymn to Apollo*, and epigram 28. Most crucially for Propertius, the *soi-disant* Roman Callimachus, the metapoetic messages in these texts are largely transmitted by means of water metaphors.

To date, scholarship on Propertius' metapoetic exploitation of water metaphors has been piecemeal and confined to individual poems. In general, the pervasiveness of water imagery in Propertius has been observed by Newman, who goes so far as to advance the unlikely proposition, at variance with all modern scholarship, that the agnomen *Nauta*, given to Propertius in some codices and early editions, may well be a correct one.[6] Murgatroyd has provided a comprehensive analysis of Propertius' deployment of the Sea of Love figure in his poetry, and other scholars, such as Nethercut, Harmon, Gold and DeBrohun have recognised the metapoetic possibilities of water in particular elegies, some of whose penetrating investigations have opened up new possibilities for their interpretation. Nevertheless, there has been an absence of any comprehensive attempt to provide a holistic analysis of metapoetic water in the Propertian oeuvre as a whole, despite a universal acknowledgement

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[5] Gold (1986) 152.

[6] Newman (1997) 151-2. This agnomen seems to have been derived from a corrupt reading of 2.24.38, where *non ita* has been universally accepted instead of the transmitted *navita*. On this see Fedeli (2005) 698.

of its prominence. A consideration of passages throughout the four books that are both explicitly and implicitly programmatic through the particular lens of the symbolism of water in all its forms may therefore open up new interpretive possibilities, enabling us to chart the aesthetic progress of the author, from his earliest days of erotic servitude to his reinvention of himself as a different type of elegiac poet. It may also help us to understand the coherence of the entire oeuvre.

This *novum iter* of investigation will begin in chapter 1 with an analysis of Propertius' non-metapoetic use of the water metaphors that are embedded in and conventional to the genre of elegy, as they must be recognised separately before embarking on any metapoetic interpretations. In some cases, these metaphors stand in the poetry as they are, embellished and often expanded in keeping with the fiercely pictorial and innovative Propertian imagination; in others, the non-metapoetic symbolism is complicated with the metapoetic, as will emerge in the progress of this study.

This will be followed in chapter 2 by a necessarily brief tour of the literary background to water metapoetics, going all the way back to Homer and Hesiod, passing by Pindar, and thence to Callimachus and his contemporary Theocritus, before taking an even briefer look at the Latin poets, Propertius' immediate predecessors as well as his contemporaries, in order to establish the possible platform from which the elegist was working. Consideration of each of these authors could provide enough material for several more theses, but my aim here is not to be comprehensive, but to supply some amount of plausible precedent for Propertius' manipulation of such symbolism.

Chapter 3 will then begin my examination of Propertian water metapoetics *in medias res*, at the very centre of his career, with those overtly programmatic poems at the beginning of Book 3 where he appears to be heralding some sort of change in his poetry, while at the same time more explicitly proclaiming his allegiance to Callimachus, and indeed Philetas. Of these poems both 3.1 and 3.3 have been the subject of extensive critical debate, and confusion has prevailed in relation to the significance of the various water sources within these poems, complicated by the much vexed final couplet of 2.10, which will also be treated in this chapter. My analysis will suggest a solution to these problems and provide a reference point from which we can look backwards, in chapter 4, to those elegies that preceded this defining point in his career, and then forwards, in chapter 5, to those that came after it. In chapter 4 the first book of elegies will be shown to offer a richer supply of metapoetic water, partly due to the inconclusive and fragmented nature of the poems of the second book. Nevertheless, the poems selected from Book 2, which appear towards its end, will prove to be revealing of the growing programmatic dilemma that appears to assail Propertius, first intimated in 2.10. In chapter 5, the investigation of poems from Book 3 will inevitably be shorter, since six of them are the subject of chapter 3, and that of the three poems of Book 4 (4.4., 4.6 and 4.9) will demonstrate the extreme level of sophistication achieved by Propertius in his manipulation of metapoetic water imagery and indicate how much his programmatic strategy has changed from the early poems of the first book.

What will emerge from this study is evidence of a fundamentally different poetic agenda in each half of the poet's career, and that the poems at the beginning of Book 3 can be seen to embody what can be appositely termed a watershed for the poet, where he explicitly and self-consciously begins to change his elegiac identity.

CHAPTER ONE

NON-METAPOETIC WATER SYMBOLISM IN PROPERTIUS

I

Water and Love

The sea of love, consisting of marine and nautical imagery in all its literary forms for love and sex, is one of the more significant amatory figures in Greek and Latin literature and goes back as far as the Archaic age. Apart from being a fairly obvious metaphorical field for the vicissitudes of a love affair, especially in view of the marine provenance of the goddess of love herself, it may also be viewed as a refinement of the metaphorical role of the sea in the symposium. Slater has shown how the symposium was often equated with a ship, and the symposium as a haven, a place of shelter from the storms of life that raged outside.[1] The unsteadiness that accompanies excessive consumption of wine gave rise to the perception of fragments of their cups" (Choerilus Samius).[2] This metaphorical view of the symposium was reflected in the entertainment that took place therein, both in the drinking games and the songs.[3] When, at the beginning of the Hellenistic age, the sympotic epigram emerged as a fully literary form, whose themes were derived from the elegies that were traditionally performed at the symposium, the marine metaphorical content that was embedded in these poems became a characteristic feature of the genre.[4] It is not surprising therefore, that the already existing sea of love figure, on coming into contact with the ships of love and life that came from the symposium, reached a new level of sophistication in the hands of the Alexandrians and the Augustans.

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[1] Slater (1976) 161-70.

[2] Slater (1976) 162 cites the story of Timaeus 566F 149 in Athenaeus 37b-d, in which young men at a party consumed so much wine that they imagined they were sailing in a trireme, and that a storm was raging in the ocean. Convinced that the pilot had told them to lighten their load, they tossed all the furniture and the bedding out of the house as though upon the water. Upon being visited by the military authorities the following day, while still "half-seas over" they explained the apparent necessity of their actions, and were pardoned, but told not to drink so much. The house was henceforth known as the Trireme. The Choerilus fragment is Choerilus Samius fr.9 Kinkel: χερσιν / ὄλβον ἔχω κύλικος τρύφος ἀμφὶς ἐαγός / ἀνδρων δαιτύμόνων ναυάγιον, οἶά τε πολλά / πνεῦμα Διωνύσοιο πρὸς ὕβριος ἔκβαλεν ἀκτάς.

[3] Slater (1976) 163 refers to the 'kottabos', a Sicilian drinking game, which involved sinking little boats (ὀξύβαφα) by the throwing of wine lees at them.

[4] Gutzwiller (1998) 115-120 explains how epigram became indistinguishable from shorter elegy, or extracts from longer elegy, not only because both were performed, but also because both now appeared in books.

Murgatroyd has provided a review of the history of the figure, beginning with Alcaeus, who (possibly) compares an old courtesan to an old ship, and Theognis, who compares an adulterous wife to a boat that slips its moorings.[5] The occurrences of the figure in Comedy were mainly in relation to the sexual act, and this was particularly exploited by Aristophanes.[6]

From the Hellenistic era Murgatroyd identifies fifteen occurrences of the figure. Four are in relation to sex: In *A.P.* 5.54 (Dioscorides) the poet is playing the role of *praeceptor amoris*, instructing how to have sex with one's pregnant wife: not face to face, as it will seem like she is being rowed. In the following epigram (55), which is related to its predecessor, the woman is aptly named Doris, and this time it is she that is depicted as being tossed about. In *A.P.* 5.161 (Hedylus or Asclepiades), three old prostitutes are likened to 20-oared (presumably because they have 20 lovers) cargo ships who cast ashore their naked and exhausted lovers like shipwrecked sailors, and an epigram by Meleager (*A.P.* 5.204) consists of a graphically original depiction of an old courtesan as a ship whose timbers are worn out by the strokes of Cypris' oarsmen, whose back is bent like a lowered yard-arm, whose grey forestays are slack, whose breasts are like flapping sails, and whose belly is wrinkled from the tossing of too many waves.

The remaining occurrences are non-sexual, and five of them come from Meleager. *A.P.* 10.21 (Philodemus) and *A.P.* 12.100 (anon) refer to the harbour: in the former, Venus (addressed as Cypris) is beseeched by a drowning bridegroom in her capacity as "lover of harbourage" to protect him; in the latter, the harbour is a strange "port of longings" to which the distraught lover has been brought by Venus. *A.P.* 12.167 (Meleager) introduces the metaphorical wind and combines the figure of the lover on the sea with that of the komast:

Χειμέριον μὲν πνεῦμα· φέρει δ' ἐπὶ σοί με, Μυΐσκε,
  ἁρπαστὸν κώμοις ὁ γλυκύδακρυς Ἔρως.
χειμαίνει δὲ βαρὺς πνεύσας Πόθος, ἀλλά μ' ἐς ὅρμον
  δέξαι, τὸν ναύτην Κύπριδος ἐν πελάγει.

Myiscus, despite this wintry wind I'm swept
  Away by love's sweet tears to pay you court.
Desire is like a hurricane. Accept

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[5] Alcaeus frag X14 col ii *PLF*; Theognis 457-60; Murgatroyd (1995) 9-25. Nisbet and Hubbard (1970) 78 also cite Semonides fr.7 (in relation to Horace *C.* 1.5) in which woman is equated with the sea.

[6] E.g. *Eccl.*37ff; 1086f; 1091; 1105ff; frag. 317K; *Birds* 1253ff; *Frogs* 45ff; 430; *Lysistrata* 671ff.

> This loving mariner into your port.[7]

Here the metaphorical wind of the poet's erotic desire in line three picks up the real one in line one. In another epigram by the same poet (*A.P.* 5.190) he depicts himself as a ship:

> Κῦμα τὸ πικρὸν Ἔρωτος ἀκοίμητοί τε πνέοντες
> ζῆλοι καὶ κώμων χειμέριον πέλαγος,
> ποῖ φέρομαι; πάντῃ δὲ φρενῶν οἴακες ἀφεῖνται.
> ἦ πάλι τὴν τρυφερὴν Σκύλλαν ἀποψόμεθα;

> O briny wave of love, and sleepless gales of Jealousy, and wintry sea of song and wine, whither am I borne? This way and that shifts the abandoned rudder of my judgement. Shall we ever set eyes again on tender Scylla?[8]

He also includes some clever punning on the girl's name. In *A.P.* 12.157 Meleager also portrays the lover as a ship, with the novel idea of Aphrodite as a female captain, the boy Eros as helmsman, and Desire as the wind that blows the ship:

> Κύπρις ἐμοὶ ναύκληρος, Ἔρως δ' οἴακα φυλάσσει
> ἄκρον ἔχων ψυχῆς ἐν χερὶ πηδάλιον·
> χειμαίνει δὲ βαρὺς πνεύσας Πόθος, οὕνεκα δὴ νῦν
> παμφύλῳ παίδων νήχομαι ἐν πελάγει.

> My skipper's Venus, Cupid mans the helm,
> Holding my spirit's rudder in his hand;
> Desire blows hard enough to overwhelm
> Me, breasting a sea of boys from every land.[9]

In *A.P.* 5.209 (Posidippus or Asclepiades) we find for the first time the paradox of the lover shipwrecked on dry land, as he observes his beloved swimming in the sea:

> χὼ μὲν ἐναυάγει γαίης ἔπι, τὴν δὲ θαλάσσης
> ψαύουσαν πρηεῖς εἴχοσαν αἰγιαλοί. (vv. 5-6).

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[7] Translated by Hine (2001) 81.
[8] Translated by Paton (1999) 223.
[9] Translated by Hine (2001) 75.

> He, standing on the land, was shipwrecked, but in the sea was received
> gently by the beach.[10]

Thus we have a precedent for the sea symbolizing the emotional and psychological dangers of a love affair. In *A.P* 12.156 (anon.) the beloved is likened to a spring storm engendered by the sea, and the lover is depicted as a castaway who, tossed on the sea, needs to be told by his beloved which direction to swim:

> Εἰαρινῷ χειμῶνι πανείκελος, ὦ Διόδωρε,
> οὑμὸς ἔρως ἀσαφεῖ κρινόμενος πελάγει·
> καί ποτε μὲν φαίνεις πολὺν ὑετόν, ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖτε
> εὔδιος, ἁβρὰ γελῶν δ’ ὄμμασιν ἐκκέχυσαι.
> τυφλὰ δ’, ὅπως ναυηγὸς ἐν οἴδματι, κύματα μετρῶν
> δινεῦμαι, μεγάλῳ χείματι πλαζόμενος.
> ἀλλά μοι ἢ φιλίης ἔκθες σκοπὸν ἢ πάλι μίσους,
> ὡς εἰδῶ, ποτέρῳ κύματι νηχόμεθα.

> My love, Diodorus, is like a spring
> Storm, of the fluid sea’s engendering.
> You imitate a thundercloud, then after
> The weather clears, your eyes brim with soft laughter.
> Like a castaway who counts the steep
> Waves, I am tempest-tossed upon the deep;
> Give me, that I may know in which direction
> To swim, marks of aversion or affection.[11]

Here again the sea symbolizes the passion that assails the lover. The concept of calm on the sea of love also makes its appearance, in a lengthy treatment by Cercidas (5.1-17 Powell), as well as two epigrams by Meleager: *A.P.* 5.156 and 12.84. Most notable is the latter example, in which the poet depicts himself as having survived his maiden voyage, only to encounter the more deadly sea of love on dry land:

> ἆρά γε τὴν πικρὰν προφυγὼν ἅλα πουλύ τι κείνης
> πικρότερον χέρσῳ κῦμα περῶ Κύπριδος; (vv. 7-8).

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[10] Translated by Paton (1999) 233.
[11] Translated by Hine (2001) 75.

Have I escaped the briny deep and found
Bitterer depths of longing on dry ground?[12]

This distich blends the paradox of the lover shipwrecked on land with the topos, common in sepulchral epigram, of the death on land of the sailor saved from the sea.

In the Latin of the Republican period the figure was common enough, especially in Plautus, who portrays prostitutes as pirate ships.[13] It occurs only once in Lucretius, in a sexual context (4.1077), and there are four instances in Catullus: 64.62 *magnis curarum fluctuat undis* refers to the emotional response of Ariadne as she observes Theseus sailing away; 64.97f *qualibus incensam iactastis mente puellam/ fluctibus in flavo saepe hospite suspirantem!* similarly refers to Ariadne's distraught state of mind; 68.107f *tanto te absorbens vertice amoris/ aestus in abruptum detulerat barathrum* depicts Laodamia's love as a powerful tide that transports her to a deep abyss; and finally at 68.63-4 Catullus uses the nautical analogy of a favouring breeze in relation to his friend Allius' assistance in a love tryst: *ac velut in nigro iactatis turbine nautis/ lenius aspirans aura secunda venit.*

When we come to the Augustan age, Murgatroyd demonstrates that the figure became more popular than ever, citing Propertius, Horace, and especially Ovid. The financial and sexual forms of the figure, however, are rare, and do not occur in Propertius. This may be because they are more suited to the lower genre of comedy. In Horace the figure features prominently in *C.* 1.5, where the poet depicts himself as having retired his ship of love to the shore, and perhaps in *C.*1.14, a much disputed poem whose ship seems to be allegorical, but not necessarily for love.[14] There are indeed numerous occurrences of the figure in Ovid (Murgatroyd cites over 50), but it is much less common in Propertius. Murgatroyd cites 13 in total. It will be useful to examine each one:

1): 2.5.3-4: haec merui sperare? dabis mihi, perfida, poenas;
et nobis **aliquo**, Cynthia, **ventus** erit.

The MSS have *Aquilo* in v.4, which, despite the efforts of such commentators as Beroaldo, Butler and Barber, Enk and Richardson, does not make sense. *aliquo* and *alio* have been conjectured, either of which are plausible, particularly the former, since it suggests that the

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[12] Translated by Hine (2001) 39.
[13] On sea imagery in comedy and oratory of the Republic, see Fantham (1972) 19-21; 134-5.
[14] On these poems, see below, pp.90-93. Murgatroyd rejects the idea that the ship in this poem is an allegory for love.

copyist's eye was caught by the word *ventus* and consequently misread *aliquo* for *Aquilo.* If *aliquo* is correct, the line translates as 'a wind will waft me elsewhere'.[15] Although the sea is not mentioned here, there is a strong suggestion of the metaphorical wind of the sea of love topos, blowing the sails of the boat towards some other harbour, such as we find in Hellenistic epigram: *A.P.* 10.21 (Philodemus); *A.P.* 12.100 (Anon.); *A.P.* 12.167 (Meleager). This other place to which Propertius will go may be a reference to the *remedium amoris* of travelling far away from one's beloved, as proposed in 1.1.29-30 (*ferte per extremas gentes et ferte per undas, / qua nulla mea femina norit iter*), and fully enacted in 1.17, or *aliquo* may refer to another love affair: Cynthia will be sorry for venting her immoderate rage at Propertius because he will abandon her, either by removing himself far from her presence, or by transferring his affections to another.

2): 2.5.11-13: non ita **Carpathiae** variant **Aquilonibus undae**
nec dubio nubes vertitur atra Noto,
quam facile irati verbo mutantur amantes.

Again the winds are the agents in this example, and the lines can be compared with 2.9.33-6 (see below). The Carpathian is that piece of the Aegean Sea between Rhodes and Crete, which was greatly feared by ancient mariners for being stormy: in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* it is Κᾶρπαθος ἠνεμόεσσα, and Horace refers to it in *C.*1.35.7-8 (*quicumque Bithynia lacessit / Carpathium pelagus carina*) and *C.*4.5.9-11 (*…quem Notus invido / flatu Carpathi trans maris aequora / cunctantem spatio longius annuo..*). This is its first appearance in the Sea of Love figure, where the fickleness of the winds is compared to that of angry lovers.[16] Fedeli suggests that this Propertian maxim derives from Menander fr. 790K.-A: ὀργὴ φιλούντων ὀλίγον χρόνον.[17]

3): 2.9.33-36: non sic incertae mutantur flamine **Syrtes**
nec folia hiberno tam tremefacta Noto,
quam cito feminea non constat foedus in ira.

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[15] On this see Heyworth (2007) 130, who prefers *alio*, and translates: "I shall find a wind to another place, Cynthia."

[16] The Carpathian sea reappears in 3.7.12 in relation to the drowning of Paetus: *nunc tibi pro tumulo* ***Carpathium*** *omne mare est.*

[17] Fedeli (2006) 182.

Once again the wind is the key element here. The Syrtes, two sandbanks on the north coast of Africa, posed a real threat to sailors because of their shifting nature as a result of the winds and the waves. The importance in this image is the nature of the Syrtes, rather than the sea itself. These shallows become particularly treacherous when the current and the sand bars cause the waves to boil and crash against each other and thus provide a fitting metaphor for a fickle and contradictory woman. They may also be a metaphor for the very shallowness of her devotion. Propertius will refer to them again, in his *renuntiatio amoris* at the end of Book 3 (3.24.16, see below), but here they make their first appearance in the sea of love figure, where their unpredictability is compared with his beloved when she is angry.

4): 2.12.7-8: scilicet alterna quoniam iactamur in **unda**
nostraque non ullis permanet aura locis.

The train of thought in these lines develops from v.5-6: *idem non frustra ventosas addit alas, / fecit et humano corde volare deum.* Cupid's wings put Propertius in mind of the metaphorical wind again, as we meet the first clear example of the figure of love as a sea voyage at the mercy of such winds. Rather than dwell on the conventional motif of Cupid's wings, Propertius shows his originality by emphasising the effect of these wings that is the stormy winds (of passion) that they provoke. They recall Cercidas 5.1-17, *A.P.* 12.156 (Anon.), 12.157 (Meleager), 12.167 (Meleager) and Catullus 64.97-8. Ovid will avail of this metaphorical wind in *Am.* 2.9.33, 2.10.9-10, and *Rem.* 13-14, 531.

5): 2.14.29-30: nunc ad te, mea lux, veniet **mea litore navis**
servata, an mediis sidat onusta **vadis.**

Enk sees here an allusion to Meleager, *A.P.* 12.167.3-4 (ἀλλά μ' ἐς ὅρμον / δέξαι, τὸν ναύτην Κύπριδος ἐν πελάγει), but both Fedeli and Schulz-Vanheyden disagree, maintaining that the only motif that the two poems have in common is that love is equated with the sea voyage, but that there is no mention of the ship of love.[18] Nevertheless, the ship is implied in Meleager's epigram ('accept this loving mariner into your port'). The topos of

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[18] Fedeli (2006) 434; Schulz-Vanheyden (1969) 52 n.18. The transmitted v.29 (*nunc ad te, mea lux, veniet mea litore navis*), being nonsensical, has been neatly emended and explained by Luck (1962) 337-40, as cited by Heyworth (2007) 173.

the ship of love is attested in Cercidas 5.1.1-17, in which the lover himself directs the course of the ship. The mention of the shallows, however, is new to the figure.

6): 2.22.41: nam melius duo defendunt **retinacula navim**

Here Propertius uses the analogy of a ship held by two cables to express an uncustomary preference for more than one girl. It could not be described as a strong incidence of the sea of love, and is merely one of two examples (the other being that a mother has less to worry about if she rears twins).[19]

7): 2.25.7: putris et in vacua requiescit **navis harena**

This line forms part of a priamel, being the third example of a series of four, before Propertius goes on to state his own situation: an aged soldier puts away his arms and rests; an old ox refuses to draw the plough; the rotten ship lies idle on the deserted strand; the warrior's ancient shield hangs in the temple; but, in contrast to these, old age will never stop Propertius from loving Cynthia. This is the first time that the retirement of ships appears in the figure, but it recalls the *phaselus* of Catullus 4.25-27 in a non-erotic context: *nunc recondita / senet quiete seque dedicat tibi, / gemelle Castor et gemelle Castoris.* The Propertian priamel probably inspired Ovid in *Am.* 2.9.19-24, although his conclusion tentatively proposes the opposite to that of his predecessor:

> fessus in acceptos miles deducitur agros;
>   mittitur in saltus carcere liber equus;
> longaque subductam celant navalia pinum,
>   tutaque deposito poscitur ense rudis.
> me quoque, qui totiens merui sub amore puellae,
>   defunctum placide vivere tempus erat.

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[19] Moreover, it seems to be proverbial. See Richardson (1977) 275: "These illustrations are humorous in their lack of appropriateness to the present case; they are probably both versions of common proverbs. See also Prop. 3.7.19-20 *nam tibi nocturnis ad saxa ligata procellis / omnia detrito vincula fune cadunt;* and Ovid *Rem. Am.* 447: *non satis una tenet ceratas ancora puppes.*

8): 2.25.23-24: an quisquam in mediis persolvit vota procellis,
cum saepe **in portu fracta carina natet**?

The motif of the insecurity of the ship appears in Greek sepulchral epigram, eg *A.P.* 665.1-2 (Leonidas of Tarentum), and more specifically, that of the ship surviving the dangers of the high sea, only to be destroyed in the harbour is attested in *A.P.* 625.3-4 (Antipater of Sidon) and *A.P.* 639.5-6 (Antipater of Thessalonica). This, however, is the first time that it is related to love.

9): 2.33B.43: semper in absentis felicior **aestus** amantis

The interpretation of *aestus* in this verse is difficult: if it refers to the burning heat of love, then a satisfactory translation of *felicior* is hard to find. It is more likely that it refers to the tide of love, since the term *felix* for 'favourable' in the context of sailing is attested in Vergil *Aen*.3.120, *Zephyris felicibus*.[20]

10): 3.11.5: ventorum melius praesagit **navita** morem

This is one of two analogies to illustrate Propertius' expertise in the vicissitudes of a difficult love affair, the other one being that a soldier learns from his wounds to feel fear. A sailor predicting the winds is new to the figure. Richardson suggests that the couplet is an adage.[21] As with examples 7 and 8, the sailor is paired with the soldier: an interesting combination of the *militia amoris* motif with that of the sailor of love.

11): 3.17.1-2: Nunc, o Bacche, tuis humiles advolvimur aris:
da mihi pacatus **vela secunda**, pater.

This verse is reminiscent of Vergil *Geo.* 2.41, *Maecenas, pelagoque volans da vela patenti*, where Vergil is invoking his patron for cooperative attention. Propertius, however, is requesting calmness on the turbulent sea of love by means of the soothing effects of wine.[22]

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[20] Butler and Barber (1933) 255 offers both possibilities. Heyworth (2007) 562 translates: "Passion is always more propitious for absent lovers".

[21] Richardson (1976) 358.

[22] In Vergil, the metaphor is programmatic and literary, rather than erotic, suggesting that the Propertian line may also contain a metapoetic resonance.

12): 3.20.2: vidisti a lecto quem **dare vela** tuo?

This is a doubtful example. The context is that the addressee (perhaps Cynthia) has been deserted by a lover who is not Propertius. Murgatroyd allows that the primary reference is to an actual voyage, but suggests that "there may be allusion to our figure."[23] If the deserter is a merchant, the voyage may perhaps be a convenient metaphor for his desertion.

15): 3.24.9-16: quod mihi non patrii poterant avertere amici,
  eluere aut vasto Thessala saga **mari**,
hoc ego non ferro, non igne coactus, et ipsa
  naufragus Aegaea (vera fatebor) **aqua**.
correptus saevo Veneris torrebar aeno,
  vinctus eram versas in mea terga manus.
ecce **coronatae portum tetigere carinae**,
  traiectae Syrtes, ancora iacta mihi est.

This final *renuntiatio amoris* is a response to Propertius 1.1 and the *remedia amoris* suggested therein. Here Propertius explicitly describes his now finished experiences of his love affair in terms of being shipwrecked on a sea of passion. It is comparable to Horace's *renuntiato amoris* (*C.*1.5) in which he describes himself as having survived such an experience and now able to dedicate his dripping garments to the god of the sea. Propertius describes his infatuation as something that even the witches of Thessaly could not wash away in Ocean; then he depicts himself as having been shipwrecked on a very Aegaean Sea of passion; but now his ship, which is garlanded (in celebration, presumably, and this is new to the figure) has successfully passed the danger zone of the treacherously shifting sandbanks that are the Syrtes, and he is a survivor, having reached a safe haven and put down anchor. The Syrtes were specifically mentioned in example 3 (2.9.33-36), and alluded to in example 5, and thus it is likely that the elegist is looking back at these metaphors in this poem. Fittingly, this is the last instance of the Sea of Love in the Propertian corpus.

It has to be said that at first sight the figure does not seem to feature strongly in Propertian love elegy. Of the above examples, only three (4,5 and 13) clearly equate the love affair with the sea voyage, and several of them can be said to be mere conventional analogies. Murgatroyd concludes: "For the sake of perspective it should be noted that the sea of love did

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[23] Murgatroyd (1995) 20.

not reach as advanced a stage of development in the Augustans as *militia amoris* and *servitium amoris*."[24] It is interesting that he should reach such a conclusion, given that he also thoroughly examined the origins and development of those two figures in two excellent papers, concluding that they reached their highest level of development and sophistication at the hands of the elegists.[25] I propose that such an analysis of the sea of love figure in Propertius is an incorrect one, and that the poet in fact, as with the other two figures, similarly raises it from the level of mere conceit to make it a fundamental element of his love elegy. I suggest that, by the time Propertius was composing his elegies, the figure had become so conventional that this Callimachean poet found new ways to expand and elaborate the application of the figure, right from the beginning of his career. What I intend to show is that the elegist avails of two different symbolic applications of the sea in relation to love, one considerably more important than the other. The less important of the two is the metaphor of the sea voyage for his love affair, and I suggest that its relative unimportance is a function of its conventionality; the more important is that of the sea as an agent of separation. It is in this application that Propertius finds the most scope for innovation and we shall see that the very liminality of the sea is what mostly exercises the Propertian imagination in relation to both non-metapoetic and metapoetic contexts.

Navigatio Amoris

We have seen that Propertius refers conventionally, but very briefly, to his love affair in terms of a sea voyage in some of the examples cited above, and that only in the final poem of Book 3 does he allow this metaphor any substantial treatment. This poem can be seen as ring compositional, as it brings to an end the affair that began in the very first poem of the first book, as the poet repudiates Cynthia's charms that so captivated him at the start. There is, however, one other poem in which the whole relationship with Cynthia may be regarded in

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[24] Murgatroyd (1995) 19 n.36.

[25] Murgatroyd (1981) 589-606 (on *servitium amoris*); Murgatroyd (1975) 59-79 (on *militia amoris*). On *servitium* he states that at the hands of the elegists the figure "attained the peak of its development, and they gave it a function of real importance in their poetry by employing it to express their concept of love and the role of the lover" (p.606). On *militia*, he states that the Roman elegists "raised it above the level of a mere conceit and gave it a position of real importance in their poetry by using it in the expression of their attitude to war and of their views on the nature of love and the natural role of the lover" (p.79). On Propertius' treatment of the figure of *militia amoris*, see also Gale (1997) 77-91.

terms of a sea voyage, and that is in the third (or second) part of the much disputed elegy 2.26: [26]

heu, mare per longum mea cogitet ire puella!
   hanc sequar et fidos una aget aura duos.
unum litus erit sopitis unaque tecto
   arbor, et ex una saepe bibemus aqua;
et tabula una duos poterit componere amantis,
   prora cubile mihi seu mihi puppis erit.
omnia perpetiar: saevus licet urgeat Eurus ;
   velaque in incertum frigidus Auster agat;
quicumque et venti miserum vexastis Vlixem
   et Danaum Euboico litore mille ratis;
et qui movistis duo litora, cum ratis Argus
   dux erat ignoto missa columba mari.
illa meis tantum non umquam desit ocellis,
   incendat navem Iuppiter ipse licet.
certe isdem nudi pariter iactabimur oris:
   me licet unda ferat, te modo terra tegat.
sed non Neptunus tanto crudelis amori,
   Neptunus fratri par in amore Iovi:
testis Amymone, latices dum ferret, in Argis
   compressa, et Lernae pulsa tridente palus.
iam deus amplexu votum persolvit, at illi
   aurea divinas urna profudit aquas.
crudelem et Borean rapta Orithyia negavit:
   hic deus et terras et maria alta domat.
crede mihi, nobis mitescet Scylla, nec umquam
   alternante vacans vasta Charybdis aqua;
ipsaque sidera erunt nullis obscura tenebris,
   purus et Orion, purus et Haedus erit.
quod mihi si ponenda tuo sit corpore vita,
   exitus hic nobis non inhonestus erit.   (2.26.29-58)

In this improbable fantasy, Propertius is using the Sea of Love imagery in a novel way in order to portray an impossible situation: together he and his beloved will make the dangerous sea voyage; he is prepared to face all dangers, even death, so long as he is with her; however,

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[26] On this see especially Fedeli (2006) 734-6. I follow Fedeli's division of this poem into three parts: A=1-20, B=21-28 and C=29-58. I concur also that what he terms B is a fragment of a now lost larger and separate elegy. Parts A and C will be treated below in ch. 4 in a metapoetic context.

Jupiter and Neptune will keep them safe, as they also have known what it is to be lovers. The stormy weather is now an external setting, not representing emotional upheaval, but the vicissitudes of life and the outside world. The ship, in fact, resembles the ship of the symposium, in which the symposiasts saw themselves as sheltering from the storms that rage outside, and the impossibility of the situation envisaged by Propertius suggests that he is indeed 'half-seas over' as he indulges in a fantasy that is the complete antithesis to the condition of the elegiac lover. We are not dealing here with the more usual application of the metaphor of the sea voyage as an illustration of the difficulties within a relationship. Instead, the voyage is one which is harmoniously taken together, and in which the dangers are external. The sea, instead of coming between the lovers, will unite them, even in death. Thus the ship that the poet and his beloved will share may be seen as the ship of Life, and the storms and calm weather that await them are the ups and downs to come, but their union is destined to prevail and thus nature will be kind to them. Propertius' professed determination to undergo all in the name of Love will mollify the elements. He will control nature by his heroic devotion (which, he implies, Jason and Odysseus were unable to do). In the end, the calm setting will reflect their serene happiness and the ship of Life will sail on the calm sea of Love. Thus it is that Propertius not only expands the conventional metaphor of the sea voyage, but also applies it in an unconventional way.

The Sea as an Agent of Separation.

It is noteworthy that of the examples provided by Murgatroyd, not one comes from Book 1 of Propertius' elegies. Nevertheless, it is in this book that we find the most arresting examples of Propertius' development of the figure into a fundamental feature of his love elegy. In the very first poem, the elegist regards the sea as a means of separation from Cynthia, when he appeals to his friends to take him away:

> ferte per extremas gentis et ferte per undas,
> qua non ulla meum femina norit iter. (1.1.29-30).

The sea voyage for the ancients was an occasion for danger and long absence from home. As a symbol of separation, it captured the imagination of Propertius, allowing him to expand and enhance the sea of love figure. One of the most compelling mythological exempla early in the first book is that of the abandoned Ariadne sleeping on the deserted shore while her treacherous lover sails away on his ship:

Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina
   languida desertis Cnosia litoribus   (1.3.1-2)

The above lines are an allusion to Catullus 64.249-50 – *quae tum prospectans cedentem maesta carinam* – a poem in which Catullus himself avails of the sea of love figure in his portrayal of Ariadne's distraught state of mind: *qualibus incensam iactastis mente puellam / fluctibus.* (97-98).

In the two *propemptika* by Propertius which involve a journey across the sea, the sea is more than simply a conventional ingredient of these elegies and its symbolic importance looms large. Propertius 1.6 is, in fact, a *propemptikon* within a *propemptikon*. Propertius employs the rhetorician Menander's type 3 variant of the 'genre' in his address to Tullus, which is that of an inferior to a superior with encomium as its distinguishing characteristic.[27] But within this he inserts another variant of *propemptikon* – that of equal to equal (Menander's type 2). This is his narration of Cynthia's imagined reaction to his hypothetical departure with Tullus and consists entirely of *schetliasmos*: she will utter pleas and threats; she will abuse him and scratch her face with frantic fingers. Propertius' inevitable yielding to this *schetliasmos* is his excuse for not accompanying his friend. But within this skilful manipulation of conventional ingredients the sea is the medium of potential separation of Propertius from Cynthia, and from his vocation as a love elegist.

This role of the sea adumbrated in 1.6 is consolidated in the *propemptikon* of 1.8, in which Cynthia's yielding to Propertius' *schetliasmos* mirrors the situation in 1.6. Cynthia is proposing to go across the sea with a rival, but in this elegy the sea is more than simply the means of separation between two lovers: Propertius paints a graphic picture of the stormy and dangerous sea voyage for Cynthia:

tune audire potes vesani murmura ponti
   fortis, et in dura nave iacere potes?   (1.8.5-6)

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[27] So Cairns (1972) 1-6. I use the inverted commas for 'genres' in order to differentiate Cairns' use of the term from the more usual broader categories, such as elegy, epic, etc.

Equally powerful is the image of the overwrought Propertius left abandoned on the lonely shore crying out like an Ariadne for his beloved:

> et me defixum vacua patiatur in ora
> crudelem infesta saepe vocare manu! (1.8.15-16).

The portrayal of his love affair as a stormy sea voyage itself is strongly evoked by these lines, and the scene on the desolated shore is, as we shall see below, a version of the quintessentially Propertian setting for the abject elegiac lover who cries out into the wilderness.

The strongly conventional framework of these two *propemptika* prepares us for the "shipwreck" elegy 1.17, which I quote in full here:

> Et merito, quoniam potui fugisse puellam,
> nunc ego desertas alloquor alcyonas.
> nec mihi Cassiope solito visura carinam,
> omniaque ingrato litora vota cadunt.
> quin etiam absenti prosunt tibi, Cynthia, venti:
> aspice, quam saevas increpat aura minas.
> nullane placatae veniet fortuna procellae?
> haecine parva meum funus harena teget?
> tu tamen in melius saevas converte querelas;
> sat tibi sit poenae nox et iniqua vada.
> an poteris siccis mea fata reposcere ocellis
> ossaque nulla tuo nostra tenere sinu?
> a pereat, quicumque rates et vela paravit
> primus et invito gurgite fecit iter!
> nonne fuit levius dominae pervincere mores
> (quamvis dura, tamen rara puella fuit)
> quam sic ignotis circumdata litora silvis
> cernere et optatos quaerere Tyndaridas?
> illic si qua meum sepelissent fata dolorem,
> ultimus et posito staret amore lapis,
> illa meo caros donasset funere crines,
> molliter et tenera poneret ossa rosa;
> illa meum extremo clamasset pulvere nomen,
> ut mihi non ullo pondere terra foret.
> at vos, aequoreae formosa Doride natae,

> candida felici solvite vela choro:
> si quando vestras labens Amor attigit undas,
> mansuetis socio parcite litoribus.

In this poem we have most of the ingredients of the sea of love figure as they appeared in earlier poetry: winds, storms, treacherous shallows, and death by drowning, and all of this is combined with the yearning for a ritual funeral overseen by Cynthia, which is reminiscent of the sepulchral epigram. If we are tempted to believe that Propertius is here recording a real event in his life, we only have to look backwards at the Greek literary tradition to realize that once again he has constructed his elegy according to the requirements of a conventional formula: that of the inverse *epibaterion*.[28] The rhetorician Menander prescribed the key ingredients for the *epibaterion*, a speech which a traveller makes on arrival either at his home or somewhere else: the speaker is well-disposed towards such a place; he has been longing for this arrival; he describes the beauty of the place; he expresses his delight at having arrived; he says how painful it was for him not to be there; he compliments both the place and the people. The inverse *epibaterion*, in which the sentiments are the opposite to those of the *epibaterion*, is a variation of the 'genre', and, as such, the rhetoricians did not provide an inventory of the requisite ingredients and so we must look to literary precedent instead. Cairns has shown that the earliest extant exemplar of inverse *epibaterion* is in Homer, *Od.* 5.299-312 and that there are strong parallels between this and 1.17:

> “ὤ μοι ἐγὼ δειλός, τί νύ μοι μήκιστα γένηται;
> δείδω μὴ δὴ πάντα θεὰ νημερτέα εἶπεν,
> ἥ μ' ἔφατ' ἐν πόντῳ, πρὶν πατρίδα γαῖαν ἱκέσθαι,
> ἄλγε' ἀναπλήσειν· τὰ δὲ δὴ νῦν πάντα τελεῖται.
> οἵοισιν νεφέεσσι περιστέφει οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν
> Ζεύς, ἐτάραξε δὲ πόντον, ἐπισπέρχουσι δ' ἄελλαι
> παντοίων ἀνέμων· νῦν μοι σῶς αἰπὺς ὄλεθρος.
> τρὶς μάκαρες Δαναοὶ καὶ τετράκις, οἳ τότ' ὄλοντο
> Τροίῃ ἐν εὐρείῃ, χάριν Ἀτρεΐδῃσι φέροντες.
> ὡς δὴ ἐγώ γ' ὄφελον θανέειν καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν
> ἤματι τῷ ὅτε μοι πλεῖστοι χαλκήρεα δοῦρα
> Τρῶες ἐπέρριψαν περὶ Πηλεΐωνι θανόντι.
> τῶ κ' ἔλαχον κτερέων, καί μευ κλέος ἦγον Ἀχαιοί·
> νῦν δέ με λευγαλέῳ θανάτῳ εἵμαρτο ἁλῶναι.

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[28] So Cairns (1972) 63-66.

> "Poor wretch that I am, what will become of me after all? I fear that the goddess prophesied all too well when she told me I should have my full measure of misery on the sea before I reached my native land. Every word she said is coming true. At Zeus' command the whole sky is heavy with clouds, the sea is seething, squalls from every quarter hurtle together. There is nothing for me now but sudden death. Three and four times blest are those countrymen of mine who fell long ago on the broad plains of Troy in loyal service to the sons of Atreus. If only I too could have met my fate and died the day the Trojan hordes let fly at me with their bronze spears over Achilles' corpse! I should at least have had my burial rites and the Achaeans would have spread my fame abroad. But now it seems I was predestined to an ignoble death.[29]

Odysseus' plight differs from that of Propertius in that his situation is shipwreck at sea, whereas our poet has been tossed up on a deserted beach. Both, however, bewail their fate (*Od.* 299, Prop. 1-4); Odysseus remembers Calypso's prophecy (v.300) and Propertius remembers Cynthia's anger (vv. 5-6); Odysseus describes the stormy weather and the fact that Zeus is against him (v.303) just as Propertius describes his own stormy conditions and laments that his prayers are useless (vv.4-6); Odysseus sees death as inevitable (vv.306-7) while Propertius anticipates the possibility of his own (vv.8 and 11-12); Odysseus' envious blessings on those who died at Troy (v.306-7) are matched *e contrario* by Propertius' curse on the inventor of ships and sailing (v.13); Odysseus' wish that he had died there and received proper burial from his comrades (vv.308-12) equates with Propertius' depiction of Cynthia at his own funeral rites had he died at Rome (vv.19-24).

It is thus clear that Propertius has employed a conventional scaffold for his elegy. But the question must be asked why Propertius creates this artificial dramatic setting for himself. One answer may lie in that request to his friends in the first poem to take him far away from Cynthia (vv.29-30). Foreign travel was a popular recommendation as a remedy for madness, as well as being a standard one for lovers, as shown by the frequency with which it appeared in comedy.[30] Cicero also recommends it for lovers who are not of sound mind: *loci denique mutatione aegroti non convalescentes saepe curandus est.*[31] For Propertius, this proposed remedy facilitates some highly dramatic settings in a number of elegies, most particularly 1.17 and 1.18, which are both extended dramatizations of this desperate measure adumbrated

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[29] Translated by E.V.Rieu (1946) 78-9.

[30] See, for example, Plautus *Merc.* 644ff; Terence *Ad.* 274-275; *Heaut.* 117.

[31] Cicero *Tusc.* 4.74.

in 1.1.29 and exemplify the typically Propertian elegiac pose of crying into the wilderness: 1.17 depicts him as having gone *per undas* only to end up shipwrecked on a lonely shore, while in 1.18 the setting is a rural wilderness far from home, suggesting that he has this time gone *per gentes*. They are two sides of the same coin in that they are both enactments of the proposed *remedium* of 1.1.29.

Solmsen, writing in 1962 before Cairns' monumental "Generic Composition in Greek and Latin Poetry", wisely cast doubt on the biographical truth of 1.17, pointing out that in a later elegy (3.21), when our poet proposes a voyage to Athens in order to forget Cynthia (yet another instance of the dramatization of 1.1.29), he declares that he has no experience of the Aegean Sea and makes no allusion to any previous disastrous voyage such as described in 1.17.[32] He sees a thematic connection between 1.16, 1.17 and 1.18 in that they are all elegies of separation and solitude and concludes that the function of the shipwreck and storm in 1.17 is symbolic: the wind behaves towards Propertius in the same way as Cynthia does, and is thus symbolic of her anger; the lonely shore represents Propertius' solitude; the misfortune of the shipwreck equates with Propertius' tempestuous love affair.

Fedeli rejects such conclusions on the basis of Cairns' findings, maintaining that there is no room for such emotional subjectivity in a poem which he believes is essentially a complex play of allusions to, and variations and imitations of poetic models.[33] But such a conclusion is too reductive, in my view. Propertius has clearly drawn from his literary sources, but that does not necessarily mean that the elegy is merely an engagement with such sources *tout court* and it still does not satisfactorily explain why he chooses to depict himself as shipwrecked on a deserted shore. Cairns has recently suggested that a Hellenistic model lies behind this elegy, mediated to Propertius by Gallus.[34] Be that as it may, I believe that Propertius chose this setting in order to enact the proposed remedy in the prologue to the collection, for so entrenched is the sea of love figure in his literary tradition, that it is never far from his mind, and that the proposed sea voyage is therefore based on a fundamental view of the elegiac lover as not just a slave of love, or even a soldier of love, but also a sailor of love.

Papanghelis recognizes the symbolic possibilities in 1.17, noting that drowning at sea was such a universal *bête noire* to the ancients that it understandably became a meaningful

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[32] Solmsen (1962) 73-88.

[33] Fedeli (1980) 399-401.

[34] Cairns (2006) 210-212. He proposes this in view of the possibility that 1.18 is modelled on a Gallan poem, in which Gallus may have reworked Callimachus'' Acontius and Cydippe *aetion*. He therefore thinks it is plausible that Callimachus lies behind Gallus' proposed earlier version of Prop. 1.17, and that the myth may have been that of Ceyx and Alcyone.

metaphor for extreme adversity in life and further proposes that "the essential originality of 1.17 resides in the promotion of a static and fanciful trope to the status of an imaginative and dynamic whole. To put it otherwise: it dramatizes a metaphor."[35] Papanghelis makes no mention of Cairns' 'genres'. Nevertheless, I think he is also close to the truth. Propertius was clearly, as Cairns has shown, working within the literary tradition of inverse *epibaterion*. But the sea of love figure is also another part of his literary tradition, and it is reasonable to conjecture that Propertius was drawing from both of these strands, and that 1.17, besides being an allusive and self-conscious literary imitation of a composite of models, is also a skilful exploitation of the symbolic possibilities offered by the sea of love figure.

There is room, therefore, for Solmsen, Papanghelis and Cairns to be simultaneously correct in their analyses of this poem. The form and subject matter of the elegy is clearly conventional, but this does not preclude the possibility of its having symbolic undertones. What they have perhaps not recognized is that on a very fundamental level, Propertius relates his elegiac love to the sea voyage. This is implicitly suggested in 1.1.29, where it is the possible means of escape from Cynthia, and in his last love elegy, his *renuntiatio amoris* (3.24), he explicitly equates his now defunct love affair with a tempestuous sea voyage in which he was once a *naufragus* (v.12) but finally he has crossed the treacherous sandbanks and safely reached harbour (v.16). Propertius has therefore taken the sea of love figure and in 1.17 expanded it to such an extent that he obscures the boundary between the literal and the metaphorical. In the elegy he depicts himself as the lover lamenting in the wilderness; but that inhospitable setting, and the shipwreck that has supposedly delivered him there, are metaphorical for his state of mind. There are really two separate but related symbolic contexts in play here: the sea voyage as the age-old metaphor for the love affair, so conventional as to be somewhat under erasure in the poem, and the sea voyage standing for separation, which is a recurrent concern for the elegiac lover. He has extended the sea of love figure from its more usual superficial and ornamental role to be fundamental to the entire elegy.

Before the *renuntiatio amoris* we also have 3.21, in which Propertius is again proposing an enactment of the remedy suggested in 1.1.29-30. Propertius is proposing to go to Athens to escape from Cynthia, and in this elegy he again appeals to the *amici* of 1.1:

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[35] Papanghelis (1987) 99.

nunc agite, o socii, propellite in aequora navem,
   remorumque pares ducite sorte vices,
iungiteque extremo felicia lintea malo:
   iam liquidum nautis aura secundat iter.
Romanae turres et vos valeatis, **amici**,
   qualiscumque mihi tuque, puella, vale!
ergo ego nunc rudis Hadriaci vehar aequoris hospes,
   cogar et undisonos nunc prece adire deos.
deinde per Ionium vectus cum fessa Lechaeo
   sedarit placida vela phaselus aqua,
quod superest, suffere, pedes, properate laborem,
   Isthmos qua terris arcet utrumque mare. (3.21.11-22)

As already mentioned above, Propertius describes himself as a new guest of the Adriatic, and a later section of this thesis will explore the metapoetic connotations of a voyage to Greece.[36] For now, however, it is enough to observe that Propertius once again regards his love affair in terms of the sea voyage. In this elegy the stormy waters that he envisages on the journey are not symbolic of the love affair but of his distraught state of mind. In fact the *phaselus* which he imagines sailing can be seen as a metaphor for himself, much in the same way as Meleager depicted the lover in *A.P.* 5.190 and 12.157. Moreover, the safe harbour that he looks forward to is also reminiscent of the Hellenistic epigrams, as well as Horace's *Ode* 1.5. This time Propertius envisages that the remedy will be effective:

aut spatia annorum aut longa intervalla profundi
   lenibunt tacito vulnera nostra sinu (31-32)

A few elegies later, the recovery appears to be complete.

In contrast to voluntary separation, the anxiety of involuntary separation, articulated in the *propemptika* of 1.6 and 1.8, rears its head again in the first 20 lines of 2.26, commonly regarded as 2.26A:

Vidi te in somnis fracta, mea vita, carina
   Ionio lassas ducere rore manus,
et quaecumque in me fueras mentita fateri,
   nec iam umore gravis tollere posse comas,
qualem purpureis agitatam fluctibus Hellen,

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[36] See below, pp. 207-9.

aurea quam molli tergore vexit ovis.
quam timui, ne forte tuum mare nomen haberet,
teque tua labens navita fleret aqua!
quae tum ego Neptuno, quae tum cum Castore fratri,
quaeque tibi excepi, iam dea, Leucothoe!
at tu vix primas extollens gurgite palmas
saepe meum nomen iam peritura vocas.
quod si forte tuos vidisset Glaucus ocellos,
esses Ionii facta puella maris,
et tibi ob invidiam Nereides increpitarent,
candida Nesaee, caerula Cymothoe.
sed tibi subsidio delphinum currere vidi,
qui, puto, Arioniam vexerat ante lyram.
iamque ego conabar summo me mittere saxo,
cum mihi discussit talia visa metus.

This elegy appears to be a fantasy of Cynthia's vulnerability. She is shipwrecked, on the verge of drowning, and calling upon Propertius to save her. We will revisit this elegy at a later stage, as it may sustain important metapoetic interpretation.[37] But the setting evokes 1.17 and invites a level of interpretation along similar lines. This poem differs from 1.17 in that there is no pretence at reality here: the poet is recounting a nightmare. The similarity, however, arises from the fact that the poet makes the setting symbolic of his state of mind, although this time it is completely obvious, since it is well recognized that nightmares are in fact expressions of our unconscious anxieties and preoccupations, and the vision of Cynthia drowning at sea is a predictable analogue for an elegiac lover's erotic agitation.[38] Here, Propertius has innovatively manipulated the Sea of Love figure by transferring the drowning to the beloved rather than the lover, because he is indulging in the impossible fantasy that their roles are reversed. Nevertheless, the anxiety of separation is fundamental to the elegy, as demonstrated by the *metus* in v.20 which was so powerful as to wake him up, presumably in the way we all emerge from a nightmare in a state of extreme agitation.

Murgatroyd rejected the notion that 1.17 contains the sea of love figure without giving any reason for such a stance, and he omits discussion of any other whole poems with a strong

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[37] See below, pp. 187-193.

[38] Lucretius expounds on this in *DRN* 4.962-1036, where he states our dreams are filled with those things that most preoccupy the waking mind.

marine content.[39] It is somewhat surprising that he was unwilling to read such poems in terms of an expansion of the figure, much in the way that he viewed how the elegists in general expanded the other two figures of *militia amoris* and *servitium amoris.*[40] I would venture to suggest, *pace* Murgatroyd, that the symbolic values of the sea and sailing in relation to love were so hackneyed and exhausted by Propertius' time that he avoided their most straightforward applications, but that their presence was so embedded in the literature that they exist implicitly, under erasure throughout the genre of love elegy. It is on this implicit platform that Propertius extends the symbolic possibilities of the sea in relation to his love affair. It is a given that it is a dangerous and lethal analogue for his love affair, for Cynthia's anger, for his passion and for his spiritual turmoil. But, most importantly, it is also for Propertius a vast *limen* that separates him from his beloved, whether he wishes it to or not. By the end of Book 3, we see that the poet has crossed this *limen*, this boundary, to reach the safe haven of sanity. The anxiety of separation from Cynthia that pervades the love elegies is thus finally overcome, but the liminal potential of the sea is, as we shall see, what particularly engages the symbolic imagination of the poet.

II

Water and Death.

The importance of the theme of death in Propertian elegy is revealed in the large number of words relating to it throughout the corpus, second only to words about love. Foulon provides us with a thorough account: 27 occurrences of *mors*, 6 of *caedes*, 4 of *letum*, 29 of *perire*, 11 of *mori*, 24 of *funus*, 12 of *rogus*, 12 of *bustum,* 6 each of *exsequiae* and *tumulus,* 12 of *cinis*, and 8 of *pulvis*. There are also 37 references to *ossa* and 22 to *umbra.*[41] The prevalence of this theme can partly be explained by its prominence in the genre's literary ancestors. A high proportion of literary epigrams are derivations or reproductions of the funerary epigram, conceived originally as tombstone inscriptions. The death theme became a

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[39] Murgatroyd (1995) 19 n.35: "I cannot agree with those critics who maintain that the figure is present in Hor. *Carm.* 1.14 or Prop.1.17."

[41] Foulon (1996) 155. He states at the end of his paper (p.167) that "il nous semble possible de parler d'une veritable obsession de la mort chez Properce".

characteristic feature of Hellenistic literary epigram in general, and was not confined merely to those categorized as sepulchral, such as those in the seventh book of the Greek Anthology.[42] The erotic epigrams also contain many references to death and the Underworld, most of which are examples of the *carpe diem* motif: love is for the living, as death is the end of everything.[43] One epigram by Meleager (*AP* 5.204) conflates love and death insofar as the poet describes the aging Timo as a clapped out old ship, and by extension, any voyage on her resembles the Final Voyage across the lake of Acheron. Some epigrams from the late 6th century AD by Paullus Silentarius treat such themes as dying together (*A.P.* 5.221) and dying of love (*A.P.* 5.246), but whether these are imitations of now lost Hellenistic epigrams, or inspired by later poets such as Propertius is impossible to say, although the former is more likely, since a common ancestor for both Propertius and Paullus Silentarius has been posited for some poems in the Propertian oeuvre.[44]

The other literary ancestor which became associated with the theme of death is Greek elegy. Bowie's illuminating paper challenges West's theory that some early Greek elegy was lamentatory.[45] From the scant evidence (a mere 3,000 extant lines, of which only 1,400 come in the direct MS tradition), Bowie reduces West's proposed eight sets of circumstances for the performance of early Greek elegy to merely two: symposium and public performance. In the decade before 415 BC however, he argues that the term *elegos* acquired the sense of "sung lament", for two reasons: firstly, because the elegiac couplet was used for sepulchral epigrams; and secondly, because, according to the interest in etymology that was in vogue at that time, there emerged the hypothesis that the word *elegos* was derived from ἐ ἐ λέγειν. Euripides' choice of the elegiac metre for Andromache's lament (*Andr.* 103-116) in 425 BC is good evidence of the currency of the theory. As far as Propertian elegy is concerned, however, it matters little how much archaic Greek elegy was associated with death. What is important is that by Hellenistic times, the association was there, as sympotic elegy and epigram became conflated in the anthologies of the time, and, significantly for Propertius, the popular sympotic theme of love merged with that of death, the legacy of the tombstone inscriptions.

This accounts for some of the pervasiveness of the Love-Death theme in Propertius, but it does not wholly explain why, for Propertius more than any other elegist, death in

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[42] For a concise and thorough history of Greek epigram, see Gutzwiller (1998).

[43] eg. *AP*5.12 (Ruf.); 5.85 (Asclep.); 5.193 (Diosc.); 5.204 (Mel.); 5.221 (Paul. Sil.); 5.239 (Paul. Sil.); 5.246 (Paul. Sil.); 5.30 (Antip. of Thess.); 5.38 (Nich.); 5.53 (Diosc.); 12.50 (Asclep.); 12.74 (Mel.).

[44] eg, Prop. 1.2 and 1.3. See Fedeli (1980) 91 and 114.

[45] Bowie (1986) 13-35. West (1972)10-13.

general is a leitmotif running throughout his work. One explanation is that the theme is well suited for this poet whose susceptibility to impressions and the highly pictorial nature of his imagination have been well documented. Horace's doctrine of *ut pictura poesis* applies to Propertian elegy perhaps more than to any other Augustan poetry. He displays a clear interest in, and knowledge of, painting and sculpture, and there is a strong tendency in his poetry to suggest scenes from these forms of pictorial art. Hubbard compares Propertius' imagination with that of Vergil: Vergil's vivid descriptions form a logical part of his narrative, whereas those of Propertius are more disconnected.[46] Benediktson refers to Propertius' "imagist style", whereby "images rather than rational argument are the main source of semantic transfer."[47] Propertius appears to think with his senses, rather than his mind.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Propertius has a fascination with the funeral. This was obviously an important and recurring theme in elegy in general, but for Propertius it assumes an importance that sets him apart from the other elegists. Granted, the Romans and Greeks attached great importance to the funerary ritual and had a horror of dying without proper burial, a fear articulated more than once by Propertius.[48] But Propertius seems to revel in the visualization of his own funeral, as well as providing vivid details of those of other people.[49] In these tableaux, the elements of fire and earth feature most significantly. On several occasions he regards his physical remains as dust and bones, the residue of the funeral pyres. In 1.19.5-6 he will be dust with a memory.

> non adeo leviter nostris puer haesit ocellis,
> ut meus oblito pulvis amore vacet.

And further on in the same elegy he makes reference to his cremated remains.

> quae tu viva mea possis sentire favilla! (v. 19).

He is again dust in 2.13.35.

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[46] Hubbard (1974) 164-5. On the pictorial nature of Propertius' imagination, she states: "The imagination of Propertius is limited by the scope of the painter or the sculptor; but everything goes to show that within this limit it was more liberally nourished by acquaintance with, and indeed knowledge of, painting and sculpture than any other Augustan poet, so much so indeed that the images of nature unmodified by a painter's skill make little appearance in his work" (p.164).

[47] Benediktson (1989) 103-116.

[48] As, for instance: *haecine parva meum funus harena teget?* (1.17.8); *Paetum sponte tua, vilis harena, tegas* (3.7.26) and *at mater non iusta piae dare debita terrae / nec pote cognates inter humare rogos* (3.7.9-10).

[49] See, for instance, 2.13.17-34 in relation to Propertius, and 4.7.23-34, in relation to Cynthia.

...........qui nunc iacet horrida pulvis

And in 2.8.19-20 he accuses Cynthia of being capable of trampling on his pyre and his burned out bones.

exagitet nostros Manis, sectetur et umbras,
insultetque rogis, calcet et ossa mea!

He refers again to his bones in 3.16.28-9 in wishing for a secluded resting place.

me tegat arborea devia terra coma,
aut humer ignotae cumulis vallatus harenae

And in 4.7.93-4 Cynthia provides us with the macabre scene of their physical union in death.

nunc te possideant aliae: mox sola tenebo:
mecum eris, et mixtis ossibus ossa teram.

Finally, even Cornelia in 4.11.14 is preoccupied by the exiguousness of her mortal remains after the funeral fires.

en sum, quod digitis quinque legatur, onus.

Propertius is attracted by the melodramatic scenario of the funeral and the physical acts of cremation and burial are strong images for a poet of such emotional and pictorial sensibilities. He wallows in the unlikely notion of a grief-stricken Cynthia weeping over his grave as it is all part of the *perire amore* motif that runs through the love elegies. His devotion to Cynthia is total and permanent, he will love her until his death and he would like to believe that she will reciprocate in the same way.[50]

Propertius' mortal remains, however, are only half the story. His imagination is equally stimulated by scenes from the Underworld, and it is here that the elements of fire and earth are replaced by water in symbolic importance. The watery regions of the Underworld are such a marked feature of Propertian elegy that Delatte concluded that the poet had a

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[50] See, for instance, 1.17.19-24. On the motif of *perire amore* in Propertius, see Baker (1970) 670-98, who argues that the term does not so much denote the anguish of unrequited love (as interpreted by Quinn (1963) 182-7) as the *fides* by which he binds himself to Cynthia, according to which he professes to love her up until and beyond his death.

"Charon complex", a literary complex identified by Bachelard in his book on water and dreams.[51] Bachelard argues that the popularity of the imagery of the Waters of Death and their crossing in human culture can easily be explained by the natural workings of the unconscious mind. The image of the infernal ferryman is now a faded metaphor, but its hackneyed status proves that it has served the diverse imaginations of generations of mankind as an apt reflection of their subconscious attitudes towards death.

Besides being an indispensable part of the metaphor of the Voyage of Death, water is the ultimate symbolic element: earth turns to dust; fire to ashes; but water evaporates completely. It is only through water that we can comprehend the loss of our being in terms of total dispersion. For a sensual poet such as Propertius, the infernal waters offer irresistible poetic possibilities. I will show that his preoccupation with death, rather than being cerebral, abstract, or philosophical, is sensual and dramatically visual. It is inextricably linked with his *perire amore* motif and at times he conflates the Sea of Love imagery with that of the Voyage of Death, resulting in a rich complexity of aesthetic and sensual symbolism.

Some Conventional Motifs:

(a) Washing the Dead.

A recurring image in Propertian elegy is that of the dead lover being bathed by his weeping beloved, a scene that obviously appeals to the melodramatic sensibilities of the poet. The devotion displayed by such an action is what he would like to receive from Cynthia. In 2.9A. he laments the fickleness of his mistress, and compares her to examples of feminine loyalty and fidelity from mythology, firstly Penelope's loyal procrastinations with her loom, and then Briseis' grief over Achilles' corpse:

> et dominum lavit maerens captiva cruentum
> propositum flavis in Simoente vadis. (2.9.11-12).

As we have seen, when Propertius contemplates his death, the other scenario to which he regularly turns, is that of his funeral.[52] He regularly indulges in an unrealistic fantasy of

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[51] Delatte (1967) 54; Bachelard (1973)301-20.

[52] See, for example, 1.7.23-24; 1.17.19-24; 1.19.21-24; 2.13; 2.24.35-38; 3.13.15-24; 3.16.27-30.

Cynthia's distraught behaviour at such a funeral, savouring a vision of her unlikely faithful ministrations at his tomb. In 2.13 Propertius once again anticipates his own death, and meticulously prescribes the arrangements for his funeral, which is to be simple but dominated by visible displays of Cynthia's grief. He selects Venus as the model for his grieving mistress and again depicts this paragon of feminine devotion washing the corpse of her lover (Adonis) in the marshes.

illis formosum lavisse paludibus, illuc
  diceris effusa tu, Venus, isse coma.[53] (2.13.55-6)

Most importantly, perhaps, an interesting variation of this topos occurs in 2.34. 91-92, where Propertius portrays Gallus as having died from love of Lycoris, and depicts him as washing his own wounds in the Underworld.

et modo formosa quam multa Lycoride Gallus
  mortuus inferna vulnera lavit aqua!

Gallus, of course, died from suicide as a result of his public fall from grace, but Propertius is taking a liberty here and enacting the *perire amore* motif. This is possibly a Gallan conceit, since Vergil portrays Gallus in the Tenth *Eclogue* as dying from love: *indigno cum Gallus amore peribat* (v.10). Moreover, in those poems of the *Monobiblos* which are addressed to Gallus, there is a suggestion of the same motif. In 1.5.5-6, Gallus, who is in danger of falling in love with Cynthia, is risking the fate of poison: *et bibere e tota toxica Thessalia*. In 1.10.5, Propertius claims that he has seen Gallus *morientem* in the embrace of his new mistress, and in 1.13.33-35, in his role of *praeceptor amoris*, Propertius advises Gallus: *tu vero quoniam semel es periturus amore, / utere: non alio limine dignus eras.* Gallus may have been encouraged to develop this motif in response to the prevailing taste at the time for *Liebestod* in mythological love stories, as reflected by Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata,* a handbook of such stories which the author dedicated to Gallus as a useful tool for his poetry.

If Gallus is indeed the source of this motif, it is fitting that he should be depicted as washing his own wounds in the infernal waters, and the couplet evokes both Briseis (2.9A.11-12) and Venus (2.13.55-56) washing their dead lovers in the river. Enk suggested

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[53] Here I depart from the Fedeli text, which opts for the more usual *formosus iacuisse paludibus,* in favour of the above, which appears in the *codex* Perusinus, and is favoured by more recent commentators, such as Heyworth. Fedeli (2006) 410 notes that v.56 has been recognized as a possible allusion to Bion's Lament to Adonis. See also Papanghelis (1989) 67.

that Propertius is alluding to a line by Euphorion: Κώκυτος <τοι> μοῦνος ἀφ ἕλκεα νίψέ ῞Αδωνιν, “Cocytus alone washed off the wounds of Adonis.”[54] Cairns has argued that in fact Propertius is alluding to a line by Gallus himself, which is modelled on a Parthenian imitation of Euphorion.[55] The fact that Gallus is washing his own wounds may also be a subtle reference to the fact that he died by his own hand. Whether or not Gallus invented the *perire amore* motif, it is of fundamental importance in Propertian love elegy, and is adumbrated in the very first poem of the *Monobiblos*, in which he mentions for the first time the incurable sickness that assails his heart, and asks for help from his friends (v.25-26): *aut vos, qui sero lapsum revocatis, amici, / quaerite non sani pectoris auxilia.* Any hope that there may exist a remedy for his passion is soon dispelled, for besides the references to the motif mentioned above in relation to Gallus, there are several other examples. In 1.6.27, in a poem addressed to Tullus, Propertius wishes to be included in the category of those who *multi longinquo* ***periere in amore*** *libenter*; in 1.9.34, as *praeceptor amoris*, he advises Ponticus: *dicere quo* ***pereas*** *saepe* ***in amore*** *levat;* in 1.4.12 he tells Bassus that Cynthia’s beauty is the least part of his *furor* for her, for *sunt maiora, quibus, Basse,* ***perire*** *iuvat*; in 2.1.47 he proclaims that *laus* ***in amore mori***, and then in vv.53-4 refers to the witches’ sorcery that will bring about his ruin: *seu mihi Circaeo* ***pereundums****t gramine, sive / Colchis Iolciacis urat aena focis.* It is perhaps significant that here he avails of two metaphors with chthonic associations. In the *Odyssey,* it is Circe who tells Odysseus that he must go to Hades; and it has been suggested that the voyage of the Argonauts to Colchis at the end of the world may well be a reference to the land of the dead.[56] Finally there is the reference already noted in 2.27.11, which is less of a euphemism and more of a direct allusion to dying from love: *solus* ***amans*** *novit quando* ***periturus*** *et a qua* ***morte***. It is clear, therefore, that death is not only a part of his love affair, but it can also be regarded as synonymous with his love affair, or indeed, as Papanghelis tentatively suggests, as a metaphor for love.[57]

Another motif that is being enacted here is that of Lament by Water. The prototypes for this motif are both Achilles’ complaints to his mother (*Il.* 1.347ff and 18.35ff) and Odysseus’ weeping alone on Calypso’s isle (*Od.* 5.151ff). In Hellenistic literature there is Cyclops in Theocritus 11.13-14, and both Cyclops and Orpheus in Hermesianax (fr. 1.P and fr. 7.8 P), and in Latin literature Propertius is preceded by the lament by Ariadne on the shore

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[54] Fr.43 Powell. Enk (1962) 465.

[55] Cairns (2006) 81 n.56. He bases his argument on Lightfoot’s suggestion that Parthenius is “highly likely” to have treated Adonis (Lightfoot (1999) 183).

[56] Clark (1978) 34-6.

[57] Papanghelis (1987) 211: “some metaphors are less ‘metaphorical’ than others.”

of Naxos in Catullus 64, which occurs three times in the narrative, and laments by both Aristaeus (once) and Orpheus (twice) in the Fourth *Georgic.*[58] There is also Apollo's lament by the Eurotas in the Sixth Eclogue.[59] Its popularity in Augustan poetry suggests that it too occurred in Gallus, particularly since he is portrayed by Vergil in the Sixth *Eclogue* as wandering by the Permessus (*tum canit errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum,* v.64) and here by Propertius as washing his love wounds in the infernal waters. Propertius assimilates this motif into the rhetorical apparatus of love elegy and avails of it most particularly in 1.17, where he laments on a lonely shore in the Upper World, but it is an equally appropriate image for the Underworld.

(b) Burial Near Water

In 3.16 Propertius returns to the sentiment expressed in 2.13 and indulges in the romantic tableau of his own funeral. He depicts Cynthia as bringing unguents and garlands of flowers to his tomb, over which she sits as a devoted guardian, and he appears to be assigning a space for his burial near the sea: an unmarked mound as an alternative to a place covered by leafy trees.

> me tegat arborea devia terra coma
> aut humer ignotae cumulis vallatus harenae (3.16..28-29)

These lines are cited by Delatte as further evidence of Propertius' 'Charon complex', but his translation is misleading: "I should like my body to be buried under a sandhill, on an unknown shore", whereas in the original Latin –"enclosed in a mound of unknown sand" – there is no mention of a shore, even if the sand does suggest it. Moreover, he omits to mention the alternative *aut* which suggests that the leafy trees are an alternative appropriate setting for his grave.[60] The irresistible conclusion is that what Propertius is really after here is seclusion (and the Callimachean undertones are obvious), and that a maritime situation is not a compulsory requirement.

Propertius again displays his propensity to blur the boundary, or *limen*, between love and death in 4.7.85-6, where Cynthia's self-prescribed epitaph places her tomb by the banks of the Anio, thus confusing her infernal littoral habitat with her final resting place in the Upper World by the banks of another river.

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[58] Catullus 64. 60ff; 124ff; 249ff and Vergil *Geo.* 4.317ff; 464ff and 508ff. For Vergil's debt to Catullus in these lines, see Crabbe (1977) 342-351.

[59] Virg. *Ecl.*6. 83-4.

[60] Delatte (1967) 56.

hic Tiburtina iacet aurea Cynthia terra:
accessit ripae laus, Aniene, tuae.

She instructs Propertius to burn the poems he has composed in her honour and set up this tombstone for her instead. The result, of course, is that Cynthia is immortalized in triplicate: by the epitaph, by the poem, and by the entire *oeuvre*.

(c) Death by Drowning.

There are several poems in the corpus in which the general theme of death by drowning occurs, some of which we have already discussed in the first section of this chapter. Although it is only beginning to evolve in the closing poems of Book 1, this motif, in the form of a *Liebestod*, is a more developed feature of Propertian elegy in Book 2. Its relative absence in Book 1 may be explained by the book's distinct addressee and dramatic scenario format. From the second book onwards, Propertius adopts a more internal rhetorical approach. His poems are not addressed to specific individuals, and they are not always a response to a particular fictional situation, allowing him to indulge in reflections and fantasies, as evidenced by 26A and 26C.

Liebestod aside, however, Propertius also relates the story of Hylas, who drowns in a spring as the victim of amorous nymphs, in 1.20, a poem which we shall revisit in greater detail in a metapoetic context. This story was already popular in Latin and Greek poetry, so much so that Vergil famously remarked: *cui non dictus Hylas puer?* (*Geo*. 3.6).[61] Theocritus' *Idylls* relate three instances of death by drowning and Segal has pointed out that the parallels between them indicate that Theocritus was drawing on an established *topos*.[62] In *Idylls* 1 and 13, both Daphnis and Hylas drown in a spring, and in *Idyll* 22 Amycus dies beside flowing water. In all three the setting is the numinous one of the *locus amoenus*, whose spring waters have an ambiguous quality. Because of their life-giving properties, they are sacred and symbolize vitality, sexuality and artistic inspiration; they harbour divine and semi-divine beings, including the Muses. But, on the other hand, they are also dangerous and destructive,

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[61] Besides Propertius' version, we have two extant treatments of the myth by Apollonius Rhodius (*Argonautica* 1.1207-1372) and Theocritus (*Idyll* 13). There is good reason to believe that Gallus also composed a version, since Prop. 1.20 is addressed to Gallus and composed in a Hellenizing style very different from his other elegies. On this, see Ross (1975) 74-84.

[62] Segal (1974) 21-38.

as they are for Daphnis and Hylas.[63] They therefore have the power to mediate between life and death, and often represent the *limen* between the two realms. For Propertius, the story of Hylas' death is a mythological paradigm for the attention of his addressee Gallus, who is in danger of losing his lover of the same name if he is not careful. Propertius is here reversing the *perire amore* motif, in that it is not the elegiac lover who is in mortal danger here, but his beloved.

In Book 3 the death of Paetus (3.7) is a death by drowning at sea. Despite the fact that it is not a love elegy, it displays a similar sensibility: Paetus' distress and his lament to the elements are reminiscent of the plaints of the elegiac lover, and the details are luridly graphic: he provides a tasty morsel for the fish (*et nova longinquis piscibus esca natat,* v.8); his nails are torn from their roots (*huic fluctus vivo radicitus abstulit ungues,* v.51); he is about to be dashed against jagged rocks (*ah miser alcyonum scopulis affligar acutis!* v.61). The poem actually shares some verbal parallels with 2.26B, such as a reference to the North wind as ravager of Orithyia, and Neptune, and may well, as Papanghelis has suggested, share the same model as 2.26B.[64] All these horrors serve to deter the poet from ever considering such a foolhardy undertaking (*at tu, saeve Aquilo, numquam mea vela videbis* v.71). Some Lethaean water has seemingly leaked into Propertius' system, however, as 1.17, 2.26B and 3.30A all testify. Propertius is no stranger to the sea, and both escaping across it and dying on it are options for him.

(d) Watery Punishments.

When Propertius does mention Tartarus, he offers the traditional parade of victims of divine punishment, namely Sisyphus, Ixion, Tantalus, Tityus, The Danaids, and Phineus, all under the implacable gaze of Aeacus, Tisiphone, the Furies and Cerberus. However, the appearances are brief and conventional, a blend of those that populate the Underworld of Lucretius, Vergil and Tibullus.

It is worth noting, however, that the character who recurs most often is Tantalus, to whom there is a total of 5 references, 3 of them direct and 2 of them indirect. Tantalus' punishment was famously for him to be set in a pool of water that always receded when he

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[63] On the tension in the *locus amoenus* between the beauty of the setting and the dangers that lurk there in Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* see Hinds (2002) 122-149. See also Segal (1998) 9-41.

[64] 3.7.13: ***Aquilo raptae...Orithyiae*** = 2.26B.51: *crudelen et* ***Borean rapta Orithyia*** *negavit*; 3.7.15: *aut quidnam fracta gaudes,* ***Neptune****, carina?* = 2.26B.46-7: *sed non* ***Neptunus*** *tanto crudeles amori, /* ***Neptunus*** *fratri par in amore Iovi.* Papanghelis (1987)106-7. Elegy 3.7 will be analysed in a metapoetic context in chapter 5.

tried to drink from it, and under fruit trees which similarly perpetually eluded his grasp. The first of the 5 occurrences is an indirect one in 1.9.16, and has been recognised as proverbial:[65]

> insanus medio flumine quaeris aquam

Propertius is addressing Ponticus, who, having fallen in love for the first time, is being urged to set aside his gloomy epic poems about war and compose instead elegy for his new *puella.* The line is enigmatic and relates to Ponticus' new subject matter and thus will be discussed below in relation to Propertius' use of water as a metaphor for his poetry, but the allusion to Tantalus seems clear, even if the meaning is less so.[66] There is no mention of Tantalus' hunger here. Tantalus reappears in 2.1.65-8, along with the Danaids, as a fellow sufferer of agony. Only someone with the power to rid these victims of their punishments could cure Propertius' erotic pangs:

> hoc si quis vitium poterit mihi demere, solus
> Tantaleae poterit tradere poma manu;
> dolia virgineis idem ille repleverit urnis
> ne tenera assidua colla graventur aqua;

This time, Propertius chooses to omit Tantalus' thirst, but this is to balance the watery content of the punishment of the Danaids, condemned forever to fill leaky urns. The remaining three references make no mention of his hunger, and concentrate solely on his thirst. In 2.17.5-6 Cynthia is capable of feeling pity for this victim.

> vel tu Tantalea moveare ad flumina sorte,
> ut liquor arenti fallat ab ore sitim

She is also capable of the same emotion in regard to Sisyphus, but has none for Propertius, whose suffering is comparable. In 3.5.39-46 Propertius clearly evokes Lucretius 3.1003ff when he lists discussion about the existence or not of Tartarus and its inhabitants as a possible topic for his poetry when he is too old to compose love elegy. Tantalus makes an indirect appearance by reference to his thirst:

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[65] Butler and Barber (1933) 167 cite Ovid *Am.* II. ii. 43 *quaerit aquas in aquis.*

[66] Richardson (1976) 176, however, suggests otherwise: "the allusion is not to Tantalus but to the man who does not realise his own good fortune." On the metapoetic connotations of this line, see below, pp. 158-9.

sub terris sint iura deum et tormenta nocentum,
   Tisiphones atro si furit angue caput,
aut Alcmaeoniae furiae aut ieiunia Phinei,
   num rota, num scopuli, **num sitis inter aquas,**
num tribus infernum custodit faucibus antrum
   Cerberus, et Tityo iugera pauca novem,
an ficta in miseras descendit fabula gentis,
   et timor haud ultra quam rogus esse potest.

Finally, Tantalus makes his appearance again in a passage in the final elegy (4.11.19-26), where Cornelia, like Orpheus in *Georgics* 4.482ff, calls upon a selection of inhabitants of the Underworld to cease from their labours and listen to her trial by Aeacus on the conduct of her life above. Once again, the reference is only to his thirst:

aut si quis posita iudex sedet Aeacus urna,
   is mea sortita iudicet ossa pila:
assideant fratres, iuxta et Minoida sellam
   Eumenidum intento turba severa foro.
Sisyphe, mole vaces; taceant Ixionis orbes;
   fallax Tantaleu<s> corripiare ore liquor;
Cerberus et nullas hodie petat improbus umbras;
   et iaceat tacita laxa carena sera.

The other *exemplum* that involves punishment by water is that of the daughters of Danaus. As noted, they appear along with Tantalus in 2.1.67-8. Their punishment is also sought by Cornelia for herself in 4.11.27-8 if she speaks falsely at the aforementioned trial:[67]

ipsa loquar pro me: si fallo[r], poena sororum
   infelix umeros urgeat urna meos.

Hypermestre, the one daughter of Danaus who escaped eternal punishment because she spared her husband also appears in relation to water in 4.7.63 as one of the happy dead heroines being swept by a pleasant breeze along the Stygian waters towards Elysium, recounting the sins of her sisters to her fellow blameless companions. We shall also see in

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[67] On the symbolism of the Danaids in 4.11, see Janan (2001) 156-8. On the Danaids in Augustan poetry, see Harrison (1998) 230-237 who argues that they were appropriated into post-Actian discourse as symbolic of the forces of evil, but that they underwent a sort of rehabilitation at the hands of Vergil, to represent the more tragic side of war.

4.4.15-16 that Tarpeia, as water-collecter, is implicitly portrayed in such a way as to resemble one of the Danaids in the Underworld straining under the burden of her water jar.[68]

All of the victims of punishment in Tartarus are effective analogues for the sufferings of the elegiac lover, and their labours, particularly those involving water, provide arresting visual images for a poet such as Propertius. But they are, for the most part, conventional embellishments, rather than central to the Propertian portrayal of the Lower World.

Navigatio Mortis: The Styx.

When it comes to the River Styx, Propertius can be seen to be operating in a similar way to his treatment of the sea of love figure. As this river was such an established part of the iconography of death by Propertius' time, he is able to build on its embedded presence in elegy and extend its symbolic possibilities. Thus, as we did with the sea of love, we find again two symbolic applications of the Styx in his poetry: on the one hand, it operates as a synecdoche for death, a convention that arose as a result of its long presence in the collective minds of the ancients; and on the other, just like the sea in the Upper World, it operates as an agent of separation. This time, however, as the final *limen*, it is infinitely more sinister and threatening.

(a) A Synecdoche for death:

In 2.9.25-26, Propertius refers to a recent illness from which Cynthia almost died, and describes how he and her friends kept a prayerful vigil by her bedside:

haec mihi vota tuam propter suscepta salutem
  cum capite hoc Stygiae iam poterentur aquae.

The topos of the illness of the beloved is common enough, but what is interesting here is how Propertius employs the term *Stygiae...aquae*, allowing this one element of the iconography of death to stand for the whole.[69] Being overwhelmed by the waters of the Styx is not the conventional depiction of what happens to the dead in the Underworld, as more usually they

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[68] On this see below, p. 216 n. 39.

[69] See, for example, Tib.1.5.9-10; 17-18; Ovid *Am.*2.13.23-24; *Ars* 2.327; Prop. 2.28.43.

are conveyed across it in a boat, but it graphically and poetically combines the idea of being overwhelmed by death with the topography of the Underworld. Propertius is, we shall find, not concerned with eschatological exactitude so much as with dramatic effect, and it is somewhat unsurprising that he should depict Cynthia's demise as a sort of drowning given the regularity of the Death by Drowning topos in both Propertian elegy and Greek and Roman literature in general. The possibility of such an eventuality must never have been far from the minds of a people for whom it was a regular part of life.

A similar use of the metaphor occurs at 3.18.9-10, in the elegy for the death of Marcellus, adopted son of Augustus, who died at Baiae in 23 BC:[70]

> Hic pressus Stygias vultum demisit in undas
> errat et in vestro spiritus ille lacu.

At first these lines misleadingly suggest that Marcellus was actually drowned at Baiae, but that was not the case. They in fact recall Paetus' actual drowning in 3.7 and this may be significant because the two elegies are almost symmetrically placed near the beginning and end of Book 3. In fact, he confounds the image of drowning in Stygian water with one of wandering on the *inferno lacu* – seemingly contradictory images, but typical of Propertius' propensity to manipulate the topography of the Underworld in the name of art. The location of Baiae may well have prompted the Stygian image, however, as it was situated by Lake Avernus, the site of Aeneas' descent to the Underworld in Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, and beside the shore where Vergil's character Misenus, also the victim of an untimely death, is buried. Vergil's Palinurus also comes to mind, as *errat* implies that the dead man has not yet been buried, and that his spirit is still wandering between the place of his death and the shores of the Underworld.

The metaphor appears again in the programmatic elegy that closes Book 2, where Propertius lists topics that are unsuitable for love elegy, on the grounds that no girl would be interested in them. One of the rejected themes is philosophical: whether there is life after death:

> harum nulla solet rationem quaerere mundi,
> nec cur fraternis Luna laboret equis,
> **nec si post Stygias aliquid restabimus undas,**[71]

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[70] Cairns (2006) 347 argues that this epicedion for Marcellus was a commissioned piece. Vergil also mourns his death in *Aen.* 6.845-853.

nec si consulto fulmina missa tonent. (2.34 51-54)

Even though Propertius claims to reject this topic for his poetry, he nevertheless addresses it in relation to love in 1.19, where he visualizes himself after his death as ashes and waiting for Cynthia to join him across the *fati litora* (vv.11-12). Moreover, he goes so far as to answer the question at the beginning of 4.7.1: *sunt aliquid Manes.* What Propertius is actually rejecting is any extended philosophical or scientific discussion on the possibility of an afterlife, but this does not preclude him from exploiting the rich poetic possibilities provided by death and its Underworld imagery, and he steadfastly avoids anything more profound than this.

A final representation of death by Stygian water appears in 4.3.13-16.

quae mihi deductae fax omen praetulit, illa
traxit ab everso lumina nigra rogo;
et Stygio cum sparsa lacu, nec recta capillis
vitta data est: nupsi non comitante deo

These lines are from an elegy which consists of a letter to a fictitious man (Lycotas), who is absent on campaign, from his wife Arethusa. In expressing the misery of her separation from her beloved husband, Arethusa (interestingly named after a spring inhabited by the Muses) complains that the ritual of her marriage was tainted by death, which is yet again represented by Stygian water.[72] The *fax* that headed her wedding procession may well have been one from a funeral pyre, and the *vitta* that was incorrectly fastened onto her hair evokes funeral ribbons, such as those of 3.6.30: *cunctaque funesto lanea vitta toro.* Water was used for purification in both rituals, and the above lines are evocative of the motif of the washing of the corpse that appears in 2.9A.11-12, 2.13.55-6 and, more indirectly, 2.34.91-92.[73] The similarities between the rituals of marriage and the funeral are alluded to in 2.7.11-12 (*a mea tum qualis caneret tibi tibia somnos, / tibia funesta tristior illa tuba!*) and will be exploited to fuller effect in 4.11.

(**b**) The final *limen*:

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[71] A much disputed line, but I accept Wassenberg's conjecture of *restabimus undas* for the unintelligible *restabit erumpnas.* On this, see Heyworth (2007) 274.

[72] Hutchinson (2006)102 points out the ironic contrast in the poem, in that in a common version of the myth the Arcadian river Alpheius travels a huge distance to the sea, from love, to unite with Arethusa forever.

[73] On this motif, see below.

The Homeric version of Hades, as experienced by Odysseus, is vaguely indicated as above the ground, westwards at the end of the earth beyond Oceanus. There the hero simply offers sacrifices and digs a trench, around about which the shades, eager for the victim's blood, congregate and engage with him in conversation.[74] The Vergilian version, however, is no longer so vague.[75] The shades inhabit a vast realm which is deep below the earth and entered by the caverns and springs near Naples. Once past the canine monster Cerberus, the shades must first cross the Stygian lake by means of a ferry conducted by Charon, before reaching Tartarus. There they undergo punishments for their sins in the Upper World, before progressing to the Elysian Fields, where, cleansed of sin they live a blissful existence. Finally, after 1,000 years, they drink from the waters of Lethe, which relieves them of their memories of their previous lives in preparation for reincarnation.[76]

The Tibullan version, as described in the third poem of his first book, is more selective and bipolar. On the one hand, there is Elysium, to which he gives an amatory twist and portrays as the perfect setting for elegiac love. On the other hand, there is Tartarus, a dark and terrifying region inhabited by a familiar parade of mythological characters undergoing punishment, mostly as a result of erotic transgressions: Ixion, the Danaids, Tityos, and Tantalus.[77] His portrayal of this region evokes *DRN* 3.978-1023, where Lucretius, denying the existence of such a place, instead ascribes allegorical significance to such denizens as Tantalus, Tityos, Sisyphus, the Danaids and Cerberus. For Tibullus, the unhappy victims in Tartarus are also symbolically important, as the antitheses of perfect elegiac love.

Propertius' Underworld is, in contrast, inchoate and inconsistent, and he never really progresses beyond the Styx, the details of which vary from one poem to another. It is the *limen* of death that appears to engage his imagination more than anything else. Any indications of the regions beyond it are vague and indistinct, as the following references will show.

1.19.11-12:

> illic quidquid ero, semper tua dicar imago
> traicit et fati litora magnus amor.

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[74] *Odyssey*, Book 11.

[75] *Aeneid*, Book 6. On the Orphic-Pythagorean influence in Vergil's Underworld, see Molviati-Toptsis (1994) 33-46, and on baroque stylisation therein, see Brenk, F.E. (1979) 1-7.

[76] It must be said, however, that Anchises' depiction of the temporary punishment of sinners is at odds with that of the Sybil's implication that the sinners are there permanently.

[77] On this see Houghton (2007) 153-165, who argues that Tibullus' underworld characters are paradigms of elegiac love gone wrong, in opposition to the ideal elegiac setting of Elysium.

There is only one reference to the waters of the Underworld in Book 1, and it occurs in 19, an elegy specifically about death and the survival of Propertius' love beyond the grave.[78] He envisages death as shores to be crossed, as a voyage to be made across the water. The term *fatum* here can therefore be taken to mean death. Papanghelis, however, argues that *fatum* can also be taken in its more concrete term as 'dead body', and that the entire poem "articulates a dialectics of the concrete and the abstract, caught up in which *amor* can hardly be as abstract as it is thought to be."[79] He justly maintains that the death theme comes into its own from Book 2 onwards, but that 1.19 displays the first signs of his preoccupation with the theme, being probably a late poem in the *Monobiblos.* In this poem, argues Papanghelis, Propertius displays a horror of the annihilation of his sentient being, and is much more concerned with the sensual experience of love than the emotional one. Propertius transposes himself beyond the grave and wonders about *amor* without physical embodiment. Not liking what he sees, he then resorts to the *carpe diem* motif in vv.25-29, because he realizes that the very inevitability of death makes life meaningful. Propertius' *amor* is aroused by sensuous beauty and excitement, and its very transience makes it all the more seductive.

Propertius is declaring that, without his corporeal attributes, will still love Cynthia after he has crossed the shores of death. The whole point of the *perire amore* motif is that of devotion to the pursuit of love until death and in this poem he is saying that even in the after-life he will still belong to her. What is significant here is that Propertius envisages the afterlife in terms of a shore to be crossed. Coming so soon after the shipwreck elegy that is 1.17, the linear reader will detect obvious resonances between these shores of death and those on which he has already contemplated the eventuality of his demise away from Cynthia and on an unknown shore: *haecine parva meum funus harena teget?*(1.17.8). In one elegy he is contemplating his end while on a particularly fraught *navigatio amoris*, and in the other, he sees his death in terms of another kind of *navigatio.* It is difficult to determine whether this link is a conscious one on Propertius' part, as the image may well have been prompted by the circumstances of the death of his mythological paradigm, Protesilaus, who was the first Greek warrior to spring from his ship onto the Trojan shore and was immediately killed.

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[78] Lyne (1998) 200-212 detects what he terms a dialogue with Catullus 68, through the agency of Protesilaus. Catullus omits the motif of Protesilaus' return from the dead, implying that love cannot overcome death. Propertius includes the motif, in order to confute Catullus' grim view, but then succumbs to doubt when he depicts Protesilaus endeavouring to embrace his wife with *falsis...palmis* (v.9). Fedeli (1980) sees allusive echoes of Catullus but argues against any intentional disagreement with his predecessor. See also Boyle (1974) 895-911 for a thorough critical analysis of the poem.

[79] Papanghelis (1987) 10-11.

From Book 2 onwards, however, it is clear that he does consciously exploit the poetic possibilities of this link between the two types of voyage, as shall be seen.

2. 27. 11-16.

solus amans novit, quando periturus et a qua
   morte, neque hic Borea flabra neque arma timet.
iam licet et Stygia sedeat sub harundine remex,
   cernat et infernae tristia vela ratis:
si modo clamantis revocaverit aura puellae,
   concessum nulla lege redibit iter.

In this strange poem, Propertius appears to be talking about suicide. After a list of unforeseen perils that lead to one's doom, he then asserts that only the lover knows when and how he is going to die. This is in fact the *perire amore* motif, succinctly expressed in 2.1.47 by *laus in amore mori*, whereby Propertius constantly associates his love with the thought of death. The poem ends, however, with an unexpected note of hope, because his mistress has the power to call him back from the very threshold of his infernal voyage. In doing so, she will honour the *fides* which bound them in life, and will unite them in death. This blatantly contradicts the final couplet of 2.13, in which Propertius dwells on the fantasy of Cynthia's visible display of grief at his own funeral and concludes with the more conventional: *sed frustra mutos revocabis, Cynthia Manis: / nam mea quid poterunt ossa minuta loqui?* (vv.57-58). Papanghelis argues that these lines "do not promote the notion of the lover's immunity so much as they afford the poet an opportunity to indulge an aesthetic obsession".[80] The obsession to which he refers is with "water-love-death", similar to Bachelard's Charon complex adduced by Delatte.

It seems, therefore, that logic and consistency must yield to artistic license. The power of the mistress to call her lover back from the dead brings to mind the Protesilaus of 1.19.71-12, whereby his wife's devotion to him enabled his return to her albeit as a ghost. It also evokes the Orpheus and Eurydice myth, although, unusually, the genders are reversed as it is the mistress who is the analogue for Orpheus, and the male lover who is playing the part of Eurydice. Orpheus is never explicitly mentioned by Propertius, but he is the perfect prototype for the elegiac lover, and is associated with the water-love-death nexus to which Papanghelis has referred. He is the first poet, who travelled on the first ship, the Argo. It has often been

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[80] Papanghelis (1989) 36.

suggested that the Argonautic expedition was originally conceived as a katabasis, and if so, the link between death and a sea voyage is all the stronger, as it goes back to the earliest literary tradition.[81] But it is Orpheus' behaviour after his own failed visit to the Underworld to bring back his wife that makes him the quintessential elegiac lover as he becomes an *exclusus amator* on two occasions outside the very doors of the House of Death: firstly, immediately after Eurydice's death and before his descent; and then after the failure of this descent when his tears and his grief bring about his ultimate downfall, as he is torn apart by the Maenads, and his head is thrown into the river, calling in vain the name of his beloved wife.[82]

Once again Propertius chooses to indulge in a visually compelling variation of the conventional *mise-en-scène* of the Underworld.[83] He envisages death as crossing the Styx by boat, but there is no sign of Charon: here Propertius is doing the rowing himself (*remex*, v.13). In this case, he may have been influenced by the scene in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, where Dionysus does the rowing himself, but under the direction of Charon. His amazing capacity to return at the whim of his mistress flies in the face of the more conventional view expressed by Catullus 3.11-12: *qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum / illuc, unde negant redire quemquam,* and also contrasts with the failure of Orpheus himself to bring his wife back to the Upper World.

2.28.39-40.

> una ratis fati nostros portabit amores
>   caerula ad infernos velificata lacus.

Cynthia is gravely ill and Propertius declares that if she dies, so shall he. This interestingly follows soon after 2.26B, where he fantasizes about himself and Cynthia making a voyage together. In that poem he envisages (with a certain amount of relish) their simultaneous drowning (*certe isdem nudi pariter iactabimur undis,* v.43), but then dispels this notion with the consolatory *topos* of the lovers' immunity from danger. Death seems to be on his mind, however, as he follows this poem with 2.27, which develops the idea of death, dying from

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[81] Clark (1978) 34-6; Nelis (2001) 234.

[82] Propertius' model for these lines is possibly Vergil's version of the myth in *Geo.* 4.460-70. See Crabbe (1977)342-351, who proposes that Vergil employed the less well-known version of the myth in which the katabasis failed and incorporated an amalgam of details from other traditional sources. The resulting version became the canonical one.

[83] Vergil also refers to reeds growing among the swamps of the Underworld at *Geo.*4.478-80: *quos circum limus niger et deformis* ***harundo*** */ Cocyti tardaque palus inamabilis unda / alligat, et noviens Styx interfusa coercet.*

love, and the lover's return from the dead because of the power of love. In 2.28 then, Cynthia is in danger of dying, and once more Propertius visualizes this eventuality in terms of the Stygian voyage.

The Sea of Love and the Voyage of Death appear to be conflated here: Propertius is blurring the boundaries between *navigatio amoris* and *navigatio mortis.* The single boat that was the object of his fantasy in 2.26B (*et tabula* ***una*** *duos poterit componere* ***amantes,*** v.33) becomes their exclusive mode of transport across the Styx. The similarity between the two situations appears to be more than coincidental, coming so close together in Book 2, and it is perhaps the former image that prompts Propertius to manipulate the *mise-en-scène* of the Underworld, transforming Charon's grimly impartial and overladen conveyer of souls into a romantic infernal love nest reserved exclusively for him and his mistress.[84]

3. 5. 13-14.

haud ullas portabis opes Acherontis ad undas
  nudus at inferna[s], stulte, vehere rate[s].

To express the common topos of death's impartiality for rich and poor alike, Propertius once again avails of the aqueous topography of the Underworld. Horace expresses the same idea in similar terms, describing the inevitability of arrival at this grim region in the second volume of his Odes, the first three Books of which were published around the same time as Propertius Book Three, and which have been recognised to have heavily influenced the poet.[85]

visendus ater flumine languido
Cocytus errans et Danai genus
  infame damnatusque longi
  Sisyphus Aeolides laboris.

linquenda tellus et domus et placens
uxor, neque harum, quas colis, arborum
  te praeter invisas cupressos
  ulla brevem dominum sequetur. (*Odes* 2.14.17-24)

Propertius' assertion forms part of his repudiation of the life of action in favour of the life of love, and his declaration that he will address more serious themes in his poetry at the onset of

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[84] For the more conventional depiction of Charon and his boat, see Verg. *Aen.* 6. 310-316.
[85] On the influence of Horace on Propertius 3.1-5, see Zetzel (1983b) 83-105.

old age. For the moment, however, he is content to live a modest existence, without material wealth, and the only wars he wishes to wage are with his mistress. In his rejection of a certain lifestyle, he resembles Horace, but the alternative one he proposes for himself is a far cry from the peaceful Epicurean existence favoured by his contemporary.

3.18. 21-24.

sed tamen huc omnes, huc primus et ultimus ordo:
  est mala, sed cunctis ista terenda via est.
exoranda canis tria sunt latrantia colla,
  scandendast torvi publica cumba senis.

In the elegy on the death of Marcellus, Propertius, in an unusually philosophical tone, resorts to the familiar *per iter tenebricosum* motif of the inevitability of death. Once again he includes the image of Charon's boat in v.24, showing that the infernal crossing is the most persistent element of the iconography of Hades in his work.

3.18.31-34.

at tibi nauta, pias hominum qui traicis umbras,
  hoc animae portent corpus inane suae:
qua Siculae victor telluris Claudius et qua
  Caesar, ab humana cessit in astra via.

In the closing lines of the same poem, Propertius states that the *nauta* of Hades will convey Marcellus' *umbra*, but that his *anima* will ascend to the heavens, the same destination enjoyed by such righteous souls as Marcellus' ancestor M. Claudius Marcellus and Caesar.[86]

4. 7. 10.

summaque Lethaeus triverat ora liquor.

Cynthia, returning from the Underworld as a ghost, visits Propertius in a dream. She presents a horrific sight: her dress and ring have been scorched by the funeral pyre, the waters of the Lethe have worn away the edge of her mouth, and her bones rattle.[87] The mention of this

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[86] On the catasterism of Marcellus, see Fedeli (1985) 566-7. On that of others, see Suet. *Jul.*88; Dio C. XLV, 6-7; Plin. *N.H.*, 93-4; Ov. *Met.* XV, 844f.

[87] Cynthia, and her disfigured, but recognizable, features are somewhat reminiscent of Vergil's Hector in *Aen.* 2.268-97, who also figures as an apparition in a dream. Tibullus, in 1.10.37-8, depicts the throng by the Styx as *pertusisque genis ustoque capillo.*

river ensures that we realize that she has returned from the land of the dead, but why does he choose it instead of the usual Stygian water as a signifier of her fate? This is the river of forgetfulness from which, as a prelude to reincarnation, souls drank in order to forget their past lives. The partial erosion of Cynthia's mouth by the water is peculiar – nowhere else is there a suggestion that drinking from the Lethe has such an effect on one's appearance – and suggests that her imbibing is incomplete. Moreover, she revisits Propertius, not reincarnated at all, but as a ghost, and she is not forgetful of her past life, but full of memories of their shared past. To boot, she even accuses him of being the forgetful one. This past, however, does not correspond with Propertius' account of it in the previous three books of elegies. One is tempted to conclude that this more mature and detached poet of Book 4 is indulging in some amusing irony at his erstwhile mistress' expense and putting into this revenant Cynthia's disfigured mouth a very one-sided and self-serving version of their relationship. Hence his substitution of the Lethe for the Styx: the Lethaean waters are amusingly suggestive of a form of selective amnesia.

4. 7. 55-70.

'nam gemina est sedes turpem sortita per amnem,
   turbaque diversa remigat omnis aqua.
unda Clytaemestrae stuprum vel adultera Cressae
   portans mentitam lignea monstra bovis.
ecce coronato pars altera rapta phaselo,
   mulcet ubi Elysias aura beata rosas,
qua numerosa fides, quaque aera rotunda Cybebes
   mitratisque sonant Lydia plectra choris.
Andromedeque et Hypermestre sine fraude maritae
   narrant historiae tempora nota, suae:
haec sua maternis queritur livere catenis
   bracchia nec meritas frigida saxa manus;
narrat Hypermestre magnum ausas esse sorores,
   in scelus hoc animum non valuisse suum.
sic mortis lacrimis vitae sanamus amores:
   celo ego perfidiae crimina multa tuae.

In Cynthia's version of life in the Underworld, she is an innocent and indeed faithful victim. She classes herself, not with those who have sinned against their men, such as Clytaemestra and Pasiphae, but with such paragons as Hypermestre and Andromeda. Although the conception of the pageant of infernal heroines derives from the Catalogue of Women in *Odyssey* 11.225-330, once again the standard details of the Underworld have been jettisoned and Propertius gives free rein to his vivid and whimsical imagination. Not surprisingly, these denizens, all of whom are female and beautiful, are depicted as travelling by water. As in 2.27.13, Charon appears to be temporarily redundant as they seem to be rowing themselves (*remigat,* v.56), and their separation does not happen after they cross the river but while they are still rowing. The sinners are travelling on a different section of the river to that of the virtuous, but Propertius is vague as to their respective destinations, only referring to the music and dancing that awaits the good souls in the Elysian Fields and implying that their passage is less strenuous, as their boat is swept along by an *aura beata* (v.60). In this he contrasts sharply with Tibullus' detailed exposition of both the Elysian Fields and the alternative *scelerata sedes.*[88] But Propertius less interested in the moral eschatology of the Underworld than in its aesthetic potential. Beautiful women are an essential ingredient, regardless of their previous behaviour. In 2.28.52, for example, Pasiphae is mentioned as one of the beauties that already inhabit these regions (*vobiscum Antiopest, vobiscum candida Tyro, / vobiscum Europe nec proba Pasiphae*), as Propertius suggests that Persephone's husband does not need to add the recently ill Cynthia to their ranks. Her *nec proba* status is irrelevant, as she is in the same aesthetic category as these other (blameless) women. What engages the Propertian imagination is the tableau of an Underworld, populated by beautiful women with exotic nomenclature, floating forever across the waters of death. They console one another with tales of their lives above, and even bear physical scars from their former existence.[89] Moreover, the fact that these other women are long dead suggests that Cynthia has joined a sisterhood that floats in a perpetual limbo, never reaching its destination, and the Elysian Fields are merely an illusion.

4. 7. 89-92.

> nocte vagae ferimur, nox clausas liberat umbras,
>   errat et abiecta Cerberus ipse sera.
> luce iubent leges Lethaea ad stagna reverti:
>   nos vehimur, vectum nauta recenset onus.

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[88] Tibullus 1.3.57-82.

[89] Warden (1980) 44 draws attention to the contrast in these lines with the Tibullan version of Elysium, where the Blessed spend their time happily pursuing the activities that brought them pleasure in the Upper World. For Propertius, however, tears are an essential part of their Elysian existence, and act as a balm for their sufferings above. Thus, his Underworld can be seen to be more elegiac than that of his contemporary.

Cynthia's chthonic report continues to deviate from the standard version of life in the Underworld, but it accounts for her ability to appear in Propertius' dream: at night the spirits are permitted to wander as ghosts from Hades, but when dawn comes they are compelled to return to the waters of Lethe, where a seemingly re-employed Charon again counts his charges. The implication is once more that the infernal voyage takes place repeatedly. *Lethaea ad stagna* refers to the waters of the Underworld in general, but Propertius' choice of Lethe again, instead of the more usual Styx or the Acheron, is a witty play with the associations of that river with sleep and oblivion.[90] Propertius is the one who is asleep, and therefore enjoying 'Lethaean' oblivion, until the visitation of his erstwhile beloved who has been crossing and re-crossing that very river and ironically 'remembers' everything about their shared past. Hutchinson remarks that she contrasts with Patroclus who, shunned by other ghosts is unable to cross the river (Hom. *Il.*23.72-3).[91] But like him, she fails to progress beyond the waters, and her reappearance in the form of a dream suggests that she has not yet been buried in Propertius' subconscious. Like a soul without burial, Cynthia does not rest, but floats on the river waiting to possess him again: *mox sola tenebo: / mecum eris, et mixtis ossibus ossa teram.* It is a strangely corporeal image for two souls, but magnificently ominous and macabre.

4. 11. 5-8.

te licet orantem fuscae deus audiat aulae,
  nempe tuas lacrimas litora surda bibent.
vota movent superos: ubi portitor aera recepit,
  obserat herbosos lurida porta rogos.

Cornelia, speaking from the grave, refers to the infernal shores of her abode, and how they will be unmoved by the tears of her husband Paullus. Copley and Curran have pointed out that in this poem Paullus is cast in the role of *exclusus amator*, only this time the house from which he is being excluded is the House of Death.[92] Water is on both sides of the infernal door: on one side it takes the form of Paullus' tears and on the other, it is the shores over which Charon presides and which, unmoved, will 'drink' Paullus' tears. It is an arresting image, in which water is the common denominator between the two domains. The deafness of

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[90] See, for example, Vergil, *Georg.* 1.78 *Lethaeo perfusa papavera somno*; 4.545 *inferias Orphei Lethaea papavera mittes; Aen.* 5.854 *ecce deus ramum Lethaeo rore madentem.*
[91] Hutchinson (2006)181.
[92] Copley (1956)80-82; Curran (1968) 135. See also Hutchinson (2006) 230ff

the shores and the reference to the capacity of the gods to be moved by prayers evoke Orpheus, and the lines are an allusion to Vergil, *Geo.* 4.502-5 *nec* ***portitor*** *Orci / amplius obiectam passus transire paludem…quae numina voce* ***moveret****?,* where Orpheus has failed to restore Eurydice to the Upper World and Charon will not allow him to cross the *obiectam…paludem* that stands between him and his beloved wife.[93] Orpheus, as the original *exclusus amator* at the entrance to the Underworld is a fitting paradigm for Paullus and serves to combine epicedium with love elegy and reaffirm Propertius' predilection for the trinity that is water-love-death.

4. 11. 15.

damnatae nocti et vos, vada lenta, paludes

This line is corrupt, but despite emendations and conjectures by numerous commentators, it is universally agreed that Cornelia is apostrophising the Lower World and, as we come to expect from Propertius, she does so by means of its aquatic topography.[94] It seems that once again, when dealing with the Underworld, the first image that comes to Propertius' mind is that of the infernal voyage.

4. 11. 69-70.

…mihi cumba volenti
solvitur aucturis tot mea facta meis.

Cornelia again sees her death in terms of a journey in Charon's boat, which she will be happy to undertake so long as the line of her descendants lives on. Curran has shown that when Cornelia refers to the Underworld, water imagery reigns supreme, while when she refers to her funeral the primary symbol is fire. Cornelia is obsessed by thoughts of her funeral, and Curran suggests that this is so because "the funeral must have been the most important public event in her life: the Princeps himself attended and wept openly for her (v.58)."[95] That may be so, but when we look back at the earlier elegies by Propertius, it is clear that he treats the theme of his own death on two planes: that of his funeral, and that of the Underworld. Both of

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[93] Hutchinson (2006) 233.

[94] Hutchinson (2006) 235. For a detailed analysis of all the efforts to emend this line, see Heyworth (2007) 506-8.

[95] Curran (1968) 137. Curran also argues that, just as fire and water were symbolic at her wedding, these two elements now symbolize her death, and the house she was brought to as a bride has now been replaced by the House of Death; Cornelia therefore sees her entire life as having taken place between these two events.

these aspects of death provide his visual imagination with an abundance of sensuous and emotional tableaux that are the hallmark of his love elegy and enable him to display his considerable powers of *enargeia.* No other aspect of death arouses his interest as a poet, such as its philosophical or metaphysical implications. Far from being oppressed by the prospect of death, Propertius appears to relish the aesthetic opportunities that the scenes of his funeral and of his afterlife in the Underworld provide. If we consider 4.11 in the light of Propertius' earlier elegies, we see the same preoccupations at play. When Cornelia speaks about her death, she either refers to her funeral that has already taken place, or to her present 'existence' in Hades. There is nothing more Propertian than this. 4.11 may well be a very different type of elegy to the earlier poems, with its apparently more serious Roman aspirations, but in some ways it can be seen as a reworking of the old motifs of his love elegy, betraying the same essential poetic sensibilities. The poet is still unable to resist the sensuous lure of such scenes.

4. 11. 101-2

...sum digna merendo
cuius honoratis ossa vehantur **aquis**.

Curran states: "the climax of the water imagery of the Underworld is the last word in the poem" and he adduces the parallel of Propertius 4.7.55-6 (*nam geminas sedes turpem sortita per amnem, / turbaque diversa remigat omnis aqua*) as providing a strong argument for *aquis*. However, he is in the minority in this respect, as mainstream scholarship tends to comply with Henisius' conjecture of *avis* for the *aquis* of the MSS.[96] Butler and Barber, for instance, accepting Heinsius' conjecture, argue that *honoratis* is a strange epithet for *aquis*, and that the allusion to the crossing of the Styx is too obscure to be acceptable. Nevertheless, as Richardson points out, such an allusion is consistent with what we are told of the Underworld earlier in the poem, as Cornelia refers in vv.15-6 to those very waters, rather than the destination on the other side.[97] This is also consistent with Cynthia's self-serving portrayal of the Styx in 4.7, and in fact her seemingly perpetual voyage along these waters in the company of the other blameless heroines can be seen to equate with the exemplary Cornelia's reward after death. Heyworth also sensibly points out that *vehor* "is a verb that draws attention to a mode of transport rather than a destination", and that it is usually

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[96] Curran cites B. Axelson: "Der Mechanismus des Ovidischen Pentameterschlusses", in N.I. Herescu, Ovidiana (Paris, 1958), p.128 for the retention of the transmitted text.
[97] Richardson (1976) 489.

accompanied by an ablative which indicates the means of travel.[98] Moreover, as Heyworth also points out, the phrase *honoratis...aquis* stands in opposition to the Tibullan *scelerata sedes* (1.3.67) and the Vergilian *sceleratum limen* (*Aen.* 6.563). For these reasons, and in view of the central role that the Stygian waters play in the Propertian view of the Underworld, I accept the transmitted *aquis*. Moreover, it is entirely appropriate that Propertius should choose to end the final poem of the final book of his entire *oeuvre* with the name of his favourite element.

Propertius' attitude to death is aesthetic rather than philosophic or scientific. Tibullus manipulated his Underworld to become an idealized elegiac setting (Elysium) counterbalanced by its opposite (Tartarus). Propertius applies his own elegiac twist to the Underworld, in that he makes of it an infernal version of the *limen* of the *exclusus amator*. The water of the Styx is the final threshold that must be crossed by one, other or both lovers. But it is also the last frontier in his non-erotic elegies, demonstrating that the highly symbolic significance of the *limen* in general has a place outside love elegy, being such an important element of Roman religious and social life.[99] It emerges that the way in which Propertius mediates the polarity between love/life and death is principally through water, and his vividly sensual imagination enables him to exploit the myriad aesthetic possibilities provided by this versatile and protean element. It is the solvent that dissolves the boundary between life and death, and between the real and the symbolic. Propertius switches with ease from one level to the other: the sea voyage, portraying a tempestuous love affair, is suddenly before we realize it a voyage in the Underworld, the ultimate journey. The Ship of Love, the Ship of Life and the Ship of Death become confounded; the locked-out lover speaks to his beloved, not only from the conventional *limen* of her house, but also from one or other side of the *limen* that separates the dead from the living. More often than not, this *limen* is a watery one, (usually) presided over by Charon (the infernal counterpart of the *ianitor*) and populated by mythological characters, some of who themselves are engaged in water-related activities.

Oceanus was seen as surrounding the earth, and from it all rivers, lakes and seas flowed.[100] This included the rivers of Hades, and thus it is easy to grasp the connection that

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[98] Heyworth (2007) 514. His translation reads: "may I deserve through my merits that my bones be borne on the waters travelled by the honoured." (607).

[99] On the symbolic importance of the *limen* in Roman life see Scullard (1981)13-41; On the importance of the *paraclausithyron* in Latin Love Elegy, see Copley (1956); On the *limen* as a 'third' in Propertian elegy, see De Brohun (2003)ch.3.

[100] Hesiod, in his *Theogony* (331-400) provides a list of all the rivers that were the offspring of Oceanus, including the Styx.

Propertius makes between the voyages made in the Upper and Lower worlds. *Perire amore* is a powerful metaphor for his passionate love, equating it with a terminal disease, and therefore obscuring the boundaries between love and death. It inevitably follows that *navigatio amoris* becomes confounded with *navigatio mortis,* and that the stretch of water that needs to be negotiated in such voyages represents the *limen* that separates mortals from their loved ones. The following chapters will reveal that this liminal property of water also plays a particularly important symbolic role in a metapoetic context.

CHAPTER TWO

WATER AND POETRY: SOME PRELIMINARIES

Greece: Metapoetic *Origines.*

Homer and the Sea.

The profound adulation of Homer by the ancients can be summed up by Quintilian who, writing in the first century AD, remarked that any attempt at *aemulatio* of this founder of epic and poet *par excellence* was doomed to failure and, in his own words, *fieri non potest.*[1] This reputation that Homer had for uniqueness was axiomatic from Hellenistic times. Indeed, the whole thrust of Callimachean poetics was based on that very premise; the father of all poetry was, to quote Euphorion, ἀπροτίμαστος, "unapproachable".[2] Further evidence of the hyperbolic veneration that was held for the poet is provided by Aelian, who writes that Ptolemy Philopater set up a temple in his honour, in which Homer was seated in the centre and surrounded by statues of all the cities that claimed him.[3] We also have a relief by the second century BC sculptor Archelaus of Priene, known as "The Apotheosis of Homer". It is most likely to have been dedicated at another Homereion in order to commemorate the victory of an unknown poet, who is depicted on the centre right flank of the sculpture. Homer is depicted at the bottom, seated and holding a large sceptre. In both features and bearing he resembles Zeus, who appears in the upper part of the relief in the company of the Muses. Below them, Homer is being crowned by the allegories of Time and The Inhabited World, and paying homage to him are the personifications of Mythos, Historia, Poieisis, Tragedy and Comedy.[4] Thus he is explicitly depicted as the source of all literature, a view expressed succinctly in an epigram by Antipater of Sidon (mid first century BC), which characterizes Homer as ἀγήρατον στόμα κόσμου παντός, "ageless mouthpiece of the entire universe".[5]

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[1] Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.50.
[2] Fr. 118 Powell.
[3] Ael. *Var.Hist.,* 13.22.
[4] A photograph of the relief is reproduced in Hardie (1986) fig.1, and a thorough discussion of its details may be found in Webster (1964) 145-7. See also Brink (1972) 549-6.
[5] *A.P.* 7.6.3-4.

But this was not all. In some quarters Homer was regarded as the origin, not only of all literature, but of all knowledge and his epic poems came to be seen as the fountainhead of all natural philosophy. The Pseudo-Plutarchean *On the Life and Poetry of Homer,* for instance, states that the seeds of all natural philosophical doctrines lie in the epics of Homer.[6] Strabo (64 BC-AD 19), in the introduction to his Geography, acknowledges Homer as the founder of science and geography. Such views descended from a tradition that had its origins in that second seat of Alexandrian learning, Pergamum, where scholars of the Stoic school sought to allegorize the poems of Homer, in keeping with the Stoic doctrine that art must have a utilitarian purpose. Amid the narrative of the poems, they believed, lay 'riddles', which, once solved, provided lessons about life and the universe.[7] Crates of Mallos, a Stoic geographer and critic of the third century BC, used Homeric poetry to support his own geographic theories. Pseudo-Heraclitus similarly maintains, in his *Quaestiones Homericae*, that all philosophical doctrines have their origin in Homer *Il.* 14.201 and 246, where the poet characterizes Ocean as "begetter of all things".[8]

Homer's depiction of Oceanus was to play an even more important role in subsequent literature, however. In *Il.* 21.192-7, Achilles is boasting of his own superiority, as a descendant of Zeus, to Asteropaeus, whose ancestor is a river god:

> ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι Διὶ Κρονίωνι μάχεσθαι,
> τῷ οὐδὲ κρείων Ἀχελώϊος ἰσοφαρίζει,
> οὐδὲ βαθυρρείταο μέγα σθένος Ὠκεανοῖο,
> ἐξ οὗ περ πάντες ποταμοὶ καὶ πᾶσα θάλασσα
> καὶ πᾶσαι κρῆναι καὶ φρείατα μακρὰ νάουσιν·

But it is not possible to fight with Zeus the son of Cronos: with him not even king Achelous vies, nor the great strength of deep-flowing Ocean, **from whom all rivers flow and every sea, and all springs and deep wells.**[9]

This depiction of Oceanus was to become the classic analogue for the poet himself: just as Oceanus is the origin of all waters, including rivers, streams and springs, Homer is the origin

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[6] [Plutarch] *De Vit. Et Poes. Hom.* B.6: 23. Hardie (1986) 23 has drawn attention to this parallel.

[7] This view contradicted that of Eratosthenes of Cyrene and Philodemus, who propounded the theory that the function of poetry was *psuchagogia*, a type of aesthetic pleasure rather than instruction. On this, see Romm (1992) 185-6. On Pergamene scholarship, see Pfeiffer (1968) 234-251; Morgan (1999) 84-93; and Hardie (1986) 25-29.

[8] *Quaest. Hom.* 4.4.

[9] Translated by Morgan (1999) 32.

of all literature. There is plenty of evidence in Roman poetry, Augustan and later, of this conceit, as well as contemporary Greek literature. Thus:

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Comp.*, 24):

κορυφὴ μὲν οὗ ἁπάντων καὶ σκοπὸς ‘ἐξ οὗ περ πάντες ποταμοί καὶ πᾶσα θάλασσα / καὶ πάντες κρῆναι’ (*Il.* XXI, 196-7) δικαίως ἂν ‘ Όμηρος λέγοιτο;

Ovid (*Amores* 3.9 (8).25-6):

adice Maioniden, **a quo ceu fonte perenni /** vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis. **;**

Manilius (2.8-11):

cuiusque (sc. Homeri) **ex ore** profusos omnis posteritas latices in carmina duxit / amnemque in tenues ausa est deducere rivos / unius fecunda bonis.

Quintilian (10.1.46):

hic enim (sc. Homerus), quemadmodum **ex Oceano** dicit ipse **<omnium> amnium fontiumque** cursus initium capere, omnibus eloquentiae partibus exemplum et ortum dedit; [10]

There is also, however, strong evidence that this image of Homer goes back as far as the Hellenistic age. A set of anapaests, attributed to the Ptolemaic age by Powell (*Coll. Alex.* 187-8 = Page *GLP* 93A), despite its literary mediocrity, usefully likens Homer to a sea spitting forth his poetry upon the shore, and Aelian, after his description of the Homereion cited above, describes a painting by one Galaton, which depicts Homer somewhat distastefully vomiting and all the other poets collecting the vomit in jugs.[11]

Ocean also became an analogue for epic poetry because of its vastness and immense scope. Strictly speaking, Ocean and the sea were not the same, but the distinction between the two became easily confounded as far back as Xenophanes who, in his statement that the sea was the origin of all forms of water, used the term πόντος.[12] Roman poets regularly substituted one for the other, such as Horace, *Carm.* 1.3.21-3:

nequiquam deus abscidit
  prudens **Oceano** dissociabili
terras, si tamen impiae
  non tangenda rates transiliunt vada.

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[10] I acknowledge my debt to Brink (1972) 547-567 for this information.

[11] Webster (1964) 144-5 sensibly suggests that such a coarse description has its origins in a satirical epigram, "which willfully misinterpreted a not very happy conception of Homer as a river-god pouring water from his mouth for other poets to collect."

[12] Fr. 300-k = Kirk and Raven 186. Xenophanes asserted that God is single and eternal, and condemned Homer for his portrayal of gods who were both absurd and immoral. It was against thinkers such as Xenophanes that the Pergamene allegorists were defending the Homeric epics.

and Ovid *Met.* 9. 594:

> obruor **oceano**, neque habent mea vela recursus.

However, the various terms for the sea rather than Oceanus became the more usual choice for poets when writing about epic. An interesting example is in Vergil, *Geo.* 2.39-45:

> tuque ades, inceptumque una decurrere laborem
> o decus, o famae merito pars maxima nostrae,
> Maecenas, **pelagoque** volans da vela patenti.
> **non ego cuncta meis amplecti versibus opto**,
> non mihi, si linguae centum sint oraque centum,
> ferrea vox.

In this *recusatio* of epic, Vergil appears intent on embarking on the open sea of epic, only to retract this decision in v.42, where he admits that the vast scope of such an undertaking is beyond his poetic powers. He employs the 'many mouths' conceit, which has been shown to entail a dense nexus of allusions to Homer, Ennius and others.[13] Moreover, v.42 is reminiscent of Catullus 64.30 – ***Oceanus, mari*** *totum qui* ***amplectitur*** *orbem* – where Catullus actually coalesces the sea and Ocean, leading one to conclude that Vergil is hinting at an identification between epic poet and Ocean.[14]

A second example is from Horace's final Ode (4.15.1-4), in which he tells us how Apollo prevented him from composing epic poetry:

> Phoebus volentem proelia me loqui
> victas et urbes increpuit lyra,
>   ne parva Tyrrhenum per **aequor**
>   vela darem.

Here the Tyrrhenian Sea serves as a metaphor for poetry about 'battles and conquered cities'.[15]

In summary, Homer's equation with the Ocean referred to his being the source of all poetry, to his greatness, and to the universal nature and limitless scope of all of his own

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[13] On this, see Morgan (1999) 179 and Hinds (1998) 34-47.

[14] For further discussion of the Vergilian passage, see below, pp. 87-8.

[15] For further discussion of these lines, see below, p.93.

poetry. By extension, Ocean also came to refer to the epic genre. The Ocean and the sea became confounded and thus in Roman poetry the Ocean/sea can represent the following: Homer; all poetry, as Homer was the source of all poetry; and epic poetry, which was seen to encompass all subjects. Added to this was the idea, going all the way back to Hesiod, of the sea as being perilous and this was exploited especially by the Augustan poets in their *recusationes*. Any venture on the sea of epic or grand themes was fraught with danger and could bring about ruination.

Hesiod and Springs.

Μουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ' ἀείδειν,
αἵ θ' Ἑλικῶνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τε ζάθεόν τε,
καί τε περὶ κρήνην ἰοειδέα πόσσ' ἁπαλοῖσιν
ὀρχεῦνται καὶ βωμὸν ἐρισθενέος Κρονίωνος·
καί τε λοεσσάμεναι τέρενα χρόα Περμησσοῖο
ἠ' Ἵππου κρήνης ἠ' Ὀλμειοῦ ζαθέοιο
ἀκροτάτῳ Ἑλικῶνι χοροὺς ἐνεποιήσαντο,
καλοὺς ἱμερόεντας, ἐπερρώσαντο δὲ ποσσίν.
ἔνθεν ἀπορνύμεναι κεκαλυμμέναι ἠέρι πολλῷ
ἐννύχιαι στεῖχον περικαλλέα ὄσσαν ἱεῖσαι,
ὑμνεῦσαι Δία τ' αἰγίοχον.....

"From the Muses of Helicon let us begin our singing, that haunt Helicon's great and holy mountain, and dance on their soft feet round the **violet-dark spring** and the altar of the mighty son of Kronos. **And when they have bathed their gentle skin in Permessos, or the Horse's fountain, or holy Olmeios**, then on the highest slope of Helicon they make their dances, fair and lovely, stepping lively in time. From there they go forth, veiled in thick mist, and walk by night, uttering beautiful voice, singing of Zeus who bears the aegis…"(vv.1-10)[16]

So begins Hesiod's *Theogony*, and the earliest extant *Dichterweihe*, the template of so many future poets. The topography of Helicon has exercised many a scholar because subsequent poets have been less than consistent with the details, as shall be seen in relation to Propertius in due course. For the moment, however, it will be useful to return to the source, as it were, of these springs and examine what exactly Hesiod says about them.

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[16] Translated by West (1988) 3.

The Muses are first introduced as dancing on Hesiod's local mountain, Helicon, around "the violet-dark spring" and the altar of Zeus. The poet does not name this spring. He then says that, after they have bathed in the Permessus, the Hippocrene and the Olmeios, they go dancing on the highest summit of Helicon. After this, they go forth, singing their beautiful song, the subject matter of which is Zeus, the other Olympians, the Titans, Dawn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Ocean and Night. This introduction to the Muses is a prelude for Hesiod's famous account of his own encounter with the Muses on the same mountain while tending his sheep, during which they breathed into him his poetic voice. There is no mention of the poet drinking from the springs: they are merely part of the locale of the inspirational event.

One would be forgiven, however, for assuming that Hesiod did actually partake of the spring water, as the conceit became common in subsequent poetry. An epigram by Alcaeus of Messene (c.200 BC) describes Hesiod's death:

Λοκρίδος ἐν νέμεϊ σκιερῷ νέκυν Ἡσιόδοιο
    Νύμφαι κρηνίδων λοῦσαν ἀπὸ σφετέρων
καὶ τάφον ὑψώσαντο· γάλακτι δὲ ποιμένες αἰγῶν
    ἔρραναν ξανθῷ μιξάμενοι μέλιτι·
τοίην γὰρ καὶ γῆρυν ἀπέπνεεν ἐννέα Μουσέων
    ὁ πρέσβυς καθαρῶν γευσάμενος λιβάδων.

> In a shady grove of Locris **the nymphs washed the body of Hesiod with water from their springs** and raised a tomb. **The goatherds drenched it with their milk, mixing in golden honey. For such was the song the old man breathed, having tasted the pure water of the nine Muses.**[17]

This epigram combines the inspirational breath of the Muses with the drinking of the spring water, and it also evokes the references later on in the *Theogony* to the sweetness of the Muses' song (v.39-40: τῶν δ' ἀκάματος **ῥέει** αὐδὴ / ἐκ στομάτων ἡδεῖα· "the words **flow** untiring from their mouths, and **sweet**...; vv.81-84: ὅντινα τιμήσουσι Διὸς κοῦραι μεγάλοιο / γεινόμενόν τε ἴδωσι διοτρεφέων βασιλήων, / τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ γλυκερὴν χείουσιν ἐέρσην, / τοῦ δ' ἔπε' ἐκ στόματος **ῥεῖ** μείλιχα· "Whomsoever great Zeus' daughters favour among the kings that Zeus fosters, and turn their eyes upon him at his birth, upon his tongue they shed **sweet dew, and out of his mouth the words flow honeyed**..." and vv.96-7: ὁ δ' ὄλβιος, ὅντινα Μοῦσαι / φίλωνται· γλυκερή οἱ ἀπὸ στόματος **ῥέει** αὐδή. "every man is fortunate whom the Muses love; **the voice flows sweet from his lips.**").

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[17] *AP.* 7.55. The milk and honey combination also appears in Pindar, *Nem.* 3.76-79.

Another epigram by Antipater of Sidon (c.145-120 BC) refers to Boeotian Helicon which "gushed forth from its springs the water of sweet speech for Hesiod." (σὺ μέν ποτε πολλάκις ὕδωρ / εὐεπὲς ἐκ πηγέων ἔβλυσας Ἡσιόδῳ·)[18] Here, the spring water is Hesiod's speech, taking the conceit a step further. The inspirational water that Hesiod supposedly drank is now a metaphor for his poetry.

It is perhaps an inevitable metaphor, since Hesiod himself refers to speech inspired by the Muses as flowing (ῥέει).[19] One would imagine that water generally would be an obvious analogue for speech, preceding any association with springs, and that once they came into the equation, drinking from them provided the perfect image for poetic inspiration. A first-century text (*Epit. Bion.* 76) represents both Homer and Bion drinking from holy springs, Bion from Arethusa and Homer from Hippocrene. Thus, as the conceit became popular, it was retrospectively attributed to the earliest poets. But the most important function of the Heliconian springs was they they were a locus of inspiration. Drinking from them was by no means an essential requirement, even if it was the easiest way of receiving this inspiration. Cameron succinctly states: "In Hesiod the Muses dance around Hippocrene and wash in its waters. In Nicander Hesiod sings 'beside the waters of Permessus' (*Ther.*12). Gallus too walked beside the Permessus, and Propertius talks of bathing in it. But when Lucretius pictures himself on Helicon, his plan is *integros accedere fontis* ***atque haurire*** (*DRN*. 927-8). Drinking was an obvious way of tapping this power, and we hardly need to derive it from one particular source."[20]

Hesiod and the Sea.

Εἰ δέ σε ναυτιλίης δυσπεμφέλου ἵμερος αἱρεῖ· (617)
εὖτ’ ἂν Πληιάδες σθένος ὄβριμον Ὠρίωνος
φεύγουσαι πίπτωσιν ἐς ἠεροειδέα πόντον,
δὴ τότε παντοίων ἀνέμων θυίουσιν ἀῆται· (620)
καὶ τότε μηκέτι νῆα ἔχειν ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ,
γῆν δ’ ἐργάζεσθαι μεμνημένος ὥς σε κελεύω·
νῆα δ’ ἐπ’ ἠπείρου ἐρύσαι πυκάσαι τε λίθοισι
πάντοθεν, ὄφρ’ ἴσχωσ’ ἀνέμων μένος ὑγρὸν ἀέντων,
χείμαρον ἐξερύσας, ἵνα μὴ πύθῃ Διὸς ὄμβρος. (625)
ὅπλα δ’ ἐπάρμενα πάντα τεῷ ἐγκάτθεο οἴκῳ,

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[18] *AP*. 11.24.
[19] As does Homer, in reference to Nestor's speech in *Il*. 1.249.
[20] Cameron (1995) 364-5.

εὐκόσμως στολίσας νηὸς πτερὰ ποντοπόροιο·
πηδάλιον δ’ εὐεργὲς ὑπὲρ καπνοῦ κρεμάσασθαι.
αὐτὸς δ’ ὡραῖον μίμνειν πλόον εἰς ὅ κεν ἔλθῃ·
καὶ τότε νῆα θοὴν ἅλαδ’ ἑλκέμεν, ἐν δέ τε φόρτον (630)
ἄρμενον ἐντύνασθαι, ἵν’ οἴκαδε κέρδος ἄρηαι,
ὥς περ ἐμός τε πατὴρ καὶ σός, μέγα νήπιε Πέρση,
ὥς περ ἐμός τε πατὴρ καὶ σός, μέγα νήπιε Πέρση,
πλωίζεσκ’ ἐν νηυσί, βίου κεχρημένος ἐσθλοῦ·
ὅς ποτε καὶ τεῖδ’ ἦλθε πολὺν διὰ πόντον ἀνύσσας, (635)
Κύμην Αἰολίδα προλιπὼν ἐν νηὶ μελαίνῃ,
οὐκ ἄφενος φεύγων οὐδὲ πλοῦτόν τε καὶ ὄλβον,
ἀλλὰ κακὴν πενίην, τὴν Ζεὺς ἄνδρεσσι δίδωσιν.
νάσσατο δ’ ἄγχ’ Ἑλικῶνος ὀιζυρῇ ἐνὶ κώμῃ,
Ἄσκρῃ, χεῖμα κακῇ, θέρει ἀργαλέῃ, οὐδέ ποτ’ ἐσθλῇ. (640)
τύνη δ’, ὦ Πέρση, ἔργων μεμνημένος εἶναι
ὡραίων πάντων, περὶ ναυτιλίης δὲ μάλιστα.
νῆ’ ὀλίγην αἰνεῖν, μεγάλῃ δ’ ἐνὶ φορτία θέσθαι·
μείζων μὲν φόρτος, μεῖζον δ’ ἐπὶ κέρδεϊ κέρδος
ἔσσεται, εἴ κ’ ἄνεμοί γε κακὰς ἀπέχωσιν ἀήτας. (645)
Εὖτ’ ἂν ἐπ’ ἐμπορίην τρέψας ἀεσίφρονα θυμὸν
Βούληαι δὲ χρέα τε προφυγεῖν καὶ λιμὸν ἀτερπέα,
δείξω δή τοι μέτρα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,
οὔτε τι ναυτιλίης σεσοφισμένος οὔτε τι νηῶν.
οὐ γάρ πώ ποτε νηὶ γ’ἐπέπλων εὐρέα πόντον, (650)
εἰ μὴ ἐς Εὔβοιαν ἐξ Αὐλίδος, ᾗ ποτ’ Ἀχαιοὶ
μείναντες χειμῶνα πολὺν σὺν λαὸν ἄγειραν
Ἑλλάδος ἐξ ἱερῆς Τροίην ἐς καλλιγύναικα.
ἔνθα δ’ ἐγὼν ἐπ’ ἄεθλα δαΐφρονος Ἀμφιδάμαντος
Χαλκίδα τ’ εἰσεπέρησα· τὰ δὲ προπεφραδμένα πολλὰ (655)
ἄεθλ’ ἔθεσαν παῖδες μεγαλήτορες· ἔνθα μέ φημι
ὕμνῳ νικήσαντα φέρειν τρίποδ’ ὠτώεντα.
τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ Μούσῃσ’ Ἑλικωνιάδεσσ’ ἀνέθηκα
ἔνθα με τὸ πρῶτον λιγυρῆς ἐπέβησαν ἀοιδῆς.
τόσσον τοι νηῶν γε πεπείρημαι πολυγόμφων· (660)
ἀλλὰ καὶ ὣς ἐρέω Ζηνὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο·
Μοῦσαι γάρ μ’ ἐδίδαξαν ἀθέσφατον ὕμνον ἀείδειν.
Ἤματα πεντήκοντα μετὰ τροπὰς ἠελίοιο,
Ἤματα πεντήκοντα μετὰ τροπὰς ἠελίοιο,
ἐς τέλος ἐλθόντος θέρεος, καματώδεος ὥρης,
ὡραῖος πέλεται θνητοῖς πλόος· οὔτε κε νῆα (665)

καυάξαις οὔτ’ ἄνδρας ἀποφθείσειε θάλασσα,
εἰ δὴ μὴ πρόφρων γε Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων
ἢ Ζεὺς ἀθανάτων βασιλεὺς ἐθέλῃσιν ὀλέσσαι·
ἐν τοῖς γὰρ τέλος ἐστὶν ὁμῶς ἀγαθῶν τε κακῶν τε.
τῆμος δ’ εὐκρινέες τ’ αὖραι καὶ πόντος ἀπήμων· (670)
εὔκηλος τότε νῆα θοὴν ἀνέμοισι πιθήσας
ἑλκέμεν ἐς πόντον φόρτον τ’ ἐς πάντα τίθεσθαι·
σπεύδειν δ’ ὅττι τάχιστα πάλιν οἶκόνδε νέεσθαι
μηδὲ μένειν οἶνόν τε νέον καὶ ὀπωρινὸν ὄμβρον
καὶ χειμῶν’ ἐπιόντα Νότοιό τε δεινὰς ἀήτας, (675)
ὅς τ’ ὤρινε θάλασσαν ὁμαρτήσας Διὸς ὄμβρῳ
πολλῷ ὀπωρινῷ, χαλεπὸν δέ τε πόντον ἔθηκεν.
ἄλλος δ’ εἰαρινὸς πέλεται πλόος ἀνθρώποισιν·
ἦμος δὴ τὸ πρῶτον, ὅσον τ’ ἐπιβᾶσα κορώνη
ἴχνος ἐποίησεν, τόσσον πέταλ’ ἀνδρὶ φανήῃ (680)
ἐν κράδῃ ἀκροτάτῃ, τότε δ’ ἄμβατός ἐστι θάλασσα·
εἰαρινὸς δ’ οὗτος πέλεται πλόος· οὔ μιν ἔγωγε
αἴνημ’, οὐ γὰρ ἐμῷ θυμῷ κεχαρισμένος ἐστίν·
ἁρπακτός· χαλεπῶς κε φύγοις κακόν· ἀλλά νυ καὶ τὰ
ἄνθρωποι ῥέζουσιν ἀιδρείῃσι νόοιο· (685)
χρήματα γὰρ ψυχὴ πέλεται δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν.
δεινὸν δ’ ἐστὶ θανεῖν μετὰ κύμασιν· ἀλλά σ’ ἄνωγα
φράζεσθαι τάδε πάντα μετὰ φρεσὶν ὡς ἀγορεύω.
μηδ’ ἐν νηυσὶν ἅπαντα βίον κοίλῃσι τίθεσθαι,
ἀλλὰ πλέω λείπειν, τὰ δὲ μείονα φορτίζεσθαι· (690)
δεινὸν γὰρ πόντου μετὰ κύμασι πήματι κύρσαι·
δεινὸν δ’ εἴ κ’ ἐπ’ ἄμαξαν ὑπέρβιον ἄχθος ἀείρας
ἄξονα καυάξαις καὶ φορτία μαυρωθείη.
μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καιρὸς δ’ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος

“If now the desire to go to sea (disagreeable as it is) has hold of you: when the Pleiades, running before Orion’s grim strength, are plunging into the misty sea, then the blasts of every kind of wind rage; at this time do not keep ships on the wine-faced sea, but work the earth assiduously, as I tell you. Pull the ship onto land and pack it with stones all around to withstand the fury of the wet-blowing winds, taking out the plug so that heaven’s rains do not cause rot. Lay away all the tackle under lock in your house, tidily stowing the wings of the sea-going vessel; hang the well-crafted steering-oar up in the smoke; and wait till the time for sailing comes.

Then drag the swift ship to the sea, and in it arrange your cargo fittingly so that you may win profit for your return; just as my father and yours, foolish Perses, used to sail in ships in want of fair livelihood. And one day he came here, making the long crossing from Aeolian Cyme in his dark ship, not running from riches, nor from wealth and prosperity, but from evil poverty, which Zeus dispenses to men. And he settled near Helicon, in a miserable village, Ascra, bad in winter, foul in summer, good at no time.

But you, Perses, must attend to all tasks in season, and in the matter of seafaring above all. Compliment a small ship, but put your cargo in a big one: bigger will be the cargo, bigger the extra gain, provided that the winds withhold their ill blasts.

When you want to escape debt and joyless hunger by turning your blight-witted heart to trade, I will show you the measure of the resounding sea – quite without instruction as I am either in seafaring or in ships; for as to ships, I have never yet sailed the broad sea, except to Euboea from Aulis, the way the Achaeans once came when they waited through the winter and gathered a great army from holy Greece against Troy of the fair women. There to the funeral games for warlike Amphidamas and to Chalcis I crossed, and many were the prizes announced and displayed by the sons of that valiant; where I may say that I was victorious in poetry and won a tripod with ring handles. That I dedicated to the Muses of Helicon, in the original place where they set me on the path of fine singing. That is all my experience of dowelled ships, but even so I will tell the design of Zeus the aegis-bearer, since the Muses have taught me to make song without limit.

For fifty days after the solstice, when the summer has entered its last stage, the season of fatigue, then is the time for mortals to sail. You are not likely to smash your ship, nor the sea to destroy the crew, unless it be that of set mind Poseidon the earth-shaker or Zeus king of the immortals wants to destroy them, for in their hands lies the outcome of good and bad things alike. At that time the breezes are well defined and the sea harmless. Then without anxiety, trusting the winds, drag your swift ship into the sea and put all cargo aboard. But make haste to come home again as quickly as you can, and do not wait for the new wine and the autumn rains, the onset of winter and the fearsome blasts of the South Wind, which stirs up the sea as it comes with heaven's plentiful rains of autumn, and makes the waves rough.

There is another time for men to sail in the spring. As soon as the size of the crow's footprint is matched by the aspect of the leaves on the end of the fig-branch, then the sea is suitable for embarkation. This is the spring sailing. I do not recommend it; it is not to my heart's liking. A snatched sailing: you would have difficulty in avoiding trouble. But men do even that in their folly, because property is as life to wretched mortals. But it is a fearful thing to die among the waves. I suggest that you bear this in mind, as I tell you it.

And do not put all your substance in ship's holds, but leave the greater part and ship the lesser; for it is a fearful thing to meet with disaster among the waves of the sea, and a fearful thing if you put too great a burden up on your cart and smash the axle and the cargo is spoiled. Observe due measure; opportuneness is best in everything." (*Works and Days,* 618-94).[21]

The above lines about seafaring are commonly known as the *Nautilia*, a digression that has intrigued scholars on account of its great length, especially as Hesiod claims that he lacks experience in this area. West states that Proclus rejected much of this passage,

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[21] Translated by West (1988) 55-7.

specifically vv.650-62, which he believed to be an interpolation.[22] West also notes that the sophist Alcidamas used this passage as a basis for his story of a contest between Homer and Hesiod, now rightly regarded as a fictional event.

The passage may be divided into three parts. A central section, the *sphragis* (646-662), contains the autobiographical details of Hesiod's one and only sea voyage to participate in a poetic competition in Euboea at the funeral games of Amphidamas. He recounts that he was victorious in this contest, winning a tripod which he brought home and dedicated to the Heliconian Muses. This section is flanked by vv.618-641 and vv.663-694, which offer advice on sailing.

Rosen has expanded on a suggestion by Nagy that the comparison between the voyage of the heroic-age Greeks from Aulis to Troy and that of Hesiod from Aulis to Euboea may be an intentional allusion to the difference between Homeric and Hesiodic poetry.[23] Rosen proposes, in fact, that the entire *Nautilia* is an αἴνιγμα comparing the poetics of *Works and Days* with those of Homeric epic, and it will be useful to summarize the essential points of his paper.

Rosen's starting point for this interpretation is the paradox contained in the *sphragis*: Hesiod says "I will show you the measure (μετρά) of the resounding sea – quite without instruction (σοφία) as I am either in seafaring or in ships. These words usually go together: whoever knew the μετρά had σοφία in this activity.[24] Any σοφία that Hesiod has appears to come, not from sailing, but from the Heliconian Muses (vv.658-60). Moreover, in archaic poetry, the word σοφία commonly referred to poetic skill.[25] Thus, what Hesiod is referring to is his **poetic** inability to sing of sailing, or, more specifically, to sing poetry about sailing, that is, Homeric epic. There then follow twelve lines about his own voyage, which he compares with that of the Heroic Greeks and ends with his claim that the Heliconian Muses are the source of his inspiration. The reader's focus has, argues Rosen, been cleverly shifted away from seafaring to poetic competition and the Muses.

Rosen then shows that once the possibility of a metaphorical reading of the *sphragis* can be established, it can be applied to the *Nautilia* as a whole. The poor farmer can now be seen as an analogue for the Hesiodic poet of the earth: just as the farmer works the land, the Hesiodic poet sings about it. If the farmer/poet is unsuccessful with his work/poetry, he seeks

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[22] West (1978) 319. Proclus was a 5th century Neoplatonist, who argued for the superiority of this poem over the *Theogony*, because of its educative nature. It is easy to see, therefore, that he would have seen these lines as redundant in such a poem.

[23] Rosen (1990) 99-113. He cites Nagy (1982) 62.

[24] On this, Rosen (1990) 101 cites Solon 13.52; Stesichorus S.89.7f Page; Theognis 876.

[25] Rosen (1990) 102 specifically cites Theognis 769-72, as well as a comprehensive list of secondary literature.

to escape this failure by undertaking a voyage/Homeric poetry. Hesiod's success at the funeral games is an example of the poet knowing the right season (τὸ ὡραῖον) for sailing/composing heroic poetry. It is to be assumed that Hesiod's poetic victory was for a poem that, in some limited way, was an attempt at heroic poetry, and West suggests that it may have been the *Theogony*, or a lesser version of it.[26] Hesiod's own father is an illustration of the poor father who is driven by poverty to the sea. Rosen sees father and son as negative and positive exempla: where the father fails on land and sea because of his ignorance of τὸ ὡραῖον, Hesiod is successful with both his poetry about the land and with his one minor venture into the realm of epic.

Rosen draws evidence from outside the *sphragis* to back up his interpretation. He draws attention to the paradox contained in v.618: "If now the desire (ἵμερος) to go to sea (disagreeable though it is) has hold of you". The word ἵμερος is usually, he says, associated with pleasure and it entails passion and emotion, whereas in this situation the desire has been prompted by poverty and hunger. This paradox is resolved, however, in the *sphragis,* when we see that the motivation for sailing equates with the motivation to compose poetry. In v.628 the word πτερὰ (wings) refer on the practical level to the sails of the ship and are a common metaphor for both the sails and the oars. But πτερὰ is also a metaphor for poetry, as particularly demonstrated by Theognis 237-50, a passage that manifestly draws on Hesiodic terminology. Thus Hesiod's injunction to (εὐκόσμως) store the wings tidily may be interpreted on the metaphorical level as an aesthetic comment about poetry. Earlier in the poem, in vv.582ff, Hesiod states that the time for relaxation for the farmer is when the cicada is singing in the trees:

> Ἦμος δὲ σκόλυμός τ' ἀνθεῖ καὶ ἠχέτα τέττιξ
> δενδρέῳ ἐφεζόμενος λιγυρὴν καταχεύετ' ἀοιδὴν
>
> "when the golden thistle is in flower and the noisy cicada sitting in the tree
> pours down its clear song…"

The word that Hesiod chooses for the cicada's song is ἀοιδή (v.583), which evokes human poetic song, rather than the sound that emanates from the stridulation of the cicada's wings. This word reappears in relation to the Muses in v.659, where the same adjective and the same noun occur in the same metrical *sedes*:

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[26] West (1978) 321.

> ἔνθα με τὸ πρῶτον **λιγυρῆς** ἐπέβησαν **ἀοιδῆς.**
>
> "..where they set me on the path of fine singing."

The image of the cicada may therefore be seen as an *ainos*, or 'fable', in which the cicada represents the poet.[27] Rosen posits another possible *ainos* in the final section of the *Nautilia*, where in v.680 he identifies the other season for sailing as that when the crow's footprint matches the leaves of the fig-branch. Here the crow may represent the poet, an image used later by Pindar (*O.* 2.86 and *Nem.* 3.82), and the footprint the poetry. Such a reading is encouraged by the terminology that Hesiod uses for his dislike of springtime sailing in v.683 (οὐ γαρ ἐμω θυμῷ κεχαρισμένος ἐστιν : "it is not to my heart's liking"), which, he says, embody an aesthetic judgement.

Rosen deflects anticipated hesitation on the part of his readers to accept that an archaic poet such as Hesiod was capable of such Alexandrian-style metapoetics by pointing out that Hesiod was manifestly interested in his craft. Nevertheless, his argument is not altogether convincing. Firstly, there are glaring inconsistencies in his metapoetic interpretation: Rosen draws a parallel between the farmer/Hesiodic poet and the sailor/Homeric poet and states that the farmer/Hesiodic poet sings his song in the heat of the summer "at the same time" as the sailor/Homeric poet sets sail (p.108), having already said that high summer is the appropriate time to sail. Why then does he state that the sailor is sailing "out of season" because he has failed at farming? Why also does Rosen say that Hesiod's father failed at sailing when there is no mention of his ever having been shipwrecked? And finally, why would a poet turn to higher Homeric-style poetry in the event of failure to compose in the lower Hesiodic style? Furthermore, I find it difficult to accept that either Hesiod or his audience were capable of the literary subtlety that Rosen suggests. This kind of detailed allegory seems characteristic of a much later period, and it is hard to imagine an archaic audience as equipped to 'decode' it.

Nevertheless, it does seem possible that the *Nautilia* is to some degree a literary polemic, albeit on a much smaller scale. Hesiod may well have inserted the mention of the voyage of the Greeks from Aulis to Troy as a nod at Homeric epic and an assertion that he himself, despite his brief and victorious foray into such poetry, was a different type of poet. It

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[27] On the *ainos* in archaic Greek poetry, see Lamberton (1988) 150-1. Callimachus famously likens himself to the cicada in the prologue to *Aetia* 1.

is also possible that a poet such as Callimachus may have retrospectively imposed a metapoetic dimension on Hesiod's *Nautilia* when he evokes that poet's denunciation of seafaring in fr. 178 Pf., where a stranger from Icus envies the poet for his life "ignorant of seafaring", compared to his own "on the waves". As will be seen, Callimachus regularly availed of the metaphorical possibilities of water, and it is plausible that Homer was not his only archaic source of such imagery.

Pindar.

It is striking that in Homer, whereas there are a great number of similes, there are very few metaphors. This can partly be explained by the demands of the genre of epic, in which the narrator's job is to unfold gradually a long sequence of events and the long simile allows the listener to assimilate the information slowly while also allowing the narrator to portray his scene vividly. Pindar has little use for the grand comparison in the Homeric manner, preferring the brief comparisons introduced by a simple ὣς, ὣσπερ, ὣς ὅτε, ὣτε, κατά, etc. The supreme image for this poet is, however, the metaphor, the legacy of his lyric and elegiac predecessors.

Pindar drew his imagery from nature and everyday life, and one of his most frequent metaphors is the maritime one.[28] It is hardly surprising that Pindar should appeal to the sea for his imagery. It was an integral part of the Greeks' existence: they traded, fought and colonised by the sea, and Pindar wrote often for the citizens of Aegina, Corinth and Rhodes – great soldiers and sailors who could grasp without difficulty a poetry that was expressed in terms that were drawn from their own everyday world. Moreover, the very nature of the sea lent itself to the poet's task; capricious and unstable, kind one minute and cruel the next, it served as an admirable paradigm for life's vicissitudes. The image of the sea voyage representing one's voyage through life moreover served as fundamental to all the other maritime images, allowing great latitude to the poet: adversity could be represented by opposing winds, storms, shipwreck; good fortune by calm conditions; the end of the experience of life by the arrival into harbour.

In Homer, the sea is a notoriously hostile place and the source of chaos, disorder, passion and death. By contrast, the fresh water of streams and fountains provides safety and

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[28] On Pindar's maritime imagery, see Peron (1974).

peace, and engenders creation.[29] This is well exemplified in *Od*.5.282-463, where Odysseus, having been tossed off his raft into the wild and bitter sea as a result of the cruel wrath of Poseidon, prays to the river god to deliver him from certain death. The river obliges him and glides him to safety in his smooth current. Such a polarity is fundamental in Pindar. As with the lyric poets and the tragedians, misfortune at sea came regularly to represent any kind of reversal, and the most common maritime metaphor is that of the sea voyage.[30] The Ship of State had been used before Pindar by such poets as Archilochus, Alcaeus and Theognis, where the helmsman represented the aristocratic rulers in a city's constitution. Pindar also avails of this metaphor, such as in *P.* 1.85-92, where he advises Hieron to steer his people with the "rudder of justice". More commonly, however, he applies the image of the sea voyage to life in general, such as *N.* 7.17-18, where he exploits the mariners' ability to predict the winds as a metaphor for foresight; *O.* 12.1-10, where men's hopes are tossed high and low on a treacherous sea; caution is advised in *O.* 6.100-1 by means of the metaphor of putting down two anchors on a stormy night, and in *N.* 6.55-7 by the maxim that it is the wave that is nearest the ship that causes most concern to mariners.

Occasionally Pindar also sees his poetry as a voyage: ἤ μέ τις ἄνεμος ἔξω πλόου / ἔβαλεν, ὡς ὅτ' ἄκατον ενναλίαν; "or did some wind throw me off course, like a small boat at sea?" (*P.* 11.39-40); and θυμέ, τίνα πρὸς ἀλλοδαπὰν / ἄκράν ἐμὸν πλόον παραμείβεαι; "my heart, to what alien headland are you turning aside my ship's course?" (*N.* 3.26-27).[31] There is also one unusual instance of his poetry being a product of the sea: in *N.* 7.79 Pindar depicts the Muse as fashioning a jewel (of poetry) from the "lily flower" taken from the "dew of the sea": Μοῖσα τοι / κολλᾷ χρυσὸν ἔν τε λευκὸν ἐλέφανθ' ἁμᾷ / καὶ λείριον ἄνθεμον ποντίας ὑφελοῖο ἐέρσας. [32] Here he combines the fresh water associated with the Muses with the salt water of the sea, as if to emphasize that the sea is the origin of all water.

Nevertheless, the overriding metaphorical application of the sea is as a negative force, and most commonly it is associated with fear, unhappiness, danger and adversity.[33]

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[29] On water imagery in the *Iliad*, and the importance of the ancient antithesis between saltwater and freshwater in the plot of that epic, see Fenno (2005) 475-504.

[30] See, for example, Euripides *Hippol.* Passim; Sophocles *Trach.* 112-22 and 144-50. See also O.Becker: *Das Bild des Weges* (1937) 153 and A.Lesky: *Thalatta des Weges der Griechen Zum Meer* (1947) 228. (Both as cited by Peron). See also Plato *Phaedrus* 243D.

[31] Translated by William H. Race (Loeb).

[32] On these lines, and on the Ode in general, see Segal (1967) 431-480.

[33] See, for example, *O.* 1.71; *P.* 2.79-8; *N.* 6.55-7; *I.* 4.21-22; *N.*4.36-38.

We have one clear example of Pindar contrasting the fertility of water with the sterility of the sea, in terms of his poetry: in the second *Partheneion* (vv.80-82) he advises two conquerors to drink from his nectar (νεκτάρ), rather than the briny water (ἁλμυρόν) dispensed by the poetry of his rivals.[34] There are also *Nem.* 4.36, where the 'deep sea' (βαθεῖα...ἅλμα) represents the enemies of the poet, and frag. 104d 33-38 Schröder, where Pindar describes his poetry as the 'siren voice' (σειρῆνα) which 'silences the sudden blasts of the west wind' and brings calm when the sea is raging.

When water is a metaphor for his poetry or his poetic inspiration he appears to draw a distinction between sea water and water from rivers and springs. Here he combines both the Homeric and Hesiodic image of speech as flowing "sweeter than honey" (e.g. *Il.* 1.249) and Hesiod's association of water with the Muses and inspiration. His own version of the Hippocrene is the Dirce, situated in his home of Thebes:

> πίσω σφε Δίρκας ἁγνὸν ὕ-
> δωρ, τὸ βαθύζωνοι κόραι
> χρυσοπέπ_λου Μναμοσύνας ἀνέτει-
> λαν παρ' εὐτειχέσιν Κάδμου πύλαις.
>
> "I shall give him to drink of the pure water of Dirce, which the deep-zoned daughters of golden-robed Memory made to gush forth beside the noble gates of the walls of Cadmus." (*I.* 6.74-76.)[35]

In *P.* 9. 79-89, only a dumb man does not always remember Dircean waters, which nourished Heracles and Iphicles, and it is from these waters that Pindar quenches his thirst for songs (vv.103-4). As Dirce is the nourishing source of the land and the people of Thebes, so it is the source of the poetry of Pindar, their very own poet. He also refers to the Castalian waters associated with the Muses of Parnassus (*Paean* 6.7-9). More generally, his poetry is a spring (*P.* 4.299), or dew (*Pyth.* 5.98-100; *Nem.* 3.78; *Isthm.* 6.64). It is a drink (*Nem.*3.79) for which one has a thirst (*Pyth.* 9.103; *Nem.* 3.6-7), which one drinks (*Ol.*6.85-6), with which one soaks oneself (*Isthm.* 6.74), which one distils (*Isthm.* 4.75), or which one pours as a libation (*Ol.* 10.98; *Isthm.* 6.9; *Ol.* 6.92; *Isthm.* 6.92; *Ol.* 7.8). In one place it is even a precious mixture of honey, milk and dew (*Nem.* 3.76-79). In all these instances of freshness, brilliance, sweetness and harmony, the common feature is the invigorating value of water: as

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[34] μὴ νῦν νέκτα[ρ ἔχοντ' ἀπό κρὰ]νας ἐμᾶς διψῶντ' α[λλότριον ῥόον] παρ' ἁλμυρόν οἴχεσθον. On this, see Poliakoff (1980) 43.

[35] Translated by Sandys (Loeb).

water does to plants, Pindar's poetry endows everything it touches with life, and makes it bloom. The identification of poetry with sweet water leads one to assume that when Pindar uses the image of the wave in relation to glory for the *laudandus*, he is generally referring to the waves generated by rivers and streams, rather than those from the sea, particularly when the Muses are also mentioned, since such is their natural habitat. [36]

To sum up, water imagery is profoundly important in Pindar's poetry. The imagery of the sea is a multi-valent symbol but generally associated with hardship and adversity, a capricious force to be overcome. Its most usual application is to the vicissitudes of life, but it occasionally applies to poetry in its most general sense as a voyage to be undertaken, fraught with risk and difficulty. Fresh water, on the other hand, is a positive symbol and is the most common metaphor for his poetry. Here, he appears to be drawing from both Hesiod and Homer in his depiction of his song as sweet, honeyed, dew, and from the springs of the Muses, but more often than not he localizes his inspirational spring, which is his beloved Dirce. Theocritus and Horace will follow this precedent.

Callimachus and his Poetics.

When discussing Callimachean poetics, the three passages that are most often cited are the Prologue to *Aetia* 1, the Epilogue to the *Hymn to Apollo*, and the epigram that is *AP*. 12.43 (=28Pf). The first two in particular are now viewed as virtual manifestoes of Callimachus' poetic programme. Significantly, each of these passages is closely associated with water.

The Prologue to Aitia 1.

The Prologue to the *Aitia* is riddled with difficulties, but we are happily somewhat aided in our understanding of it by the fragmentary remains of several ancient commentaries. The Florentine scholia begin with a quotation of the opening line of the Prologue, and then supply names for the Telchines (Praxiphanes, Asclepiades, Posidippus, Dionysius). The scholia then inform us that Callimachus cites the poems of Mimnermus and Philetas, and that Callimachus recounts how "in a dream, newly bearded, he met the Muses on Helicon and got from them the explanation of causes….taking the beginning of his discourse from them."

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[36] On maritime images in Pindar see Peron (1974) and Steiner (1986) 66-75.

This encounter with the Muses recalls the opening of the *Theogony*, where Hesiod meets the Muses on Helicon and receives from them the subject matter of his poem, but unlike Hesiod, Callimachus deals first with his critics, as shown below:

ι μοι Τελχῖνες ἐπιτρύζουσιν ἀ⌊οιδῇ,
νήιδες οἳ Μούσης οὐκ ἐγένοντο φίλοι,
εἵνεκεν οὐχ ἓν ἄεισμα διηνεκὲς ἢ βασιλη
……]ας ἐν πολλαῖς ἤνυσα χιλιάσιν
ἢ……] ους ἥρωας, ἔπος δ’ ἐπὶ τυτθὸν ἑλίσσω (5)
παῖς ἅτε, τῶν δ’ ἐτέων ἡ δεκὰς οὐκ ὀλίγη.
…..]και Τελχῖσιν ἐγὼ τόδε· _‘φῦλον α⌊
…….] τήκειν ἧ παρ ἐπιστάμενον,
…..]ρεη̣ν ὀλιγόστιχος· ἀλλὰ καθέλκει
……]πολὺ τὴν μακρὴν ὄμπνια Θεσμοφόρος· (10)
τοῖν δὲ] δ̣υ̣οῖν Μίμνερμος ὅτι γλυκύς, αἱ κατὰ λεπτόν
…….]ἡ μεγάλη δ’ οὐκ ἐδίδαξε γυνή.
……..,]ο̣ν ἐπὶ Θρήϊκας ἀπ’ Αἰγύπτοιο πέτοιτο
αἵμα̣ι̣ Π̣υ̣γμαίων ἡδο̣μ̣ένη γέρανος,
Μασσαγ̣έ̣ται καὶ μακρὸν ὀϊστεύοιεν ἐπ’ ἄνδρα (15)
Μῆδον· ἀ̣ηδονίδες δ̣’ ὧδε μελιχρότεραι.
ἔλλετε Βασκανίης ὀλοὸν γένος· αὖθι δὲ τέχνῃ
κρίνετε, μὴ σχοίνῳ Περσίδι τὴν σοφίην·
μηδ’ ἀπ’ ἐμεῦ διφᾶ τε μέγα ψοφέουσαν ἀοιδήν
τίκτεσθαι· βροντᾶν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός.’_ (20)
καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα
γούνασιν, Ἀπόλλων εἶπεν ὅ μοι Λύκιος·
“………] ἀοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅττι πάχιστον
θρέψαι, τὴ̣ν Μοῦσαν δ’ ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην·
πρὸς δέ σε] καὶ τόδ’ ἄνωγα, τὰ μὴ πατέουσιν ἅμαξαι (25)
τὰ στείβειν, ἑτέρων ἴχνια μὴ καθ’ ὁμά
δίφρον ἐλ]ᾶ̣ν μηδ’ οἶμον ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους
ἀτρίπτο]υ̣ς, εἰ καὶ στειν̣οτέρην ἐλάσεις.’_
τῷ πιθόμην· ἐνὶ τοῖς γὰρ ἀείδομεν οἳ λιγὺν ἦχον
τέττιγος, θ]όρυβον δ’ οὐκ ἐφίλησαν ὄνων. (30)
θηρὶ μὲν οὐατόεντι πανείκελον ὀγκήσαιτο
ἄλλος, ἐγ]ὼ δ’ εἴην οὑ̣λαχύς, ὁ πτερόεις,
ἆ πάντως, ἵνα γῆρας ἵνα δρόσον ἣν μὲν ἀείδω
πρώκιον ἐκ δίης ἠέρος εἶδαρ ἔδων,

αὖθι τὸ̣ δ̣’ ἐκδύοιμι, τό μοι βάρος ὅσσον ἔπεστι (35)
  τριγλ̣ῴχι̣ν ὀλοῷ̣ νῆσος ἐπ’ Ἐγκελάδῳ̣.
.......] Μοῦσαι γὰρ ὅσους ἴδον ὄθματι παῖδας
  μὴ λοξῷ, πολιοὺς οὐκ ἀπέθεντο φίλους.

"The Telchines often mumble against my poetry – ignorant and not born friends of the Muse – because I did not accomplish one continuous poem in many thousands of verses on kings or….heroes, but like a child I [unroll] my poem little by little, though the decades of my years are not few….to the Telchines I say: '…race….who know how to rot your liver [ie with envy/malice],….of few lines but the fertile Thesmophorus far outweighs the long…. of the two poems the small-scale, not the large woman, taught that Mimnermus is sweet….May the crane, which delights in the blood of Pygmies, [fly] from Egypt to the Thracians, and may the Massegetai shoot from afar at the [Median] soldier. [Nightingales] are sweeter like this. Off with you, wretched race of Malice! In future [judge] fine poetry by art, not by the Persian *schoinos*. Do not look to me for the birth of a loud-resounding poem: thundering is not my job but Zeus'.' When I first placed the writing-tablet on my knees, Apollo, the Lycian one, said to me: '….poet, [feed] the sacrificial victim to be as fat as possible, but, my good friend, nourish a slender Muse. [Moreover], this too I bid you: proceed on paths not trodden by wagons, do not [drive your chariot] in the common tracks of others nor on the broad highway, but on [unworn] roads, even if you will drive a narrower path. We sing among those who love the pure sound of [cicadas], not the raucous noise of donkeys.' Let [another] bray like the long-eared beast, but may I be the light one, the winged one; ah yes, that I may sing feeding upon the dew from the divine air, and old age, may I shed it – it weighs upon me like the three-cornered island [ie Sicily] upon terrible Enceladus….All those upon the Muses have looked with straight eye as children, they do not expel them from their friendship when they are grey.' (Callimachus fr. 1.1-38).[37]

The section relating the dream is missing, but Callimachus seems to have described falling asleep and dreaming of his encounter with the Muses. Upon awakening, he prepares to report what the Muses have imparted to them, and asks them to "remind me…of the answers" (51 Pf). Additional scholia gloss the Aganippe as "a fountain on Helicon", which a surviving line of Callimachus calls "maiden daughter of Aonian Permessus."(55 Pf). A fragment, preserved on a separate papyrus, and believed to be part of the prologue also, records the experience of Hesiod on Helicon:

ποιμένι μῆλα νέμοντι παρ’ ἴχνιον ὀξέος ἵππου
 Ἡσιόδ⌋ῳ̣ Μουσέων ἑσμὸς ὅτ’ ἠντίασεν
μ̣έν οἱ Χάεος γενεσ̣[

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[37] Translated by Hunter and Fantuzzi (2002) 68. For a thorough analysis of this passage, see Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2002) 238-255, who reveal the profound extent of Callimachus' engagement with his literary predecessors and contemporaries.

] ἐπὶ πτέρν̣ης ὑδα[
τεύχων ὡς ἑτέρῳ τις ἑῷ κακὸν ἥπατι τεύχει

When the Muses swarmed up to Hesiod
the shepherd, grazing his flock
where the swift horse left its print...
[they told him]...of Chaos born...
...water bursting at heel...
and that 'Evil devised against another
eats the heart of its deviser.[38]

Clausen, writing in 1964, was representative of the prevailing opinion that Callimachus had an aesthetic objection to epic; that for this poet Hesiod was imitable but Homer inimitable; that the *Aitia* was written as a substitute for epic.[39] He argued that Ennius imitated Callimachus' dream in order to be "polemical and anti-Callimachean", that Parthenius was responsible for Callimachus' later popularity in Rome, and that Vergil was never comfortable with his decision to go seemingly against his Callimachean principles and compose his epic that was the *Aeneid,* even going so far to suggest that his deathbed request for its destruction indicated that "just possibly, some Callimachean scruples haunted Vergil to the end".[40]

The conviction, prevalent since the nineteenth century, that Callimachus hated epic has been strongly challenged in recent decades. Although allowing that the Roman poets certainly availed of Callimachean language – particularly that of the Prologue – to avoid epic, scholars such as Ross, Hutchinson and Thomas have argued that this does not necessarily mean that Callimachus himself was against epic.[41] By adapting Callimachus to their own poetic agenda, the Roman poets distorted his original message, which Thomas, foreshadowing Cameron, has suggested was not so much about genre as style.

Cameron rejects any suggestion that Callimachus was against the genre of epic *per se,* pointing out that the *Hecale* was an epic, albeit of a very different type to the grandiloquent Homeric one.[42] He argues that there is scant evidence of large scale epic in the century or so preceding Callimachus, and that the focus of Callimachus' criticism is not epic, but a particular style of elegiac poetry, such as that displayed by Antimachus' *Lyde* whose long-

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[38] Translated by Nisetich (2001) 65.
[39] Clausen (1964) 181-196.
[40] Clausen (1964) 196.
[41] Ross (1975) 142; Hutchinson (1988) 283; Thomas (1993) 199-204.
[42] Cameron (1995) 263-302.

winded and bombastic style he considered unsuitable for elegy. Harder, reviewing Cameron's book, agrees that the prologue is not about genre but style, but she considers that Cameron's thesis that it is about *elegiac* style is too limited, and that Callimachus is talking about poetic style in general.[43] Barbantani argues from the evidence of papyri that the type of elegy that Callimachus is objecting to is not erotic-mythological elegy, but historical/encomiastic elegy, of which Mimnermus' *Smirneis* is an example, and which Callimachus criticises when referring to it as the μεγάλη γυνή in the prologue.[44] But, she argues, this elegy was similarly objectionable because of its overblown and bombastic content and cites examples from papyri. Whatever type of elegy Callimachus may or may not approve of, it seems clear that he believed that the grandiloquent style appropriate to epic had no place in elegy, which should be λεπτός and learned.

The role of water in all this encourages the interpretation that Callimachus' main concern is literary style, more than anything else. The complaint of the Telchines appears to be about length. The "monotonous uninterrupted poem" that they expect is suggestive of the 'Cyclic' poems, clumsy imitations of Homer and lacking in originality. According to Diod. 5.55-1, the Telchines were "sons of the sea" (υἶοι θαλάττης), and their principal characteristic was that they were envious (φθονεροί).[45] In *Iamb.* 2.12-3, Callimachus accuses writers of tragedy, a genre that he despised, as talking "like fishes in the sea". The sea that is evoked by both of these groups is reminiscent of the Pindaric ἁλμυρόν (briny water) of bad poetry. Pindar is again alluded to when Callimachus compares himself to the cicada, feeding on dew, a common metaphor for the earlier poet, and the cicada also recalls the Hesiodic passage in the *Works and Days* (582-597), in which the poet identifies the season of the singing cicadas as the appropriate time to rest (and compose poetry?).[46] Callimachus is therefore identifying with both of these poets stylistically: he is concerned with producing poetry that is the product of the clear springs of the Muses, attenuated, refined, and untainted.

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[43] Harder (2002) 606. She points out that the Prologue contains a large number of allusions, not just to elegy, but to a variety of genres, and also refers to some passages of literary criticism. She concludes: "the evidence rather suggests that fr.1 must be read as referring to poetic style and quality in general, touching on values and criteria that are applicable to a variety of poetic genres, of course including elegy, but not restricted to it. The 'message' may well be that a poet should aim for the quality of small-scale, subtle and original poetry, and the reader seems to be invited to read this message against the background of a kaleidoscopic and allusive picture of earlier Greek poetry and earlier literary criticism." (607-8).

[44] Barbantani (2005) 29-47.

[45] Whether or not the Telchines refer to real people is not germane to this discussion. The important point is that they are detractors of Callimachus' poetry, and that, more than anything else, he purports to be responding to their criticism. On the question of the possible identity of the Telchines, see Spanoudakis (2001) 425-441.

[46] The cicadas, of course, were born from men who, according to Socrates in Plato's *Phaedrus*, loved singing so much that they forgot to eat. Those who manage to stay awake during their song are rewarded with the inspiration of the Muses (259b-c). Thus, as well as feeding on a diet of dew, their association with the Muses links them also with springs.

Hymn to Apollo v.105-113.

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ’ οὔατα λάθριος εἶπεν·
‘οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ’ ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει.’
τὸν Φθόνον ὡπόλλων ποδί τ’ ἤλασεν ὧδέ τ’ ἔειπεν·
_‘Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλά
λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ’ ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἕλκει.
Δηοῖ δ’ οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
ἀλλ’ ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.’_
χαῖρε, ἄναξ· ὁ δὲ Μῶμος, ἵν’ ὁ Φθόνος, ἔνθα νέοιτο.

> “Envy spoke privately into Apollo’s ear: ‘I do not admire the poet who does not sing like the sea.’ Apollo gave Envy a kick and said: ‘Great is the stream of the Assyrian river, but it carries much filth and refuse in its waters. And the bees do not bring water from everywhere to Demeter, but only the pure and undefiled stream that trickles from a holy fountain, the best of the best.’ Hail, lord; but let Blame go where Envy dwells.’[47]

Williams, in his commentary of this poem, reads the sea as a reference to Homer, and therefore a “positive standard for what is good in poetry”. He bases this on the perception of Homer as *Oceanus*, the source of all poetry just as the sea is the source of all waters, especially rivers and springs. This image, he maintains, was commonplace in Hellenistic times, and thus Callimachus “accepts the sea, at least tacitly, as a positive standard.”[48] According to Williams, at issue here are both size and purity, and Callimachus is being accused of not emulating *even* the length of Homer’s poems.

Cameron has mounted a plausible challenge to such a view.[49] Firstly, he rejects the notion that the issue here is one of genre, and that Callimachus is being criticised for not writing epic. Secondly he denies that the sea is a positive standard, or representative of Homer. The issue is one of length: the sea rolls on forever, like bad poetry. The Homeric Hymn to Apollo was five times longer than this Hymn, and so Callimachus is answering Envy’s complaint that it is too short. It is then that he brings in the idea of quality, by comparing the large Assyrian river, full of mud and debris, with the small, pure clear spring that represents Callimachus’ poetry.

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[47] Translated by Cameron (1995) 403.
[48] Williams (1978) 85. On the unity of the main body of the *Hymn* and its epilogue, see Bassi (1989) 219-231.
[49] Cameron (1995) 403-8.

Furthermore, Poliakoff cogently argues that Callimachus derived his imagery from Pindar, who associates Apollo, the spring and sweetness, and contrasts the νέκταρ that is his poetry with undesirable water that is ἁλμυρόν.[50] Thus the sea is not a positive standard, but a negative one. Since, however, Callimachus was also aware of Homer's association with the sea, he has Apollo drop this analogy so as not to condemn Homer, and adopt instead the image of the large silt-ridden river.

I would also suggest that Callimachus, by alluding to Pindar in a Hymn that by its title and subject matter evokes the Homeric *Hymn to Delian Apollo*, is deliberately fusing two conflicting symbolic connotations of the sea. When Envy launches his criticism, and says that he does not "like a poet who does not sing like the sea", he is referring to the Homeric hymn.[51] For Envy, the issue is one of length: Callimachus' *Hymn* is too short, unlike the Homeric one which is five times longer. Such limited powers of literary criticism provoke in Apollo an exasperated response: he kicks Envy, because he objects to such a facile interpretation of what constitutes good poetry.[52] His response, therefore, equates the sea with the silt-ridden Euphrates, because he is transforming the connotation of the sea metaphor from that of Homer to that of Pindaric bad poetry, and thus simultaneously transforming the argument from one of length to one of quality. In other words, singing like the sea is not necessarily a good thing, since imitation of Homer entails joining the throng of Cyclic poets who churn out reams of derivative rubbish. The opposite to the Pindaric sea of bad poetry is the fresh water of the springs, and thus by the end, Callimachus has exchanged the Homeric stylistic register for the Pindaric and Hesiodic one.[53]

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[50] Poliakoff (1980) 41-47. He summarises thus: "what the Apollo hymn seems to be saying is that, *pace* Homer, a large poem (πόντος) is by nature undesirable, though its faults may be less conspicuous than the Assyrian river."

[51] Kambylis (1965) 77 notes a parallel between Envy and the sea in the *Hymn to Apollo,* and the sea-born Telchines and the large poem in the *Aitia* prologue, but denies (wrongly in my view) that the Telchines' affiliation with the sea reflects on its status as a literary symbol.

[52] Bassi (1989) 229-30 draws attention to the significance of Apollo's act of kicking Envy with his foot: Aristophanes uses the foot as a metaphor for poetry in the literary contest in *The Frogs* (1323-4). Thus Callimachus can be seen as using the weapon of his poetry to defend himself against his detractors.

[53] Müller (1987) has advanced the plausible theory (endorsed by Bing (1995) 40-1 and Murray (2002) 212-223) that Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter* also contains a metapoetic dimension according to which Demeter stands for Callimachean poetics, while Erysichthon violates their principles. Demeter and her initiates, with their sobriety (they only drink water), their fasting, their night vigils, and their hard work resemble the poets of the Callimachean aesthetic. Moreover, they are commonly known as 'Bees' (Theoc. 15.94), just as the poets are portrayed at the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*. Demeter's grove, with its trees and pure spring water, is threatened by Erysichthon, who wishes to chop it down to create a banquet hall. Such sacrilegious behaviour is punished by Demeter, who afflicts Erysichthon with an incessant ravenous hunger that he is unable to satisfy. The vast supply of food and drink that he consumes is described in terms that recall the filthy Euphrates of the *Hymn to Apollo*: the ἔκβολα λύματα δαιτός (*h.* 6.115) which 'flow' into Erysichthon (κατέρρεεν, 90) and 'dry up' his household (ἀνεξήραναν, 113) ~ πολλὰ λύματα γῆς (*h.* 2. 108-9); and the way in which the food disappears

Epigram *AP* 12.43 = 28Pf.

Ἐχθαίρω τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικὸν οὐδὲ κελεύθῳ
χαίρω, τίς πολλοὺς ὧδε καὶ ὧδε φέρει·
μισῶ καὶ περίφοιτον ἐρώμενον οὐδ’ ἀπὸ κρήνης
πίνω· σικχαίνω πάντα τὰ δημόσια.
Λυσανίη, σὺ δὲ ναίχι καλὸς καλός· ἀλλὰ πρὶν εἰπεῖν
τοῦτο σαφῶς, ἠχώ φησί τις· „Ἄλλος ἔχει.

I loath the Cyclic poem, nor do I take any pleasure in the road that carries many this way and that. I also loath a gadabout lover, nor do I drink from the public fountain. In fact, I detest everything vulgar. Lysanies, you are so, so handsome – but before I get the words out clearly, Echo says 'he's someone else's.' [54]

This poem has also been taken as evidence of Callimachus' objection to epic, 'Cyclic poetry' being understood to represent all post-Homeric epic. Cameron rejects such an interpretation, arguing that Cyclic poetry in the strict sense is poetry about the Trojan war, and that what Callimachus disliked in this sub-Homeric poetry was both its lack of originality in its imitation of Homer and its un-Homeric features of language and style. More controversially, Cameron also rejects the theory that this poem is a programmatic statement about Callimachus' poetry. He agrees that drinking from a fountain could be a literary reference, but believes that in this epigram it is more likely to be a predominantly erotic metaphor after an epigram by Theognis (959-62), where drinking alone is a metaphor for being able to love someone without a rival.[55] The whole poem is primarily erotic, and not a literary statement.

Cameron fails to see any common denominator in the opening catalogue of the four objects of the poet's dislike. He argues that the poet's objection to the public fountain, the gadabout lover and the beautiful Lysanies on the grounds of his need to share them with

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into Erysichthon's mouth corresponds with the declaration by Phthonos in the *Hymn to Apollo*: ἐς βυθὸν οἷα θαλάσσας (*h.* 6. 89-90) ~ ὃς οὐδ ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει (*h.* 2.106).

[54] Translated by Cameron (1995) 387.

[55] Cameron (1995) 389. See also Thomas (1979) 180-7, who argues that the περίφοιτον ἐρώμενον in v.3 refers to the peripatetic lover in Menandrian comedy and that the poet is making a parallel objection to contemporary drama. His suggestion is rejected by Cameron, primarily on the grounds that the term ἐρώμενος "means not (active) lover, but (passive) beloved". While I accept Cameron's objection to Thomas' argument, I fundamentally disagree with his pronouncement (p.389) that attempts to confer a metapoetic reading on this epigram result from "the tedious fallacy of assuming that Callimachus was more interested in poetical theory than poetry." See also Giuliano (1997) 153-73, who interprets the poet's rejection of the common fountain as a refusal to compose verbose and unrefined epic poetry.

others cannot be applied to Cyclic poetry. But when we recall that Callimachus advocated the untrodden path and pure undefiled spring water in relation to his poetry, it is hard to resist the conclusion that the public fountain in particular, but also the other two items because of their lack of exclusivity, represent the very antitheses of his poetic ideals. Moreover, Gutzwiller posits that this epigram is an introductory poem to the erotic section of Callimachus' poetry book, and that he is alluding to Asclepiades' introductory epigram, but in doing so, he is asserting his difference from that poet: while Asclepiades wholeheartedly embraces life's pleasures, Callimachus' tastes are more refined.[56] If the epigram is indeed introductory to the erotic section, it is not improbable that Callimachus would seek to include a literary statement, thus firmly justifying the situation of these epigrams within the collection as a whole. The appearance at the end of Echo, who by definition is unable to utter anything original, seems to emphasise the point. It is by no means beyond the bounds of possibility therefore that Callimachus combines the poetic and erotic realms in one poem, particularly if it serves as a prologue to the erotic section.

Callimachus and the wine v water 'debate'.

Antipater of Thessalonica, writing in the Augustan era, dismisses the pedantic poets who drink from the holy stream in favour of the wine drinkers Archilochus and Homer:

> Φεύγεθ', ὅσοι λόκκας ἢ λοφνίδας ἢ καμασῆνας
> ᾄδετε, ποιητῶν φῦλον ἀκανθολόγων,
> οἵ τ' ἐπέων κόσμον λελυγισμένον ἀσκήσαντες
> κρήνης ἐξ ἱερῆς πίνετε λιτὸν ὕδωρ.
> σήμερον Ἀρχιλόχοιο καὶ ἄρσενος ἦμαρ Ὁμήρου
> σπένδομεν· ὁ κρητὴρ οὐ δέχεθ' ὑδροπότας. *AP*. 11.20.

Although Callimachus is not specifically mentioned in the epigram, the clear allusion in v.4 to v.112 of the *Hymn to Apollo* (πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς) leaves the reader in no doubt as to the target of Antimachus' criticism. This and several other epigrams of the period have fuelled

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[56] Gutzwiller (1998) 218-22. She supports her argument with the fact that Callimachus elsewhere alludes to an epigram by Asclepiades to comment on his poetic preferences: fr. 398 "the Lyde is a fat work and imprecise" responds to the Samian's praise of that poem in *A.P.* 9.63.

the assertion by scholars that Callimachus' water of poetic inspiration was actually imbibed by him, and that he disdained wine as an alternative source of such inspiration.[57]

Evidence adduced for the existence of such a debate in Callimachus' day includes the remains of a fragment of Cratinus, preserved in *AP*. 13.29, in which that poet declared that wine was a "swift horse to the poet" (οἶνός τοι χαρίεντι πέλει ταχὺς ἵππος ἀοιδῷ / ὕδωρ δὲ πίνων οὐδεν ἆν τέκοις σοφόν) ; that Callimachus himself declared Archilochus to be "wine-smitten" (τοῦ μεθυπλῆγος φροίμιον 'Αρχιλόχου, fr. 544 Pf.); and that in a fragment of the *Aetia* (the meeting with Theogenes of Ikios, fr. 178 Pf.) the poet expresses his distaste for excessive drinking in favour of learned discussion.

Nevertheless, there is no evidence in the fragments of Callimachus that he advocated actually drinking from springs for poetic inspiration, any more than Hesiod did. He certainly refers to three different streams (Hippocrene, Permessus and Aganippe), but we cannot be sure of the context in which they are mentioned, nor their specific function. Knox has carefully analysed all the evidence and come to the conclusion that the image of Callimachus as the teetotal water-imbibing poet was retrospectively imposed on that poet by the later epigrammatists for the purposes of ridicule, and that it was not until the Augustan era that he was associated with actually drinking from the clear springs of Helicon.[58] Certainly, it seems unlikely that a poet who penned for himself the following epitaph could have participated in a debate between the relative merits of water and wine as instruments of inspiration:

Βαττιάδεω παρὰ σῆμα φέρεις πόδας εὖ μὲν ἀοιδήν
εἰδότος, εὖ δ' οἴνῳ καίρια συγγελάσαι. *Ep*. 35 Pf.

You are walking past the tomb of Battiades, well versed
in the art of song, of mixing wine and laughter
perfectly.[59]

Whether or not he actually described himself as drinking from the streams of Helicon remains a mystery. What is sure, however, is that by the Augustan era he was associated with this act.

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[57] In another epigram (*AP*. 11.24), the same poet professes to prefer to drink one cup of wine than a thousand cups of Hippocrene (Pegasus), mentioning the springs of Helicon in vv.1-2. See also *AP*. 9. 305, 375, 406; 11. 23, and 31. See Kambylis (1965) 119; Crowther (1979) 1-11. On whether or not Callimachus actually drank the inspirational water, see Cameron (1995) 366 n.28; Asper (1997) 128-34.

[58] Knox (1985) 112-119. He observes also that the status of Bacchus as a poets' god among the Augustan poets (e.g. Prop. 2.30. 37-40, 3.2.9, 4.1.62, 4.6.75 and Horace *C*. 2.19) also makes it difficult to believe that their poetic master disdained wine in relation to poetry.

[59] Translated by Nisetich (2001) 179.

Theocritus.

In *Idyll* 1 there are three settings within the poem: Firstly, there is that of the Goatherd and Thyrsis by the spring, where the Goatherd asks Thyrsis to sing about the sufferings of Daphnis. It is the quintessential setting for the *Dichterweihe*, with its clear running water and whispering pines, the magical territory of the Muses and Pan. Thyrsis' singing is also 'sweeter than the water tumbling over there on the high rock.' (ἅδιον, ὦ ποιμὴν, τὸ τεὸν μέλος ἢ τὸ καταχές / τῆν' ἀπὸ τᾶς πέτρας καταλείβεται ὑψόθεν, vv.7-8). Secondly, there is the world depicted by the beautiful cup that the Goatherd will gift to Thyrsis in return for his singing. The scenes portrayed on this cup are more workaday and realistic than the idealized and more magical one of the rustics, but there are Pindaric poetic associations of water and honey in the Goatherd's description of the cup as having been 'washed with sweet wax' (κεκλυσμένον ἁδέι κηρῶι, v.26). Finally, there is the song of Daphnis, the legendary founder of pastoral poetry. Daphnis meets his death in the clear waters of the river. There are overtones of Hades here, but this is not necessarily the river of the Underworld. It may equally be the water of the nymphs who inspired him in the first place. It seems that they are reclaiming their poet. As his voice belonged to them in his lifetime, his body belongs to them in death.

In *Idyll* 13 the nymphs also claim the body of Hylas. Hylas comes from the sea with Heracles and the Argonauts – all characters from the world of epic – but he is drawn into the *locus amoenus* that is the setting of pastoral poetry when he goes in search of clear, spring water. The nymphs drag him down into their world, away from the epic environment. Theocritus heightens the contrast between these two worlds by employing the nautical simile of a shooting star falling into the sea to describe Hylas' fall into the spring, presaging a favourable wind for the sailors. The compelling implication is that Hylas does not belong in the world of the heroes of the Argonautic expedition, and now that he has left them, they should continue on their way.[60]

The sea as an unsuitable setting for pastoral poetry recurs in *Idyll* 11, where the Cyclops Polyphemus has fallen in love with the sea nymph Galatea, and as he gazes out over the sea he yearns for Galatea to leave her watery home and join him in his cave, where ice cold water flows from the snows. Since she is unwilling to do so, he then contemplates the impossible scenario of his leaving his cave to live with Galatea in her marine world. The sea

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[60] On the treatment of the Hylas myth in Greek and Latin literature, see below pp. 171-83.

is the mysterious Other. It is a world outside the experience of the denizens of the bucolic world that can be alluring, but it is ultimately unfathomable and alien.

Theocritean clear flowing water from the spring, as part of the *locus amoenus* of pastoral poetry, is a numinous, magical and mysterious substance associated with both the Muses and the Nymphs, who inspire song.[61] The first *locus amoenus* with metapoetic associations in Greek literature is in Plato's *Phaedrus* (230b-c), where Socrates explains his choice to hold the discussion in such a place by pointing out that it is sacred to the Nymphs and their father Achelous (230b.8-9) and that Pan and the Nymphs are the divinities that will inspire their discussion.[62] For Theocritus, the *locus amoenus* is part of the richly exuberant scenario where the everyday world of the shepherd is transformed into something higher, more serene, and inspired by higher beings. This is the scene of the *Dichterweihe*, of inspiration for both song and prophecy, but it is also a mysterious and dangerous place. The Nymphs may be inspirational, but they, along with Pan, also have the power to claim the lives of the mortal inhabitants, such as poor Hylas. The water in these places is paradoxically both life-giving and life-taking, because it is the home of deities over whom mere mortals have no control. Theocritus is therefore drawing from a double tradition: from that of Hesiod's and Pindar's association of the Muses and poetry with water, as well as from the timeless agricultural one of the general sacredness of rivers and springs as the haunts of deities and essential to the survival of the animals and crops.[63]

There is an important contrast between the Muses and Nymphs that can be interpreted as programmatic for the bucolic genre. Theocritus associates the Muses with Homeric and Hesiodic poetry. In *Idyll* 16.3-4 he asserts that "…Muses are goddesses, and therefore sing of gods; we on earth are mortal, so let us sing of mortal men" (Μοῖσαι μὲν θεαὶ ἐντί, θεοὺς θεαὶ ἀείδοντι· / ἄμμες δὲ βροτοὶ οἵδε, βροτοὺς βροτοὶ ἀείδωμεν.) Since Theocritus' agenda appears to be to establish a form of *epos* that defines itself in opposition to both the Homeric version about myths and heroes and the Hesiodic didactic one, he appropriates the Nymphs as inspirers of the lowly song of the shepherds and goatherds.[64] The Muses, though

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[61] Eg: 1.7-13, 20-22, 117-121; 7.131-163; 11.45-8; 13. 39-42.

[62] Homer's description of Calypso's cave (*Od.* 5.65ff) is usually cited as the *locus classicus* for the *locus amoenus*, but without metapoetic associations.

[63] On the long poetic tradition of the *locus amoenus* as the ideal setting for scenes of seduction and rape, see Motte (1973) 208-11. See also Hinds (2002) 130-6 on how violence in a harmonious setting is a feature of the pastoral tradition in general.

[64] On Theocritean *epos* as an Alexandrian alternative to the Homeric and Hesiodic versions, see Halperin (1983) 217-48. He demonstrates how Theocritus creates a more modest kind of *epos* by using the technique of inversion, whereby he detaches themes from the heroic world and sets them amid more prosaic surroundings, peopled by humble characters.

present, play a relatively marginal role in those *Idylls* which deal mainly with the everyday life of the shepherd (1 and 3-7). In these poems, the Nymphs, as inspirers of pastoral poetry, occupy the place traditionally assigned to the Muses. This contrast is particularly evident in *Idyll* 7, which has been interpreted by many as a Theocritean version of the Hesiodic *Dichterweihe.*[65] In this poem the first person narrator Simichidas (possibly representing Theocritus himself), a town-poet, is invested by the expert (and semi-divine?) poet Lycidas, who is "dear to the Muses" (φίλος...Μοίσαις, v.95). The scene takes place in a *locus amoenus*, in the vicinity of the spring Burina, etymologised as "ox-flow", which was created by a kick from Chalcon. Such a spring is suggestive of the Hesiodic Hippocrene, also formed from the kick of an animal, the mythological horse Pegasus. The conclusion is compelling that Theocritus' Burina, with its connotations of the lowly ox, as opposed to the mythical and majestic Pegasus, is the pastoral version of the Hesiodic initiation scene. Lycidas sings his rustic song, to which Simichidas responds that "I too have learned much from the Nymphs as I grazed my cows on the hills: excellent songs, whose fame perhaps has reached the throne of Zeus" (πολλὰ μεν ἄλλα / Νύμφαι κἠμὲ δίδαξαν ἀν' ὤρεα βουκολέοντα / ἐσθλά, τά που καὶ Ζηνὸς ἐπὶ θρόνον ἄγαγε φάμα· vv.91-93). The lines are a clear re-writing of the Hesiodic scene and imply that, whereas the Muses taught Hesiod his didactic *epos*, Simichidas (or Theocritus) has learned his bucolic song from the Nymphs. Simichidas then sings his song, after which his investiture takes place in the form of Lycidas' giving him the promised stick, "pledging friendship in the Muses" (ἐκ Μοισᾶν ξεινήιον ὤπασεν ἦμεν, v.129). Simichidas has mastered the art of bucolic poetry, which is inspired by the Nymphs, but also sanctioned by the Muses. It seems that it is transmitted from them, but via the Nymphs. The Nymphs are the bucolic agents of the Muses. They are part of the specialized pantheon of Theocritus' poetry, which also includes Pan, because they are the divinities that inhabit the milieu of his characters. In the final part of the *Idyll*, Simichidas and his companions reach their destination, another *locus amoenus*, which, in its exaggerated abundance, is highly charged with poetic symbolism: sacred water gushes noisily from the cave of the Nymphs; the air resounds with the song of the cicadas; the wine is mixed by Castalian Nymphs whose Parnassian provenance evokes their more famous sisters, the Muses.

Thus to some extent at least, Theocritus negotiates his departure from Homeric and Hesiodic high *epos* by means of water. As the haunt of Nymphs and Pan in the bucolic world,

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[65] On this see Hunter and Fantuzzi (2004) 146-9; Hunter (1999) 144-199.; Pearce (1988) 276-304; Bowie (1985) 67-91; Krevans (1983) 201-220.

it has a broader symbolic meaning. As for Hesiod, Pindar and Callimachus, the Muses and their springs are the source of his song, but his adoption of the world of the everyday rustic as the *locus* for his poetry entails an incorporation of the divinities that inhabit this world. The Nymphs, and the watery places in which they dwell, are not only the sources of bucolic inspiration, but they are also dangerous, mystical and sacred. Even Pan, the rustic god, with his associations with Panic, is a dangerous god. The clear water of a Theocritean spring is not merely a Callimachean/Hesiodic poetic metaphor. It is that, and much more.

To recapitulate: Water in Greek literature, in both its salty and freshwater forms, had an array of symbolic uses in the field of poetic composition. As the sea, and often in combination with the sea voyage, it came variously to represent Homer, the epic genre in particular, or poetry in general. In stylistic terms, it could also mean derivative and lon-winded poetry, as opposed to the more refined and attenuated form favoured by Callimachus and his followers. As for the freshwater spring, it represented inspiration, originality and stylistic purity. Because this was one of the essential elements of the *locus amoenus*, it was also invested with mystical and sacred properties. It was a numinous element inhabited by deities who, besides being inspirational to the poet, also had the paradoxical power to be dangerous to the unsuspecting victim.

The emphasis of this symbolism for the Greeks was on style and inspiration. Genre, which was to become so programmatically important for the Roman poets, was not an issue for the archaic and classical poets, as poetic composition was a response to the occasion that demanded it and there was a genre for every occasion. In the Hellenistic age, performance-based poetic composition was replaced by a more literary form, as the occasions themselves disappeared and the poets became attached to libraries and museums. For the first time, poetry was composed to be read as well as heard, and the Alexandrian poets like Callimachus and his contemporaries were consciously writing within a literary environment and against the backdrop of the work of their predecessors which they studied and catalogued. The choice of genre became a literary and aesthetic one, rather than a performance-based one, but even so, Callimachus has shown that all genres were fair game. The earlier modern conviction that Callimachus was opposed to epic poetry has been thoroughly and convincingly rejected by more recent scholarship, which has shown that Callimachus' polemic was directed at slavish imitation of Homeric epic, rather than epic itself. The twin ideas of succession and competition were fundamental to Alexandrian poetics and thus their programmatic preoccupations were for the most part stylistic rather than generic.

Rome

Such is the background for the Latin poets. It will be now useful to examine briefly how some of Propertius' Roman predecessors and contemporaries manipulated this established imagery, before turning to his own elegies.

1. The Sea

At the beginning of Catullus 64, we are introduced to the *Argo*, the mythical protoship:

> Peliaco **quondam** prognatae vertice pinus
> **dicuntur** liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas
> Phasidos ad fluctus et fines Aeetaeos,
> cum lecti iuvenes, Argivae robora pubis,
> auratam optantes Colchis avertere pellem
> ausi sunt vada salsa cita decurrere puppi,
> caerula verrentes abiegnis aequora palmis.
> diva quibus retinens in summis urbibus arces
> ipsa levi fecit volitantem flamine currum,
> pinea coniungens inflexae texta carinae.
> **illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten;**
> **quae simul ac rostro ventosum proscidit aequor**
> tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda,
> emersere freti candenti e gurgite vultus
> aequoreae monstrum Nereides admirantes.
> illa atque haud alia, viderunt luce marinas
> mortales oculis nudato corpore Nymphas
> nutricum tenus extantis e gurgite cano. 64.1-18.

The above lines are, according to Thomas, "perhaps the most literary and allusive lines of Catullus" as the poet draws heavily from Euripides, Apollonius, Callimachus, Ennius and Accius.[66] It has often been a source of puzzlement to scholars that Catullus goes against established tradition by linking the first departure of the Argo with the marriage of Peleus and Thetis. In the standard version of the legend, Peleus is already married to Thetis and the father of Achilles when he goes on the Argo. Thomas argues that the reason for such an

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[66] Thomas (1982) 145. On the intertextual connections between Cat. 64 and the *Argonautica*, see Clare (1996) 60-88.

anachronistic juxtaposition is polemical, and that the Argo itself is the vehicle for such polemic, as the very proliferation of prior treatments of this primary voyage affords the poet the opportunity to set himself at the end of a rich and learned tradition. Zetzel challenges Thomas' views, maintaining that a poetry whose *raison d'être* is merely to display learning is a sterile one, and argues that the reasons for Catullus' decision to begin his poem with the primary voyage of the Argo lie in the dense nexus of literary allusions throughout the poem, all of which provide an intertextual guide to the interpretation of the poem.[67] Zetzel, however, has oversimplified Thomas' arguments, in my view. Nowhere does Thomas suggest that the chief purpose of Catullus' poem is to display his learning. Rather, it is by demonstrating the importance of his models that the poet sets up the literary tradition to which he belongs, and this is the backdrop against which he strives to show the superiority of his own finished poem. The literary allusions can then serve to enhance the reader's interpretation of the poem. Both Thomas and Zetzel are essentially on the same side: Catullus' models both demonstrate his learning *and* provide a key to interpreting the poem as a whole.

The more sophisticated the manipulation of such models, the better the finished product, and Harrison has demonstrated just how sophisticated Catullus is being in these lines.[68] He makes the compelling argument that Catullus is alluding here, by means of the "Alexandrian footnotes" *quondam* and *dicuntur,* to a pre-Homeric Greek poem about the same ship, which, Harrison hypothesizes, was the earliest Greek epic, and thus he is drawing attention to the very origins of the Greek epic genre. By doing so, he is making a claim for the originality of his own poem. The *Argo* initiated the sea, but at the same time it initiated the genre of ancient epic poetry. Catullus' *Argo* similarly marks a new beginning in literature: that of the Latin epyllion. Although this is a term that was only coined in the nineteenth century, it refers to a short epic hexameter narrative, which appeared for the first time in Rome in the first century BC. We cannot know for sure if Catullus' poem was the first Latin epyllion, but it certainly stands at the beginning of this tradition.[69]

Harrison also argues that there is enough metapoetic terminology in the opening of this poem to show that Catullus also deploys the metaphor of voyaging for poetry. *Cursus* and *currere* are terms used for the progress of poetry; *aequor* as the term for any flat surface could allude both to the 'sea' of epic and a surface for writing; *proscidit* is a ploughing term, which is often used for writing in the sense that the stilus, like the *rostrum* can plough a

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[67] Zetzel (1983a) 251-266.

[68] Harrison (2007a) 1-17.

[69] Other examples are Cinna's *Smyrna* and Calvus' *Io.* On these works, see Courtney (1993) 205-11; 218-224 and, more recently, Hollis (2009) 29-41; 60-68.

furrow. Pindar, as we have seen, deployed the metaphor of the poetic voyage, but it does not appear in extant Hellenistic poetry, or in Lucretius.[70] Catullus seems to be the first Latin poet to use it, and thereby initiates a trend for future poets.

Vergil deploys the metaphor in both the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid.* In *Georgics* 1.40-2 he calls upon the future astral god Caesar to look kindly on this new literary enterprise:

> da **facilem cursum** atque audacibus adnue coeptis,
> ignarosque viae mecum miseratus agrestis
> **ingredere** et votis iam nunc adsuesce vocari.

Harrison refutes some commentators' claims that the metaphor being used in these lines refers to charioteering rather than seafaring by arguing that Caesar as an astral deity is much more likely to guide the way over the sea, and that *ingredere* further emphasizes the astral dimension, as it is a technical term for the rising of a star (*TLL* 7.1.1570.81ff).
The metaphor recurs in *Georgics* 4.116-7, where the poet declines a potential digression:

> atque equidem, extremo ni iam sub fine laborum
> **vela traham et terris festinem advertere proram**,

Harrison draws attention to the fact, as yet unnoticed by scholars, that in the corresponding passage where Vergil returns to his subject, he avails himself of the same metaphor (vv.147-8):

> verum haec ipse equidem **spatiis exclusus iniquis**
> **praetereo atque aliis post me memoranda relinquo**.

The most prominent occurrence in the *Georgics* of the metaphor, however, is in Vergil's famous invocation to Maecenas in Book 2 to accompany him on his poetic voyage (vv.39-46):

> tuque ades inceptumque una decurre laborem,
> o decus, o famae merito pars maxima nostrae,
> **Maecenas, pelagoque volans da vela patenti**.
> non ego cuncta meis amplecti versibus opto,
> non, mihi si linguae centum sint oraque centum,

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[70] Harrison does say, however, "though it has been suggested that the *DRN* charts an implicit voyage towards wisdom: see Gale 1994, 124."

ferrea vox. **ades et primi lege litoris oram;**
in manibus terrae: non hic te carmine ficto
atque per ambages et longa exorsa tenebo.

This passage is more complex, because it combines the metaphor of the poetic voyage with the Callimachean aesthetic of slender versus large. After inviting Maecenas to accompany him on the open sea (v.41), he then retreats from such grandiose themes by means of the Homeric 'hundred mouths' topos (vv.42-44) and asks Maecenas to join him and sail close to the land in the shallower waters (vv.44-6).[71] Two types of voyage are being adumbrated here: on the one hand there is the voyage over the 'sea' of epic, with all its Homeric connotations, and on the other there is the preferred one closer to the land which is a more appropriate analogue for the less grandiose poem that is the *Georgics.*

Less obvious, perhaps, is Vergil's deployment of the metaphor in the *Aeneid,* but Harrison has argued that the poet plays with the correspondence between the actual voyage of the Trojans and the progress of the plot of the epic poem itself. When, for instance, the ghost of Creusa appears to Aeneas in Book 2 (vv.780-2), she predicts a long voyage across the sea and so the literal journey is mirrored by the length of the story that the poet will unfold.[72]

Maritime imagery is also a feature of Horace's *Odes.* The famous third *Ode* of the first book, a *propemptikon* addressed to Vergil who is depicted as on the point of undertaking a voyage to Greece, has perplexed many commentators:

Sic te diva potens Cypri,
sic fratres Helenae, lucida sidera,
ventorumque regat pater
obstrictis aliis praeter Iapyga,
navis, quae tibi creditum
debes Vergilium; finibus Atticis
reddas incolumem precor
et serves animae dimidium meae.
illi robur et aes triplex
circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci
commisit pelago ratem
primus, nec timuit praecipitem Africum

---

[71] On the exploitation by poets of this topos, see Hinds (1998) 34-47.
[72] Harrison gives other examples: *Aen.* 3.10-11; 7.5-7 and 7.10-24 (in which the Trojans avoid Circeii, and thus are saved from repeating a disastrous episode of the *Odyssey*).

decertantem Aquilonibus
nec tristis Hyadas nec rabiem Noti,
quo non arbiter Hadriae
maior, tollere seu ponere volt freta.
quem mortis timuit gradum
qui siccis oculis monstra natantia,
qui vidit mare turbidum et
infamis scopulos Acroceraunia?
nequicquam deus abscidit
prudens Oceano dissociabili
terras, si tamen impiae
non tangenda rates transiliunt vada.
audax omnia perpeti
gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas;
audax Iapeti genus
ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit;
post ignem aetheria domo
subductum macies et nova febrium
terris incubuit cohors
semotique prius tarda necessitas
leti corripuit gradum.
expertus vacuum Daedalus aëra
pennis non homini datis;
perrupit Acheronta Herculeus labor.
nil mortalibus ardui est;
caelum ipsum petimus stultitia neque
per nostrum patimur scelus
iracunda Iovem ponere fulmina.

The verbal correspondences with the *Aeneid* have led most to read the poem metapoetically. Cody and Santirocco, for instance, interpret the ship as Vergil's new poetic endeavour (the *Aeneid*), launching onto the high seas of the *genus grande*, and deserting the shallower waters of the *genus tenue*, to which the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* belonged. Horace sees such an undertaking as dangerous, for Vergil's fragile ship of poetry could founder in such a vast sea.[73] Harrison disagrees, arguing that the evidence in the poem does not consistently invite such a reading and suggests instead that the storm envisaged by Horace in the Ode is an allusion to the storm that opens the *Aeneid*; and that despite the fact

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[73] See Cody (1976) 77 and 89; Santirocco (1986).

that Vergil's epic was as yet unpublished at the time, Horace, as an intimate friend of Vergil, would have been privy to early readings of it, and thus the allusion to its opening in a "literary in-joke" from one close friend to another.[74] Nevertheless, I would venture to suggest that, on the basis of Harrison's own reading of Catullus 64, Cody and Santirocco may be partly right. If Catullus uses the *Argo* to refer to the origins of epic poetry, it is surely also possible that the very first (*primus*, v.12) voyage described in vv. 9-20 of Horace's Ode are a reference to the same *Argo*, and therefore to the very first epic poem. This, however, does not necessarily mean that Horace is seriously denigrating epic. By using the Hesiodic motif of the danger of sailing to allude to epic poetry he may well be combining the "literary in-joke" that Harrison has convincingly detected with a little bit of light-hearted generic gamesmanship.

In *C.*1.14, we have another ship, which is generally agreed to be allegorical, but there are differences of opinion as to what it actually symbolizes:

> O navis, referent in mare te novi
> fluctus. o quid agis? fortiter occupa
>   portum. Nonne vides ut
>   nudum remigio latus,
>
> et malus celeri saucius Africo 5
> antemnaque gemant ac sine funibus
>   uix durare carinae
>   possint imperiosius
>
> aequor? non tibi sunt integra lintea,
> non di, quos iterum pressa voces malo. 10
>   quamvis Pontica pinus,
>   silvae filia nobilis,
>
> iactes et genus et nomen inutile:
> nil pictis timidus navita puppibus
>   fidit. tu, nisi ventis 15
>   debes ludibrium, cave.
>
> nuper sollicitum quae mihi taedium,
> nunc desiderium curaque non levis,

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[74] Harrison (2007a) 13-14, arguing that *finibus...Atticis* would be a 'curious symbol' for Homeric epic, and that Vergil's return from such a territory would be unlikely to represent a return to his earlier poetry, given that he constructed his career carefully in terms of an ascent up towards epic.

interfusa nitentis
vites aequora Cycladas.

It has been variously interpreted as the Ship of State, the Ship of Love, and the Ship of Poetry.[75] Quintilian interpreted it as the Ship of State and this has been the prevailing opinion until recently, especially because the poem was believed to have been modelled on one by Alcaeus that was given a similar allegorical interpretation by the ancients.[76] Anderson argues against this interpretation, pointing out that the stable elements of this metaphor are missing from the Ode: there is no helmsman on the ship, and the narrator is neither a passenger nor a detached observer. The passion expressed by this narrator is rather that of a lover engaged in a quarrel with his beloved, and this ship is therefore the Ship of Love. Moreover, fragments of another poem by Alcaeus (46, Diehl) suggest that he also availed of this metaphor. Zumwalt poses the most attractive theory that in fact Horace avails of all three uses of the metaphor but that the ultimate one is the poetic one.[77] Horace, he argues, deliberately misleads the reader into interpreting the ship as the state until the last four lines of the poem, whereupon it then becomes clear that the ship is allegorizing a headstrong woman. This woman is in turn a metaphor for the poet's own love poetry. The combination of the erotic and the poetic uses of the metaphor enables the poet to portray his love poetry in terms of a lover's quarrel: he has been bored with his love poetry but now he fears for it because he has tried to use such a slight medium for grander themes. *Referent* (v.1) suggests that he has attempted this before, which indeed he has, in 1.2 and 1.12, two poems written in praise of Augustus. The sea therefore may represent the grander themes of epic, which are unsuitable for his lyric poetry.

In *C.*1.5 the sea is the conventional arena for erotic misfortune:

Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa
perfusus liquidis urget odoribus
    grato, Pyrrha, sub antro?
    cui flavam religas comam,

simplex munditiis? heu quotiens fidem
mutatosque deos flebit et aspera

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[75] For useful discussions of this poem, see Anderson (1966) 84-98, Woodman (1980) 60-67, and Santirocco (1986) 46-9.

[76] Quint. 8.6.44; Alcaeus 46A, Diehl.

[77] Zumwalt (1978) 249-254.

nigris aequora ventis
emirabitur insolens,

qui nunc te fruitur credulus aurea,
qui semper vacuam, semper amabilem
sperat, nescius aurae
fallacis. miseri, quibus

intemptata nites. me tabula sacer
votiua paries indicat uvida
suspendisse potenti
vestimenta maris deo.

Many erotic epigrams depict the hapless lover as shipwrecked or drowning at sea, but the proliferation of technical literary terms in this poem suggests that the Ship of Love metaphor has been conflated with that of the Ship of Poetry. Words such as *gracilis* (v.1) and *simplex munditiis* (v.5), for example, appear to connote the Callimachean unadorned style, while the phrase *perfusus liquidis...odoribus* (v.2) appears to suggest its antithesis. West sees the poem as a disavowal of elegy, and Davis states that the *puer* is a stereotype from the domain of elegiac discourse.[78] Coffta offers a broader metapoetic interpretation.[79] Both the *puer* and Pyrrha possess contradictory stylistic attributes: the *puer* is *gracilis,* suggesting the Callimachean plain style, but he is *perfusus liquidis...odoribus*, connoting the opposite. Similarly, Pyrrha is *simplex munditiis,* 'simple in her elegance', a concise summary of the Callimachean aesthetic, but she is also associated with the *aspera aequora* of epic. There is a tension here between the two levels of style and between lyric and epic poetry. For Coffta, the *puer* represents the inexperienced poet who aims at polished verse. Pyrrha is the metaphorical ideal. But instead of refined poetry (*gracilis*), he will produce excessive or bombastic poetry (*perfusus liquidis odoribus*). Horace, as the experienced and accomplished poet is capable of composition which is beyond the *puer*, and could write elegy or epic, but insists that he will do neither. Or does he? *Suspendisse* (v.15) is ambiguous. It could either mean 'to have hung up' (permanently), or 'to have checked', to have interrupted' (for the time being). This, argues Coffta, is typical Horatian deliberate elusiveness. Whatever the interpretation of this enigmatic Ode, it seems clear that the sea represents an arena for change. The *puer*, cast in the role of elegiac lover, has yet to experience the treacherous sea,

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[78] West (1995) 24; Davis (1991) 224-233.
[79] Coffta (2002) 125-135.

which Horace, being older and more experienced, has survived. One could argue that what we have here is the sea voyage as an analogue for the career of the poet: Horace is at one end, and the *puer* at another. But the poem also appears to be highlighting the contrast between love elegy and erotic lyric poetry, whereby the lyric lover is more dispassionate and detached than the elegiac *puer*, whose outpourings are presented as excessive.

The metaphor of the metapoetic voyage is perhaps clearest in the final Ode of Book 4, where Horace uses the conventional Callimachean *recusatio* format to reject the themes of war:

> Phoebus volentem proelia me loqui
> victas et urbes increpuit lyra,
> ne parva Tyrrhenum per aequor
> vela darem. (4.15.1-4)

Harrison recognizes that in these lines Horace is drawing from both the prologue to the *Aetia* and from the epilogue to the *Hymn to Apollo,* in that the first two lines are a version of the former, to which he applies the literary symbolism of the latter.[80] The *Tyrrhenum...aequor* may very well be a reference to verse 67 of the first book of the *Aeneid* (*gens inimica mihi* ***Tyrrhenum*** *navigat* ***aequor***), which by now would have been circulating widely, and perhaps also Horace is localizing his sea of epic.

Finally, a few examples of Ovid's nautical metaphors for poetry. The closing lines of the first book of the *Ars Amatoria* confirm that the poet was happy to deploy the same metaphor of the poetic sea voyage in relation to his work:

> pars superat coepti, pars est exhausta laboris.
> hic teneat nostras ancora iacta rates. (v.771-772)

He uses it again in *Ars.* 3.747-748:

> sed repetamus opus: mihi nudis rebus eundum est,
> ut tangat portus fessa carina suos.

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[80] Harrison (2007a) 14.

Clearly here his poem is a sea voyage, the conclusion of which is the safe harbour, an image that is repeated at the end of the *Remedia*:

> hoc opus exegi: fessae date serta carinae;
> contigimus portus, quo mihi cursus erat (*Rem.* 811-2).

The metaphor then incorporates generic issues in *Met.* 15.176-177:

> 'et quoniam magno feror aequore plenaque ventis
> vela dedi:

These words actually come from the mouth of an elderly citizen of Crotona, in reply to an enquiry from Numa, but, coming as they do at the end of the *Metamorphoses*, they may also apply to that poem as well, which, as a long hexameter epic poem incorporating many topics, is appropriately compared to a voyage on the open sea.[81] These lines compare with *Tristia* 2.329-30, where Ovid makes a further stylistic statement in keeping with the more slender genre of elegy that he is writing:

> non ideo debet pelago se credere, siqua
> audet in exiguo ludere cumba lacu.

In this apology for not composing higher poetry, Ovid contrasts the open sea of epic subject matter with his own regrettable choice of the shallower waters of his more slender poetry. Embedded in this apology is the Callimachean aesthetic, which renders its sincerity suspect. Ovid is resorting to the useful topos of incapacity to explain his failure to write a higher form of poetry.

2. Springs and Rivers.

The Roman poets inherited the tradition of poetic initiation begun by Hesiod and continued by Callimachus. Ennius' place at the beginning of this tradition is controversial.

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[81] The old man is either Pythagoras or a Pythagorean mouthpiece, and the speech is didactic. Hence the sea in this case is specifically the sea of didactic epic and acts as a sort of *mise en abyme:* the sea voyage represents the old man's story; the didactic digression; and the poem by Ovid. On Pythagoras and Ovid, see Barchiesi (2001) 62-69.

The fragments and testimonia reveal that he had a dream encounter with Homer who, while imparting the *natura rerum*, breathed his soul into him. Despite the fact that Lucretius (1.112-126) and Propertius (3.3.1-6) situate Ennius on Helicon for this event, it is doubtful that he would have met Homer here, since this location is Hesiodic rather than Homeric. It is in fact possible that Ennius did not mention the name of the location of the encounter, since Persius and his scholiast (another discredited source of information) seem to imply that it took place on Parnassus.[82] Those allusions in Propertius and Lucretius appear to suggest that Ennius also met with the Muses, who gave him a wreath and allowed him to drink from the streams of epic poetry. But specific evidence for this is lacking, and Lucretius and Propertius may well have been inventing this experience for Ennius in order to provide a Latin precedent for what had heretofore been a uniquely Greek event. Nevertheless, the fragmentary beginning of Book 7 points to a major proem and suggests that the earlier books had already been published.[83] In this proem, Ennius' claim to priority is made in the context of the Muses:

> [cum] neque Musarum **scopulos**
> nec dicti studiosus [quisquam erat] ante hunc[84]

Scopulos, as the mountain of the Muses, is first attested here, and is used again by Propertius in 2.30.27: *aspicies **scopulis** haerere **sorores***. The subsequent fragment in Ennius 7 is the enigmatic *nos ausi reserare*, the object of which, according to Skutsch, is either 'springs' or 'doors'. Vergil *Geo.* 2.175 *sanctos ausus recludere fontes* would seem to suggest the former, although Plato *Phaedr.* 245A ὃς δ'ἂν ἄνευ μανίας Μουσῶν ἐπὶ ποιητικὰς **θύρας** ἀφίκηται, πεισθεὶς ὥς ἄρα ἐκ τέχνης ἱκανός ποιητὴς ἐσόμενος, ἀτελὴς αὐτός... provides a precedent for the latter. Skutsch argues in favour of the door metaphor, on the grounds that *reserare fontes* is an unnatural phrase. However, it is possible that the proem to Book 1, in which Homer replaces the Muses, is complemented by an alternative *Dichterweihe* later in the poem (most likely in the proem to Book 7), where Ennius speaks of the inspirational springs of the Muses. Such an occurrence would provide a precedent for Lucretius, who, at the beginning of Book 1 substitutes Venus for the Muses, only to open Book 4 with both an acknowledgement of the inspiration of the latter and a similar claim to priority:

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[82] Persius *Prol.* 1-3. On this, see Skutsch (1985) 147, and Hardie (1913) 188-195.
[83] On this, see Skutsch (1985) 366.
[84] *Ann.* 210 Skutsch.

> Avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante
> trita solo. iuvat integros accedere fontis
> atque haurire, iuvatque novos decerpere flores
> insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam
> unde prius nulli velarint tempora Musae. (4.1-5)

The setting in which Lucretius envisages himself drinking from the fountains of the Muses is a *locus amoenus*, abundant with new flowers.

The *locus amoenus* pervades Vergil's *Eclogues,* of which rivers and springs are constituent parts as in Theocritus, but the most significant occurrence of inspirational water takes place in the famous passage of *Eclogue* 6.64ff:

> tum canit, errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum,
> Aonas in montes ut duxerit una sororum, etc.

Here Vergil places Gallus at the foot of Helicon, along the banks of the Permessus, from where he is led up to the upper slopes of the mountain by Calliope. There he is honoured by the Muses and presented by Linus with a Hesiodic pipe with which he was instructed to compose a poem on the Grynaean Grove. This passage is commonly believed to be an allusion to a poem by Gallus in which he recounted his own poetic initiation.[85] One would be tempted to believe that the Permessus, low down on the inspirational mountain, represents the slighter genre of love elegy, and that Gallus was led up to the higher streams so that he would be inspired to compose the generically higher aetiological poem on the Grynaean Grove. Such a theory is bolstered by Propertius' only mention of the Permessus in 2.10.25-6:

> nondum etiam Ascraeos norunt mea carmina fontes,
> sed modo Permessi flumine lavit amor.

However, there are problems with this theory, which will be explored fully in due course in relation to Propertius 2.10. For the moment it is enough to see that Vergil, and presumably Gallus before him, availed of the holy streams of inspiration.

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[85] On this see Ross (1975) 18ff. On the interpretation of *Eclogue* 6 see Skutsch (1956) 193-5; Stewart (1959) 179-205; Elder (1961) 109-125; Farrell (1991) 291-314 and Morgan (1999) 174-5.

There is evidence in the *Aeneid* that for Vergil the river, like the sea, can be metaphorical for the progress of the narrative itself. Lines 7.29-36, for example:

> atque hic Aeneas ingentem ex **aequore** lucum
> prospicit. hunc inter **fluvio Tiberinus** amoeno
> verticibus rapidis et multa flavus harena
> in **mare** prorumpit. variae circumque supraque
> assuetae **ripis** volucres et **fluminis** alveo
> aethera mulcebant cantu lucoque volabant.
> flectere iter sociis terraeque advertere proras
> imperat et laetus **fluvio** succedit opaco.

These lines precede the second proem of the *Aeneid*, in which Vergil invokes the Muse Erato and states the programme for the second half of his poem:

> dicam horrida bella
> dicam acies actosque animis in funera reges. (*Aen.* 7.40-41)

Thomas argues that, although these lines in substance amount to an affirmation of traditional epic, in contrast to the rejection of the same themes (*reges et proelia*) at the beginning of *Eclogue* 6, Vergil is nevertheless not abandoning his Callimachean principles.[86] He adduces distinctly Alexandrian features in the lines immediately preceding v.41 to support his argument: the epitaph for Caieta in vv.1-4, an aetion; the portrayal of Circe represents a Hellenistic conflation and rearrangement of sources; v.14 (*arguto tenuis percurrit pectine telas*) has Callimachean poetic resonances; vv.30-32 allude to both Apollonius (*Arg.*2.401) and Ennius (*Annales* 142V.); the postponement of the proem and the invocation of Erato, echoing Apollonius *Arg.*3.1, are also Alexandrian touches.[87] Kyriakidis, in contrast, argues that the frame of Book 6, i.e. the end of Book 5 and the beginning of Book 7, provides an anti-Callimachean manifesto, which is expressed in Callimachean terms.[88] Vergil, he says, is proclaiming a new direction in epic poetry, which embraces the themes that Callimachus rejects. He suggests that Aeneas' journey from the sea up the Tiber is an inversion of Callimachean water imagery from the conclusion to the *Hymn to Apollo*, wherein the muddy

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[86] Thomas (1986) 61-73.

[87] On the Apollonian imitations in these lines, see Nelis (2001) 262-266.

[88] Kyriakidis (1998) 147. He argues that the frame around *Aeneid* 6 (i.e. the end of Book 5 and the beginning of Book 7) is packed with metapoetic references whose general message is a rejection of Callimachean poetics and a justification of his new Roman epic.

Euphrates representing traditional epic is rejected for the pure spring of Callimachean poetry. Kyriakidis argues that Vergil therefore employs Callimachean imagery and terminology to move away from Callimachean poetics and proclaim a new direction in Roman epic poetry.

This is a thought-provoking analysis, but in my view it is based on the incorrect premise that the Euphrates of the *Hymn to Apollo* represents specifically traditional epic. I have argued above that the muddy water of the Euphrates instead symbolizes bad poetry in general, especially that which results from the slavish imitation of Homeric epic. I suggest that Vergil, rather than symbolically equating the Euphrates with the Tiber, is contrasting the two rivers: in true Callimachean fashion, his river is an attenuated version of that of his predecessor; it is Italian; it is pleasant (*amoenus*); its sand is golden yellow (*flavus*). He is following the lead of his master in producing a much refined version of what has gone before, reforming grand epic and moulding it into this uniquely new Italian form.

The setting of this river is, moreover, the *locus amoenus,* the scene of poetic inspiration, a fitting locale for the launch of the second half of the epic. The pastoral element of this is less significant than the inspirational one, but it has its own importance in that it prefigures the setting of the Evander episode, in which the themes of grand epic are temporarily set aside. There is clearly still a place in Vergilian epos for slighter themes. The winds are favourable for Aeneas' entry into this special place and it is the inspirational backdrop for the proem that follows, with its invocation of the Muse Erato. It symbolically mirrors the beginning of the second, Italian, half of his poetic journey.[89]

For Horace too the *locus amoenus*, of which the spring is an essential and central component, and which also consists of trees, shade and flowers, is the *Dichterlandschaft*, the symbolic scene of his poetic activity and inspiration. This is similar to the inspirational setting for Vergil and Propertius, but Horace also portrays it as his 'office', as it were: it is here that he likes to pass many pleasant hours composing his poetry and drinking wine.[90] In the opening ode of his first book, the man depicted as imbibing wine under a shady tree by a stream (vv.19-22) may be seen, as Dunn points out, as a surrogate for the poet himself, who appears later in the poem in the conventional setting of the *gelidum nemus* and surrounded by Muses.[91] He is also paradigmatic for the practitioner of Epicurean values, such as the

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[89] On upstream travel as an important image for the simultaneous progress of Aeneas' journey and of the epic narrative itself see Jones (2005) chapter 7.

[90] See, for example, *C.*1.38; 2.11.10; 3.25; *Epist.* 1.14.34-36.

[91] Dunn (1989): 97-109.

Lucretian prototypes of *DRN* 2.29-33, who have no need of ostentatious wealth and delight in stretching out on the grass in the shade by a stream:

> cum tamen inter se prostrati in gramini molli
> propter aquae rivum sub ramis arboris altae
> non magnis opibus iucunde corpore curant,
> praesertim cum tempestas adridet et anni
> tempora conspergunt viridantis floribus herbas.

Thus the literary and philosophical dimensions of Horace's life are usefully synthesized in one symbolic and traditional setting. In *C.*1.26.6-12, Horace programmatically alludes to Lucretius' famous statement of originality in *DRN* 1.926-930 (and repeated in 4.1.3-5):

> ... o quae **fontibus integris**
> gaudes, apricos necte flores,
> necte meo Lamiae coronam,
> Pimplei dulcis. Nil sine te mei
> prosunt honores: hunc fidibus novis,
> hunc Lesbio sacrare plectro
> teque tuasque decet sorores.

The fountain, wreath and lyre are all symbols of the same Lucretian referent – that of poetic inspiration, but the Horatian *locus* also contains the apparatus of the *convivium* (flowers, wreaths, lyre, wine and, in the case of 3.13, animal sacrifice), and is therefore quintessentially apt as a generic marker of lyric poetry. Thus often, in contrast to the numinous and mystical Greek settings so prevalent in Vergil and Propertius, Horace's *locus amoenus* is more naturally situated in Italy, and his Muses are of the Roman variety, the *Camenae*, who were Italian water nymphs endowed with the sacred power of prophecy, and used by Livius Andronicus as the equivalent of the Greek Muses.[92] This is particularly useful for Horace when he wishes to sing of Roman themes, such as in *C.*3.4, an encomium of Augustus, where he begins with a conventional address to Calliope who is in the company of Apollo, but then reveals that his *Dichterweihe* has already taken place, long ago in his childhood, in Southern Italy, and it is the native Italian *Camenae* who have provided him with his poetic credentials for praising the Roman Emperor.

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[92] See also Kennedy (1982) 371-389 who argues that Gallus similarly equated the Italian nymphs with the Greek Muses.

The *Fons Bandusiae* Ode (3.13) offers us a comprehensive view of Horace's manipulation of the spring metaphor:

O fons Bandusiae splendidior vitro,
dulci digne mero non sine floribus,
cras donaberis haedo,
cui frons turgida cornibus

primis et venerem et proelia destinat.
frustra: nam gelidos inficiet tibi
rubro sanguine rivos
lascivi suboles gregis.

te flagrantis atrox hora Caniculae
nescit tangere, tu frigus amabile
fessis vomere tauris
praebes et pecori vago.

fies nobilium tu quoque fontium
me dicente cavis impositam ilicem
saxis, unde loquaces
lymphae desiliunt tuae.

The spring in this poem is Italian, and can be read as a symbol for both Horace and his poetry. Davis has shown that the whole ode, with its banqueting motifs, is "an encapsulation of fundamental convivial motifs", and that Horace's *me dicente* (v.13) and the spring's *loquaces…lymphae* (vv.14-15) mirror each other.[93] But the spring is also *splendidior vitro* (v.1), evoking the Callimachean aesthetic of the pure spring, and the sacrifice of the kid makes it a sacred fountain from which the poet receives his Muse-given inspiration, endowing his poetry with a sacerdotal quality. Thus, in this ode, Horace, conflating poetry with religion, presents himself as both poet and *vates,* and he combines epic themes (*proelia,* v.5 and *rubro sanguine rivos*, v.8) with lyric ones to elevate his poem in the stylistic register, so that it is eligible to compete with the highest genres.[94] The fountain/poem will be numbered among the most noble of fountains (*fies nobilium tu quoque fontium* v.13), and

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[93] Davis (1991) 126-132. See also, Mader (2002) 51-59 and Hexter (1987) 131-139).

[94] The bloodstained water evokes the Scamander episode of *Iliad* 21.234-5 and also Catullus 64.344.

thus on a par with its Greek counterparts, such as the Hippocrene and Aganippe, and the regenerative power of its waters and its song (*loquaces...lymphae*) will guarantee immortality for Horace.

In summary, the spring/fountain is an indispensable constituent of the *locus amoenus*, and for Horace this setting functions simultaneously on three levels of meaning. Firstly, it is the Hesiodic, Pindaric and Callimachean setting of divinely inspired poetic inspiration. Horace is a Callimachean poet and a *vates*, but since his subject matter is Roman, he often disguises his Hellenism by substituting Italian place names for the traditional Greek poetic landscape. Secondly, it is the convivial setting for lyric poetry, with its animal sacrifice, wine, wreaths and the lyre, and the place where Horace likes to depict himself composing his poetry. Thirdly, it is also the paradigmatic setting for the practitioner of Epicureanism, which, in its espousal of poverty, seclusion and simplicity has much in common with Callimachean poetics.

Rivers in general also play a programmatic role in Horace. In *C*.4.2, Pindar is compared to a gushing river:

> monte decurrens velut amnis, imbres
> quem super notas aluere ripas,
> fervet immensusque ruit profundo
> Pindarus ore, (vv. 5-8.)

Davis has shown that this is not so much a negative image as a means of addressing the Callimachean issue of large versus small.[95] Pindar here plays the role of generic foil: his boundlessness and spontaneity is compared with Horace's small-scale and carefully crafted compositions.

In his opening Satire, Horace uses water symbolism to comment on the fool who vaunts the capacity of his granaries:

> vel dic quid referat intra
> naturae finis viventi, iugera centum an
> mille aret? 'at suave est ex magno tollere acervo.'
> dum ex parvo nobis tantundem haurire relinquas,

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[95] Davis (1991) 133-43. Commager (1962) 60 argues that "the analogy between poetry and water, nowhere else in the *Odes* so elaborately developed, seems to have been dictated by Pindar's fondness for the comparison."

cur tua plus laudes cumeris granaria nostris?
ut tibi si sit opus liquidi non amplius urna
vel cyatho et dicas 'magno de flumine mallem
quam ex hoc fonticulo tantundem sumere.' eo fit,
plenior ut siquos delectet copia iusto,
cum ripa simul avolsos ferat Aufidus acer.
at qui tantuli eget quanto est opus, is neque limo
turbatam haurit aquam neque vitam amittit in undis. (vv 49-60)

Freudenburg has shown that Horace is not just conveying a moral message here, but that he is also manipulating the metaphor to convey a literary one, for, although ancient diatribe abounds with symbols of ostentation, nowhere in the extant remains do we find a wastrel trying to drink from a raging river.[96] Freudenburg's argument is reinforced by the fact that Horace and his contemporaries were very sensitive to Callimachean symbols of poetic inspiration, and thus such an analogy as the raging Aufidus could not fail to be recognized as one. Moreover, there are other signs that Horace's message is aesthetic as well as moral: *copia* is a linguistic term for fullness of expression; *acer* is a word from literary criticism that commonly designates the grand style; the mud in the river compares with the epithet *lutulentulus* used in 1.4 to designate Lucilius' muddy style; and the *voces populi* could refer to the language and expression of other poets.[97] Thus, the river Aufidus is "symbolic of poetic incompetence."

In *Sat.*1.4.11, Horace famously compares Lucilius' style to that of a muddy river, full of debris:

cum flueret lutulentus, erat quod tollere velles;

The analogy instantly evokes Callimachean aesthetics, but it has been pointed out by Freudenburg that Horace is here also availing himself of standard terminology from compositional theory.[98] He cites several examples from ancient literary composition where the river analogy is used to argue for and against characteristics of style. Much of this has roots in the Stoic promotion of the natural and spontaneous 'flowing' style, as opposed to the carefully constructed rhetoric that was guided by notions of euphony. Generally speaking, 'fluency' is a requirement of style, but there are different definitions of it, and Horace's

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[96] Freudenburg (1993) 187-192.
[97] For *copia*, see Cicero *De Oratore* 2.151, *OLD* 1c and 6 and *TLL* 1B2b; for *acer*, see *OLD* 11 (a) and Hor. *Sat.*1.10.14 (re. Lucilius).
[98] Freudenburg (1993) 150-162. See also Scodel (1987) 199-215.

comments on Lucilius correspond to Quintilian's analogy in *Inst.* 9.4.5-8, where he compares his critics' 'fluency' to a crashing river whose flow is hindered by the rocks and debris that it carries with it.

Like his predecessors, Ovid drinks from the holy streams of inspiration (*Am.* 1.15.35-36; 3.9.25-26; *Tr.* 3.7.15), but it is clear that by now the metaphor has faded. Ovid prefers to present himself as independent of Apollo and all that goes with him. Moreover, his programmatic poems tend to be humorous rather than serious. His disavowal of divine inspiration in the proem to the *Ars Amatoria* and his replacement of Apollo by Cupid in *Amores*1.1 have been seen as an attempt to break away from the dependence of his predecessors and to show himself as a self-sufficient poet.[99] Nevertheless, his awareness of the tradition of Hesiodic poetic initiation is clear in his account in *Met.* 5.256-64 of the origin of the Hippocrene. Hinds has identified the dense metapoetic associations and allusions in this passage, which reveal a poet who is self-consciously participating in an established tradition.[100]

Homer and the archaic poets had established a standard against which subsequent poets measured themselves. The Alexandrian poets were mostly concerned with style and originality: Homer was inimitable, and subsequent efforts to imitate him resulted in bad derivative poetry. They wished to resuscitate poetry from these depths into which they considered it had fallen and to overhaul it completely, while at the same time working within the established tradition. They canonized the best of their predecessors and then entered into an imitative-agonistic relationship with them. Their main concern was with style, rather than genre. The poetry that was composed in the tradition of *epos*, for example, was attenuated, refined, allusive, and learned in opposition to its archaic prototypes.

Catullus and the Neoterics may be said to have been engaged in a somewhat similar relationship with their archaic Latin predecessors, such as Ennius, but the poets of the next generation had a different agenda: Callimachus' style revolution was for them an established code, and thus there was no great need for those who worked within it to be quite so shrill in its promotion. The emphasis therefore shifted onto more pressing considerations, which were both social and political. Poets in the newly emerging regime of Augustus responded

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[99] On this, see Armstrong (2004) 528-550.

[100] Hinds (1987) 3-24. He argues that Ovid is engaging in particular with Aratus, who provided an account of the origin of the Hippocrene in his *Phaenomena* 216-24, and that the Ovidian passage contains some mannered wordplay which reflects self-consciously on his poetic craft.

artistically to both their own personal circumstances and to the political situation and their choice of genre and subject matter was as much a reflection of these as of their own individual personalities. Their *recusationes*, which they wrote in response to the pressure, gentle or otherwise, to compose encomiastic epic, were manipulations of Callimachean polemics regarding style. The result can be aptly described as a muddying of the waters: Callimachus' programmatic statements regarding style were adapted to fit generic expediency, and in particular the Homeric association with the sea became more about epic than anything else. The sea of epic is now most commonly a catch-all for all large-scale poetry, into which these poets venture with caution, in their small, Callimachean boats.

CHAPTER THREE

PROPERTIUS' PROGRAMMATIC POEMS

To understand the metapoetic significance of the water symbolism in Propertius, the most obvious place to begin is with those elegies in which such symbolism is most overtly presented. This I have chosen to do, and the elegies in question are the densely programmatic 3.1-5, 3.9 and 2.10. Much has been written about the opening poems of the third book, which purport to herald a new departure of sorts in Propertian elegy, but despite their proud and declarative tenor, the poet still claims to be a love elegist. A careful examination of the symbolic role of water in these elegies, however, may yield the key to understanding just what exactly is the change that Propertius is announcing in his poetry, and any conclusions drawn about the water symbolism may also serve to establish a paradigm of subsequent interpretation of those elegies where the profound semantics of water are progressively less conspicuous, but equally crucial to our interpretation of the metapoetic subtext. I have included 2.10 in this section as the confusion created by Propertius' references to the Permessus and the Ascraean springs has for a long time hindered our grasp of the poetic hydrography of Helicon, preventing us from arriving at an overall understanding of the Propertian symbology of the waters of inspiration.

With this in mind, I will begin my discussion with those elegies that are essentially about the holy springs of inspiration, starting with 3.3, the cardinal elegy about the poet's consecration as an elegist, and then moving on to the closely connected 3.1, and finally 2.10. This will be followed by an examination of the remaining elegies 3.2, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.9, against the backdrop of the former discussion.

3.3.

Visus eram molli recubans Heliconis in umbra,
   Bellerophontei qua fluit umor equi,
reges, Alba, tuos et regum facta tuorum,
   tantum operis, nervis hiscere posse meis;
parvaque iam magnis admoram fontibus ora
   unde pater sitiens Ennius ante bibit,
et cecinit Curios fratres et Horatia pila,

regiaque Aemilia vecta tropaea rate,
victricisque moras Fabii pugnamque sinistram
Cannensem et versos ad pia vota deos,
Hannibalemque Lares Romana sede fugantis,
anseris et tutum voce fuisse Iovem:
cum me Castalia speculans 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 hic ulla tibi speranda est fama, Properti:
mollia sunt parvis prata terenda rotis;
ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus,
quem legat exspectans sola puella virum.
cur tua praescriptos evecta est pagina gyro<s>?
non est ingenii cumba gravanda tui.
alter remus aquas alter tibi radat harenas,
tutus eris: medio maxima turba mari est.'
dixerat, et plectro sedem mihi monstrat eburno,
quo nova muscoso semita facta solo est.
hic erat affixis viridis spelunca lapillis,
pendebantque cavis tympana pumicibus,
orgia Musarum et Sileni patris imago
fictilis et calami, Pan Tegeaee, tui;
et Veneris dominae volucres, mea turba, columbae
tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu;
diversaeque novem sortitae iura Puellae
exercent teneras in sua dona manus:
haec hederas legit in thyrsos, haec carmina nervis
aptat, at illa manu texit utraque rosam.
e quarum numero me contigit una dearum
(ut reor a facie, Calliopea fuit):
'Contentus niveis semper vectabere cycnis,
nec te fortis equi ducet ad arma sonus.
nil tibi sit rauco praeconia classica cornu
flare, nec Aonium tingere Marte nemus;
aut quibus in campis Mariano proelia signo
stent et Teutonicas Roma refringat opes,
barbarus aut Suevo perfusus sanguine Rhenus
saucia maerenti corpora vectet aqua.
quippe coronatos alienum ad limen amantis

nocturnaeque canes ebria signa fugae,
ut per te clausas sciat excantare puellas,
qui volet austeros arte ferire viros.' 50
talia Calliope, lymphisque a fonte petitis
ora Philitea nostra rigavit aqua.

Propertius is describing the scene of his initiation by the Muses on Mt. Helicon and by doing so he is inscribing himself in a tradition that goes back as far as Hesiod. As we have seen, Hesiod's *Dichterweihe* on Helicon consisted of an encounter with the Muses who, after bathing in the springs and dancing on the top of Helicon, present Hesiod with a staff of laurel and breathe into him his poetic voice. Callimachus' Dream, in which he was transported to Helicon where he met the Muses, appears to present the poet as a 'new Hesiod'.[1] Both of these poets most likely lie behind Ennius' own dream encounter at the start of the *Annales*, only this time with Homer, who imparted to the Roman the *natura rerum*, whilst breathing his soul into him. As we have also seen, Ennius may well have narrated an alternative *Dichterweihe* later in the poem (possibly the proem to Book 7), speaking of the inspirational springs of the Muses.[2] Lucretius speaks of drinking from the fountains of the Muses in 4.1-5, and Vergil's Gallus in *Eclogue* 6.64ff is led up by one of the Muses to the top of Helicon where Linus presents him with the Hesiodic pipe by which he is to sing of the Grynaean Grove. The *communis opinio* is that Vergil is alluding to Gallus' lost depiction of his own initiation scene, in which it is a fair conjecture that there featured both a reference to Orpheus' power to charm nature and Linus, given that they feature not only in *Eclogue* 6, but also in Propertius 2.13.3-8, a programmatic passage in which he asserts the importance of his own elegy:[3]

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[1] Cameron (1995) 367 casts doubt on the probability that there was any initiation at all in Callimachus, that the poet merely has a conversation with the Muses, and that he already had a conversation with Apollo when he first sat down to write poetry, in the *Prologue*, where he receives advice on style. But, in the light of the widespread employment of the initiation motif in subsequent poetry it seems more likely that some version of an initiation scene, involving the Muses and the springs, appeared in the Dream. Moreover, during the 4th and 3rd centuries BC a sanctuary of the Muses had been established on Helicon, of which Callimachus must have been very aware, leading Hunter (2006) 17 to conclude that "it would be rash to think he remained as topographically unspecific as Hesiod, particularly if the Heliconian grove was in his day a clearly identifiable sanctuary with a recognizable sacred geography." The two distinct elements in the Prologue and Dream of the warning to Callimachus by Apollo and the visit to the mountain of the Muses are united into one experience by Propertius in 3.3. On Hesiod's initiation, see Kambylis (1965) 52-61.

[2] See above, pp. 94-5.

[3] Skutsch (1901) 21-36; Ross (1975) 117-8; Thomas (1988). Cairns (2006) 127-8 speculates that Gallus in fact described more than one poetic initiation: besides a Hesiodic/Callimachean one on Helicon, he may also have recounted a lower key (Philitean?) initiatory experience involving a cave (*spelunca*) and outside the Hesiodic/Callimachean tradition. However, it seems difficult to imagine that Gallus would have used the Hesiodic model to depict an initiation into un-Hesiodic poetry.

hic me tam gracilis vetuit contemnere Musas,
iussit et Ascraeum sic habitare nemus,
non ut Pieriae quercus mea verba sequantur,
aut possim Ismaria ducere valle feras,
sed magis ut nostro stupefiat Cynthia versu:
tunc ego sim Inachio notior arte Lino.

What is not clear from this tradition of *Dichterweihe* is just when the initiated poets began actually drinking from the springs. We have seen that there is no evidence in Hesiod of this, even if later epigrams suggest he did.[4] Similarly, we have observed that the extant fragments of Callimachus, though they contain references to the Hippocrene and Aganippe, make no mention of actually drinking from these springs, though taunts levelled against the Callimachean school as 'water-drinkers' (ὑδροπόται) by Antipater of Thessalonica (*AP.* 11.20; 11.31) suggest that he did mention drinking the waters of inspiration. This 'evidence', however, may simply be a case of retrospective imposition of such an action on Callimachus, given the currency of the motif in Antipater's day.[5] Nevertheless, by the time we reach Lucretius, a poet can enthusiastically quench his thirst at the streams of Helicon.[6] Whether or not Callimachus instigated this motif, it is perhaps an inevitable metaphor to evolve, since drinking the waters of inspiration is such an obvious means of tapping their power, particularly when they consist of "a narrow trickle of a sacred spring" as presented by Callimachus himself.

It is clear that the symbolism of poetic initiation was greatly elaborated after Callimachus, and one of the principal confusions that have arisen as a result of it concerns the springs of Helicon. The proliferation of references to drinking from these holy springs throughout the work of Augustan poets led to the belief amongst scholars in the hierarchy of streams, denoting the different genres of poetry.[7] This has been contested by Crowther, who sensibly concluded after an examination of the evidence that "there are no grounds for assigning specific poetic functions to any of the streams, with the possible exception of Permessus in Vergil and Propertius." [8] Most prominent in fuelling this debate is Propertius

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[4] See above, pp 59-60. See also Reitzenstein (1931) 41-4, who (challenged by Cameron (1995) 365-373) inferred from *AP.*7.55, 11.24 and 9.64 that Callimachus described himself as drinking from the same spring as Hesiod.

[5] See above, pp. 78-9.

[6] Lucretius *DRN* 1.927-8 and 4.2-3.

[7] Maass (1896) 75-7; Wilamowitz (1924) 95; Kroll (1964) 29.

[8] Crowther (1979) 1-11. He states that in pre-Augustan poetry, Pindar alone mentions actually drinking from streams for inspiration, and that the confusion in Propertius may in fact indicate that Callimachus never assigned them any particular poetic function.

himself, because of perceived inconsistencies in his elegies concerning them: in 2.10.25-26, he differentiates between the Permessus and the Ascraean springs; in 3.1 he asks the shades of Callimachus and Philetas what water they imbibed; and in 3.3 we now find Propertius bending down to drink from one body of water, only to be directed to another.

Let us look at this more closely. Propertius begins 3.3, with an allusion to Ennius' *Annales* (*visus eram*, v.1), depicting himself in his dream as lying in the shade of Helicon *Bellerophontei qua fluit umor equi*, in other words, beside the Hippocrene.[9] He also appears to be alluding, by means of *Wortstellung,* to Vergil, *Ecl.*1.1: *Tityre tu patulae* ***recubans*** *sub tegmine fagi,* thereby implicitly associating himself with more humble poetry, while aspiring towards the higher form of epic. He is about to move his puny mouth to the mighty spring (*parva ora; magnis...fontibus*, v.5) from which he says thirsty Ennius drank before, when Apollo stops him and tells him that this is not the water (*tali flumine,* v.15) that is suitable for a poet such as he. Instead he points the way to a secluded cave in which doves are dipping their beaks into a pool of still water. But this pool is described as *Gorgoneo...lacu,* and since Pegasus, who brought the Hippocrene forth by a strike of his hoof, is sprung from the blood of Medusa, the water here must be identified with the Hippocrene. To add further confusion, Apollo is imparting his advice from a tree that belongs to the grotto of the Castalian spring which is not on Helicon at all, but on Mt. Parnassus. Then, as if this was not enough, the poem ends with Calliope moistening Propertius lips with water that is *Philitea aqua* (v.52).

What are we to make of all of this? Camps, on vv 27-32, says, "There appear to be (in the dream) two springs on Helicon, and Propertius is being directed away from one and towards the other."[10] On *Gorgoneo...lacu* he says, "We seem to be back at Hippocrene, as in line 2, although in 25-6 the poet was being directed away from it to a different spring. The imagery in fact is not worked out exactly or consistently."[11] Butler and Barber choose to dismiss the problem in the following terms: "Here, as in 2.10.25-6 and (less definitely) in 3.1.6, the poet turns to the metaphor of two different fountains of inspiration. But these fountains are clearly metaphorical, and to discuss the topography of his Helicon is a waste of time."[12] These commentators may be missing the point, however, as Fedeli quite rightly points out that we are not talking about different springs in this elegy, but different points of access.[13] The epithet *Gorgoneo* clearly denotes that we are still dealing with water from the

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[9] See Ennius *Ann.* 3. Skutsch: *visus Homerus adesse poeta.* See Fedeli (1985) 117.

[10] Camps (1966b) 66.

[11] Camps (1966b) 67.

[12] Butler and Barber (1933) 266.

[13] Fedeli (1985) 142.

Hippocrene, only not at its source. Nethercut points out the symbolic difference between rushing water (denoting war) and still water (denoting peace) in the first five poems of Book 3, and it is here that the key to understanding the poem may lie.[14]

Let us return to the top of the mountain. The Ennian water from which Propertius attempts to drink is certainly gushing and threatens to overwhelm his small mouth. This is the water that enabled Ennius to sing of the epic themes of Roman history. Such subject matter is unsuitable for elegy, and so Apollo directs him away. Thus this point of access on the top of Helicon, where the water is a torrent, is the water of inspiration for epic poetry. The cave to which Propertius is directed, is reached by a new pathway (*nova... semita,* v.26), which carries the Callimachean connotation of the untrodden track. It is bedecked with the paraphernalia of both Venus and Bacchus, and also, as Harmon has pointed out, evokes the elaborate gardens of wealthy Romans.[15] But it also resembles the *locus amoenus,* that locus of inspiration for both pastoral and love poetry. The water here is still and obviously safe enough for the doves to dip their beaks in with impunity. This is the water of inspiration for elegy, and perhaps also for pastoral and lyric poetry, given its associations with Pan, Bacchus and dancing. What these three genres have in common is that they all require a *parvum os*, and clearly the water at the top of the mountain is too much for them. Moreover, one could argue that this water, even though it is from the same source, is purer than the *magni fontes* at the top, because it has passed through the rock and emerged even more distilled, "the narrow trickle of a sacred spring", and much smaller in volume, as befits love elegy. We are reminded of the notion of Homer as the source of all poetic genres, and his representation as the sea. Similarly here, the Heliconian spring appears to represent all poetry in general, with the different genres emanating from different access points according to the amount of its flow and distillation.

Why then is the water from this pool described as *Philitea aqua?* In 3.1.1, Propertius addresses the shades of both Callimachus and Philetas, evoking them as models for his own poetry. In the final line of that elegy, the *Lycio...deo* is a clear allusion to Callimachus' *Aetia* Prologue, where Apollo is Lycian. It is logical therefore that he should end this poem with a reference to his other model. Moreover, *Philitea aqua* may be seen as a composite allusion to both Callimachus and Philetas. Harmon has in fact suggested that it is not so much the actual

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[14] Nethercut (1961) 389-407.

[15] Harmon (1979) 328. Kambylis (1965) 166-170 points out that Bacchus and Apollo are linked regarding poetic inspiration; that Bacchus, by means of wine, is able to provide the same inspiration that Apollo gives with water. He is also helpful to the love poet because he can attract the *turba puellarum.* On Bacchus as a source of poetic inspiration, see Hunter (2006) 42-80.

water that Philetas drank at his initiation, but rather an allusion to his poetry by way of Callimachus.[16] In the epilogue to the *Hymn to Apollo*, it is the "Melissae" who carry water to Deo. The "Melissae" were also the priestesses of Demeter, and thus it is possible that they also appeared in Philetas' poem written in honour of the goddess. By alluding in such a way to Philetas, Propertius is emphasizing the cultic associations of his two predecessors. Nevertheless, in 3.1.6, Propertius asks both Callimachus and Philetas, *quamve bibistis aquam?* This, as I will attempt to show, is a reference to the poetic consecration of these poets, and the connection between that elegy and this one leads one to believe that the *Philitea aqua* refers to that which the poet actually drank. It is of course very possible (and very Propertian) that the term sustains both literal and symbolic interpretations simultaneously. This Philetean water can be seen as the water of elegiac inspiration drawn from the Gorgonian pool, and contrasts with the other more profuse Gorgonian source further up the mountain.[17]

The sprinkling of Propertius' mouth with this Philitean water is not the only part of the poem that contains strong evocations of the epilogue to the *Hymn to Apollo*. The whole sea-river-spring nexus appears also in Apollo's speech to Propertius in vv.15-24. The gushing water to which Propertius is leaning is referred to as a *flumen* by the god. This *flumen* of epic, and more precisely of Ennian subject matter, recalls the silt-ridden Euphrates of the epilogue.[18] This is followed by two metaphors for Propertius' elegy. Firstly, there is that of the chariot: *mollia sunt parvis prata terenda rotis* (v.18), followed by the much more extended one of the little boat: *non est ingenii cumba gravanda tui* (v.22). Here Propertius is combining the topos of the little boat of his *ingenium* with that of the symbolic sea-voyage. Thus the symbolism of the *flumen* now gives way to that of the sea, as Apollo warns Propertius to stick close to the relative safety of the shore in his *cumba*. The image of the small boat hugging the shore is not just a metaphor for elegy, but also for the elegiac couplet. The oar on the seaward side can be interpreted as representing the hexameter, drawing from the sea of epic, while the oar on the shoreward side is the pentameter, sweeping shallower water.[19] The repetition of *alter...alter* in v.23 is itself suggestive of the metre, for which

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[16] Harmon (1979) 330.

[17] On Philetas' possible influence on Roman poetry, see Knox (1993) 61-83, who argues that Philetas would, like Callimachus, have been a model for Propertius of both style and content. On Philetas in general, see Sbardella (2000).

[18] See also Propertius 1.9, where he addresses the epic poet Ponticus, who has recently fallen in love, and tells him: *quid si non esset facilis tibi copia? nunc tu / insanus medio* ***flumine*** *quaeris aquam.* The possible meaning of this enigmatic distich will be discussed in due course, but it appears that the *flumen* here represents the subject matter of epic.

[19] For the boat keeping close to the shore, see *Geo.* 2.44-5.

alternus has been shown to be a programmatic term.[20] Elegy, with its every second line of hexameter, can be seen as an offshoot of epic, just as the *Gorgoneus lacus* is derived from the Hippocrene. The sea is the subject matter and the high sea is unsuitable as the storms out there could sink the flimsy boat. Indeed, this *cumba* of elegy can be compared with Vergil's epic *navis* in Horace *C.*1.3, where Horace expresses concern for its voyage on the high seas of epic. Moreover, it is crowded out there, and hugging the quiet shore is the preferred option for Propertius' elegy.

The symbolism in vv.15-24 in fact amounts to a reversal of that of the *Hymn's* epilogue. In that passage, Envy begins with the sea ("I do not like the poet who does not sing like the sea"), and Apollo replies by contrasting the filthy Euphrates with the small, pure spring. Thus sea-river-spring in Callimachus becomes in Propertius spring-river-sea as the initial body of water, the gushing Hippocrene is, despite its volume, still a spring and a locus of inspiration. The emphasis in the Propertian symbolism is therefore different. Callimachus, as we have seen, took on the issue of length and turned it into one of style. That argument had been dealt with and won by Propertius' time. Indeed, there is no suggestion of criticism of Ennius in this poem. Rather, he seems to be paying him a compliment by referring to him as *pater Ennius* and attempting to emulate him. For Propertius, the issue is of genre and subject matter. There is no suggestion of silt and mud in the *flumen* to which Propertius' Apollo refers. The water is pure, coming as it does from the Hippocrene, but the amount is too great for elegiac poetry. Ennius is not necessarily outside the Callimachean ambit, or, rather, Propertius is not suggesting that he is. The Hippocrene is the same inspirational body of water for all consecrated poets whose fame and reputation have been assured. It is as if, whereas Callimachus' Apollo deliberately misunderstands Envy in his response in the epilogue, Propertius' Apollo is returning to Envy's initial point about size. Elegy is slender of style and comes in small amounts. However, despite the fact that Propertius is mainly concerned with genre and subject matter, there is nevertheless a subtle insinuation that his choice of the elegiac genre is in fact more Callimachean than the loftier epic, given its associations with the small clear distilled pool of water. The reader is thus left with the impression that the choice of the *tenue* rather than the *grande* is a deliberate one of aesthetic preference, despite any protestations of inadequate talent for epic. Ennius was influenced by Callimachus, as his dream shows. But there are different levels of Callimacheanism, and

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[20] See Ovid *Am.* 3.1.8; *OLD* s.v.*alternus* 1 (c). See also Hinds (1987) 119-20 and 162 n.9.

although Propertius refrains from denigrating one who had become iconic in the younger poet's time, he shows the reader that he is a very different type of artist.

Calliope's instructions to the poet in vv. 39-50 encapsulate the martial themes that he should avoid in his elegy. Frost has drawn attention to the reference to the Rhine in vv.45-6 (*barbarus aut Suevo perfusus sanguine* ***Rhenus*** */ saucia* ***maerenti corpora*** *vectet aqua*) and argued persuasively that the lines are an allusion to Vergil's mourning Nile in *Aen.* 8.711-13 (*contra autem magno* ***maerentem corpora Nilum*** */ pandentemque sinus et tota veste vocantem / caeruleum in gremium latebrosaque flumina victos*).[21] Such an allusion serves to emphasise the contrast between epic and elegy, and supports Nethercut's observation that Propertius often presents the war/peace (and thus epic/elegy) antithesis in terms of water in motion versus water at rest.

There remains the question of why Apollo is addressing Propertius from a tree in the Castalian grotto, thereby suggesting that he is standing on a different mountain, Parnassus. Fedeli, after Kambylis, suggests that the association of Apollo with the Castalian grotto was by Propertius' time so widespread that he was able to take the extra step and speak about the Castalian tree of the god while he was in fact on Helicon.[22] I am not convinced by this; such a solecism is uncharacteristic of Propertius. Since however this scene is being depicted as a dream, or at the very least an imaginary event, it is surely then eminently permissible for Apollo to be standing on one mountain while looking over at another. Moreover, by deliberately situating Apollo on Parnassus, he renders him impartial in relation to the different points of access to the inspirational waters of Helicon, thereby not privileging one genre over the other.

3.1.

Callimachi Manes et Coi sacra Philitae,
   in vestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus!
primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos
   Itala per Graios orgia ferre choros.
dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro?
   quove pede ingressi? quamve bibistis aquam?
ah valeat, Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis!

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[21] Frost (1991) 251-259. He has shown striking parallels in both syntax and rhythm between the two passages and also observes that the epic-elegy antithesis in 3.1 and 33 is broadened out in 3.4 and 3.5 into one of peace v war, and that therefore this allusion offers coherence to the overall programme in these poems.
[22] Fedeli (1985) 128; Kambylis (1965)139.

exactus tenui pumice versus eat,
quo me Fama levat terra sublimis, et a me
nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis,
et mecum in curru parvi vectantur Amores,
scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas.
quid frustra missis in me certatis habenis?
non datur ad Musas currere lata via.
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 via.
mollia, Pegasides, date vestro serta poetae:
non faciet capiti dura corona meo.
at mihi quod vivo detraxerit invida turba,
post obitum duplici faenore reddet Honos;
omnia post obitum fingit maiora vetustas:
maius ab exsequiis nomen in ora venit.
nam quis equo pulsas abiegno nosceret arces,
fluminaque Haemonio comminus isse viro,
Idaeum Simoenta Iovis cum prole Scamandro,
Hectora per campos ter maculasse rotas?
Deiphobumque Helenumque et Pulydamanta et in armis
qualemcumque Parim vix sua nosset humus.
exiguo sermone fores nunc, Ilion, et tu
Troia bis Oetaei numine capta dei.
nec non ille tui casus memorator Homerus
posteritate suum crescere sensit opus;
meque inter seros laudabit Roma nepotes:
illum post cineres auguror ipse diem.
ne mea contempto lapis indicet ossa sepulcro
provisum est Lycio vota probante deo.

The first line of the poem is framed by the two names Callimachus and Philetas, emphasizing the distinction of these poets as models in the opening poem of the third book. We can never know how much allusion there is to Philetas in this poem but the relative importance of Callimachus is confirmed by the epithet *Lycio* in relation to Apollo in the closing line of the poem, recalling the Lycian Apollo who addressed Callimachus in the *Aetia* Prologue and also the fact that Philetas appears in the same prologue as a model for the younger poet. Moreover, unsurprisingly, the entire elegy is peppered with clear Callimachean poetic terminology. Leaving aside for the moment those references to water, there are several others which connote the slender style and the untrodden path: *tenuastis* (v.5); *exactus tenui pumice versus* (v.8); *non datur ad Musas currere lata via* (v.14); *intacta...via* (18); *invida turba* (v.21); *exiguo sermone* (v.31). All of these recall the *Aetia* Prologue and leave the reader in no doubt that Propertius has important things to say about his elegy.

As one would expect, however, Propertius' poetic messages are heavily cloaked in a dense metaphorical nexus where he fuses the concrete with the symbolic thereby eliciting amongst scholars an array of diverse interpretations. The first six lines, appropriately dubbed by one scholar as "critically tormented" are a particular locus for confusion, containing as they do a compressed combination of sacral elements and poetic motifs.[23] Two connected perennial questions lie at the root of the confusion surrounding these lines: what exactly are the *sacra* of Philetas, and is Propertius requesting access to the grove in order to offer worship or to receive it? Many scholars interpret *sacra* in ritual terms as "sacred rites offered to the dead", or even "sacred remains" and Enk proposes that the word connotes "*pars melior poetae, qua immortalis est*."[24] The most sensible interpretation is offered by Fedeli, who points out that taking a strictly sacral interpretation is too restrictive, given the obvious fusion of sacral elements and poetic motifs throughout the poem, and that *manes* (referring to the cult of the dead) and *sacra* (referring to poetic initiation, or even just poetry) should be taken together for both poets since it defies logic to differentiate the appeal to what are the joint models for his poetry;[25] since the *Musarum sacerdos* is the poet, the *sacra*, the rite he performs, is the poetry and thus Fedeli supports the view of Sandbach, according to whom the opening lines should be translated as "poetic shades of Callimachus and Philetas".[26] Such an interpretation leads him to answer the other question: Propertius is requesting entry into the *nemus*, not to celebrate the memory of his two forbears, but with the intention of becoming a poet on the same footing as they are. Harmon argues that Propertius is conducting rites in honour of the two poets, while simultaneously wishing to join them in the ranks of the worshipped. This is more satisfactory, given the obsequious tone at the beginning

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[23] Described thus by Hunter (2006) 7.

[24] "Sacred rites": Rothstein (1920-4); Butler and Barber (1933) 263; Shackleton-Bailey (1956) 135-6. "Sacred remains": Postgate (1881) 146; Richardson (1977) 319.

[25] Fedeli (1985) 42-43: "Un punto firmo mi sembra constituito dalla necessità di unire strettamente *manes* (l'aspetto legato al culto dei morti) e *sacra* (termine che, come vedremo, allude all'iniziazione poetica, o, direttamente, alla poesia): sarebbe, infatti, difficilmente concepibile un'invocazione da un lato ai *manes* di Callimaco, dall'altro ai *sacra* di Fileta: un'apostrofe, quindi, tale da differenziare due poeti che, invece, Properzio vuole qui strettamente unire." See also Baker (1968) 35-9.

[26] Sandbach (1938) 213-4. Heyworth (2007) 281 cites other examples of *sacra* as poetry: Vergil *Geo.* 2.475-6; Ov. *Tr.* 4.10.19; *Ex P.* 2.10.17; Mart. 7.63.5, 10.58.13. See also *OLD* 3e.

of the elegy.[27] One could perhaps go a little further, and say that writing Callimachean/Philetan poetry is, in a way, carrying out a rite in their honour. To put it another way, the roles of priest/worshipper and object of worship are not just simultaneously adopted by Propertius.[28] They are two sides of the same coin. The poetry that pays tribute to Callimachus and Philetas is itself Propertius' passport to immortality.

Further clarity regarding these issues may be provided by a close examination of the two references to water in the passage. In v.3 Propertius claims: *primus ego ingredior* ***puro de fonte*** *sacerdos*, and then in v.6 he asks the question *quamve bibistis* ***aquam****?* Are they the same or different?

Camps notes the Callimachean overtones in the phrase *puro de fonte* and therefore links it to the *aqua* of v.6.[29] Kambylis believes that they are one and the same.[30] Butler and Barber, who read *sacra* as "sacred rites offered to the dead", separate the two waters, the former referring to the holy water ritually carried by a priest from a sacral spring, and the latter referring to poetry.[31] Fedeli, once again recognizing Propertius' propensity to offer his reader a double level of meaning, argues that the phrase *puro de fonte* has both sacred and poetic connotations; that the word *purus* links it with the Callimachean καθαρή ὀλίγη λιβάς, and is therefore an expression denoting λεπτόν. Thus, he argues, the accent here is on style, whereas the *aqua* of v.6 refers to the spring of elegiac poetry, therefore denoting genre.[32] I agree with Fedeli that the two waters have different meanings, but not in quite the same way. Both waters may be interpreted as Callimachean poetry, but their distinction from each other is more complex than simply a difference of emphasis, as he suggests.

Let us begin with *puro de fonte.* The *nemus* of Callimachus and Philetas is a poetic grove, and Propertius wishes to enter it for the first time. If it is the grove of elegy, why is he only seeking ingress now, since he is no stranger to the genre, having already written Books One and Two? Or, to put it another way, what excluded him from heretofore entering the grove? If we look back to the programmatic prologue to Book 2, Propertius proudly claims:

> non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo:
> ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit. (vv.3-4).

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[27] On this, see also Lonie (1959) 17-34 ("permit me to share your fame after my death").
[28] On the possible heroic worship of Philetas, see Hollis (1996) 56-62.
[29] Camps (1966b) 53.
[30] Kambylis (1965) 159.
[31] Butler and Barber (1933) 263.
[32] Fedeli (1985) 47-9; 56.

Now, however, at the beginning of Book 3, a change has taken place, as he no longer repudiates the Muses, but presents himself as their *sacerdos.* He is ready for his initiation on Helicon, which he describes in 3.3. Harmon argues that 3.3 describes an event that is prior in time to everything else in the first five poems of Book 3, but I would suggest that, symbolically at least, 3.1 precedes, and is preparatory to, the initiation of 3.3.[33] In the first poem, he is looking to be initiated, and that initiation is being presented as a sacred ceremony. The grove is the consecrated grove of elegy. Callimachus and Philetas, as consecrated elegists, belong there already and Propertius is now keen to stake his claim to a place there because he is prepared to fulfil the requirement of being initiated by the Muses and Apollo. To put it quite simply, Cynthia has been demoted.

The claim that Propertius makes in vv.3-4 is misleading. Surely he cannot be claiming to be the first Latin elegist, since he was preceded by Gallus and Catullus? We cannot know for certain what Gallus' elegy was like, but we do know that Parthenius dedicated his *Erotika Pathemata* to him, as a useful handbook for his poetic compositions (be they elegy or hexameter), and the content of Propertius 1.20, generally recognized as some sort of homage to the older elegist, certainly suggests that Greek myth played a large part in his poetry.[34] Moreover, of the two long elegies by Catullus, one of them is a translation of Callimachus. Nevertheless, Propertius' originality is really being asserted rather than demonstrated here, and, crucially to our interpretation of this poem, such an assertion corresponds to statements made by his two contemporaries, Horace and Vergil. Firstly Horace: this poet's claim in 3.30.13-14 – *princeps Aeolium Carmen ad Italos / deduxisse modos* – is but one of a plethora of passages which lie behind the first five elegies of Propertius' third book. The first three books of Horace's *Odes* were published between the publication of Propertius' second and third books, and the influence of those poems on the elegist has been well recognized and documented.[35] The word *sacerdos,* in fact, appearing for the first time in Propertius on the third line of this opening poem, also appears on the third line of the first of Horace's *Odes* in Book 3. The difference between the claim of Horace and that of Propertius is hard to grasp, as expressed by Solmsen, who described Propertius' claim as "as obscure as it is beautiful".[36] Fedeli reasons that Propertius is boasting of being the first to insert Italian themes into a

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[33] Harmon (1979) 317.

[34] On Propertius 1.20, see below, pp. 171-83. The most thorough and fascinating account of the possible nature of Gallan elegy is provided by Cairns (2006)

[35] See, for example, Solmsen (1948), and Miller (1983) 289-299.

[36] Solmsen (1948) 107 n.15.

framework that is essentially Hellenistic, while adhering to the Callimachean aesthetic.[37] Secondly, Vergil makes a similar claim in *Georgics* 3.10-11: *primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita supersit, / Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musas.* Nelis has shown how the two contiguous passages of *Geo.* 2.458-542 and 3.1-48 form both the mid-point of both the *Georgics* and Vergil's entire oeuvre and, as such, are densely programmatic.[38] He points out that when Vergil says *temptanda via est* in v.8, he at first sight seems to refer to poetry of the countryside such as he has already written in his first two works, but that his claim in vv.10-11 then recalls Lucretius' Ennius at 1.117-119; both poets were probably looking back at an original Ennian source. Thus Vergil is referring to historical epic about contemporary or recent events, the *reges et proelia* adumbrated in *Eclogue* 6.3. The ambiguity is deliberate: by simultaneously looking backwards towards his earlier work and forwards to his epic, Vergil is assimilating all three works into what Nelis calls "a unified tradition of historical epos".[39] Such an interpretation is helpful to our interpretation of Propertius' parallel claim in 3.1.3-4, a passage which is similarly at the midpoint of the Propertian oeuvre and part of a series of poems whose principal subject matter is not love but love elegy.[40] Whatever the exact meaning of these lines, what seems to be most important is that Propertius is making a claim for originality that corresponds to those of his contemporaries: what Vergil claims for epic and Horace for lyric, he claims for elegy.

Thus, Propertius' credentials for entering the grove are his elegies to date, i.e. those of Books One and Two, which are Italian, yet also Callimachean. The water that he brings from the pure fountain, therefore, is this earlier Callimachean Italian love elegy, but it differs from the *aqua* of v.6 because it is inspired by Cynthia alone, and not the Muses. It is pure, Callimachean water, but it is not the water of a consecrated poet. It is that of his "Cynthia-centric" poetry.[41]

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[37] Fedeli (1985) 52 argues for a substantial difference, but his explanation is somewhat obscure: "Orazio vuole adattare il contenuto del *carmen Aeolium* ai *modi italici*; Properzio, invece, intende conferire un contenuto italico a un genere letterario coltivato dai Greci, in particolare Callimaco e Fileta." I fail to see a real difference here: both poets are dealing with the adaptation of Greek material to Latin verse; both poets are using metre that comes from Greece.

[38] Nelis (2004) 73-107. On the programmatics in this central section of the *Georgics*, see also Hardie, A (2002) 175-208; and Thomas (1986) 61-73.

[39] Nelis (2004) 83.

[40] This is, of course, to accept the unity of Book 2, a hot topic. However, it has been widely accepted that Book 1 was a separate publication. If Book 2 is indeed two books, then the opening poems of what we now call Book 3 are central to that series of Books 2-5. On this, see Butrica (1996a) 87-158, who argues for Book 1 separately published as *Cynthia*, and a three book collection comprising 2-4, published as *Amores.* He suggests that the inordinate length and chaotic nature of Book 2 may be explained by interpolations rather than lacunae. One also has to assume that Propertius had already projected a fourth book at this stage.

[41] A term used by Mader (1993) 339.

This brings us to the *aqua* of v.6. Luck, in his paper “The Cave and The Source” proposes that Propertius in this elegy is in fact requesting entry into the grove of the dead shades of Callimachus and Philetas in order to seek oracular advice, that “at a crucial point in his career, hesitating between the epic and the elegy, Propertius (speaking symbolically) turns to their divinized *manes* for advice.”[42] Although his arguments regarding this supposed poetic crisis in the poet are wide of the mark (why would he turn to Callimachus and Philetas for advice on changing to epic, particularly when he chooses to portray Callimacheanism as antithetical to such poetry?), he nevertheless has made some sensible observations regarding the three questions posed in the passage (*quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro, / quove pede ingressi? quamve bibistis aquam?* vv.5-6). He claims that two of these questions are answered by Apollo in 3.3: the cave is the one to which Apollo directs Propertius in v.25-6, that secluded grove further down the mountain accessed by a new path, and the water is the *Gorgoneus lacus* within it, that distilled pool of water with which Calliope moistens the poet’s lips, thereby effecting his initiation.

The *aqua* of 3.1.6 then, is the water of initiation from the elegiac source. Luck goes on to say, “the second question remains unanswered.” In this I suggest that he is incorrect. In fact, all three questions are answered by Apollo, but the reply to the second question is even more oblique than the other two. The surface meaning of *quove pede ingressi*, in keeping with the sacred imagery of the priest, refers to the propitiousness of stepping into a sacred place with the correct foot. But it also refers to the metre: “in what metre did you write?”[43] The answer is provided by Apollo in 3.3.23-4 *alter remus aquas alter tibi radat harenas, / tutus eris: medio maxima turba mari est.* In other words, it is the elegiac couplet. Fundamentally, the three questions amount to the same thing; “What type of poetry did you write, so that I might emulate it and become a consecrated poet like you?”

It is now possible to attempt a definition of the two types of water in the poem. The water that is *puro de fonte* is Callimachean poetry; the poetry that Propertius has already written in Books 1 and 2, and the poetry that he will continue to write, because, as Fedeli has argued, it is poetry that is λεπτός, signalled by the word *tenuastis* in the preceding line. The water that Callimachus and Philetas have drunk has the same purity, but it is more than this: it is the water of poetic initiation, and marks Propertius’ transition to a new kind of love elegy. Now that he becomes a consecrated poet, inspired by the Muses and Apollo, his love elegy is rising to a new level. No longer is it the private ‘Cynthia-centric’ poetry, with no other aim

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[42] Luck (1957) 177.

[43] For *pes* as metre, see also Cat. 14.21; Ovid *Am.* 3.1.7-14, and *OLD* 11.

than to please his mistress. He is no longer the quintessential elegiac social outcast, immune to any sense of civic duty, as he portrays himself in 2.1, unable to participate in anything outside the confines of his *angustus lectus.* His new role as *Musarum sacerdos*, self-consciously reminiscent of Horace's parallel claims as poetic *vates*, implies a certain amount of civic participation and duty. But just what is this new public role that he is claiming for himself? In 3.3.19-20 Apollo tells Propertius that he must compose love elegy *ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus, / quem legat exspectans sola puella virum.* Further on in the poem, in vv.49-50 Calliope adds that Propertius' elegies will help other lovers: *ut per te clausas sciat excantare puellas, / qui volet austeros arte ferire viros.* Propertius has been a *praeceptor amoris* since the beginning of his career, but that role heretofore has always been secondary to his primary aim to win over his mistress. Now, it seems, this role assumes primary importance at the expense of Cynthia. DeBrohun rightly observes that the emphasis on this function of his poetry at the beginning of Book 3 marks a change from Books 1 and 2, where Propertius was most often himself in the role of *exclusus amator.*[44] This change reaches its completion in the renunciation of Cynthia at the end of Book 3, which DeBrohun terms "a type of deconstruction of the subject matter that dominated his first books." This new and seemingly altruistic 'vocation' is Propertius at his most ironic: he appropriates and manipulates the Horatian *vates*-concept to present himself as a now useful member of society, thereby subverting the moral reforms that were being promoted at the time by Augustus, for no matter how sanitized his new love elegy may be, it is still incompatible with them. However, rather than being a serious attack on such reforms, it is merely a witty and irreverent vehicle by which he signals this new departure in his elegy which, as a result of his emancipation from his slavish and exclusive devotion to his mistress, is poised to embrace other, more elevated themes.

Nevertheless, despite the amusing irony, which is after all a characteristic feature of Latin love elegy, high ambition is manifest in v. 9: *quo me Fama levat terra sublimis.* Just as Vergil, at the mid-point of his poetic career, looked forward to elevating his hexameter *epos*, Propertius, at the same point in his, aspires to a higher form of elegy.[45] Thus, the importance of the *praeceptor amoris* motif can be seen as metapoetic, in that it identifies him as the leading poet of his particular genre. Propertius presents himself not only as a teacher of love

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[44] DeBrohun (2003) 131. She also remarks on the noticeable shift at the beginning of Book 3 from poems inspired by Cynthia to Propertius' self-conscious positioning of himself within the tradition of Callimachus and Philetas.

[45] *Geo.* 3.8-9 (*temptanda via est, qua me quoque possim / tollere humo victorque virum volitare per ora.*), which in turn recall Ennius' self-composed epitaph, *volito vivos per ora virum* (*Varia* 17f. Vahlen). Propertius seems also to envisage himself as flying.

(a role that may correspond to Vergil's didactic one in his *Georgics*), but also as a teacher of love-poetry, superior to all love elegists, while at the same time he is intensely conscious of his standing in relation to other poets, as particularly evidenced by the second half of 2.34 in which he praises Vergil and inscribes himself into the tradition of love poets. His message seems to be, "let Vergil be the iconic poet of epic, let Horace be that of lyric, but I will be the outstanding Elegist."[46] From now on, Cynthia becomes progressively less important, as he searches for new themes, a search that will reach new heights in Book 4 as he moves on from exclusively love elegy to a double programme of both Roman aetiological poems as well as those about love.

Finally in this section, I will deal with 2.10. I suggest that my analysis of this poem may resolve some of the apparent inconsistencies in Propertius' attitude to love poetry so early in his career, and consolidates my arguments regarding the symbolic role of water in the other two elegies.

2.10

Sed tempus lustrare aliis Helicona choreis,
et campum Haemonio iam dare tempus equo.
iam libet et fortis memorare ad proelia turmas
et Romana mei dicere castra ducis.
quod si deficiant vires, audacia certe
laus erit: in magnis et voluisse sat est.
aetas prima canat Veneres, extrema tumultus:
bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est.
nunc volo subducto gravior procedere vultu,
nunc aliam citharam me mea Musa docet.
surge, anima, ex humili! iam, carmine, sumite vires!
Pierides, magni nunc erit oris opus.
iam negat Euphrates equitem post terga tueri
Parthorum et Crassos se tenuisse dolet:
India quin, Auguste, tuo dat colla triumpho,
et domus intactae te tremit Arabiae;

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[46] On Propertius' ambition in this regard, see Zetzel (1983b) 83-105, who discusses how Vergil, Horace and Propertius each aimed for canonicity and reinvented their genres, which blended archaic and Alexandrian Greek elements with Roman or Italian themes. He also observes that Propertius, in his first five poems of Book 3, was clearly heavily influenced by Horace's newly published *Odes*.

et si qua extremis tellus se subtrahit oris,
   sentiat illa tuas postmodo capta manus!
haec ego castra sequar; vates tua castra canendo
   magnus ero: servent hunc mihi fata diem!
at caput in magnis ubi non est tangere signis,
   ponitur hac imos ante corona pedes;
sic nos nunc, inopes laudis conscendere culmen,
   pauperibus sacris vilia tura damus.
nondum etiam Ascraeos norunt mea carmina fontis,
   sed modo Permessi flumine lavit Amor.

Much has been written about the strange, conflicting messages in this poem. Is this a *recusatio*, and if it is, what sort of *recusatio* is it? Is Propertius seriously proposing to give up love elegy, so soon after his declaration of commitment to it in 2.1, and compose epic instead? Is he undergoing some sort of artistic crisis, or under real pressure from Maecenas and Augustus to mend his ways and compose poetry that has a civic function?[47] He appears to be proposing a change to epic or epic themes, but the type of poetry referred to in v.25 is that of the *Ascraos fontes*, i.e. Hesiodic poetry, which, though epic in metre, is very different from poetry about war, and what does he mean when he says that Love has bathed his poems in the Permessus? How does this water differ from the *Ascraeos fontes*, since it is mentioned as one of them in the opening of the *Theogony*?

Despite the fact we now no longer try to apply a biographical and chronological reading to the elegies, it is clear that Propertius, in presenting himself in the dramatic situation as an elegiac lover, carefully arranged his elegies to simulate the reality of a troubled and challenging love affair. It is therefore reasonable that the poem should be analysed in the context of its position within Book 2 in order to grasp what the poet intended the reader to make of this sudden declaration of his intention to sing of war rather than love.

A brief look at the first nine elegies of Book 2 reveals the typical vicissitudes of a fraught love affair. After the programmatic opening poem in which he proclaims his commitment to Cynthia, in 2.2 he extols her incomparable beauty; in 2.3 he is enslaved by her; in 2.4 he expresses the miseries of loving her; in 2.5, exasperated by her faithlessness, he threatens to leave her; in 2.6 he documents his extreme jealousy; in 2.7 he celebrates the

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[47] Stahl (1985) 161 calls this poem "a deceptive form of surface promise and subsurface denial" by which Propertius responds to considerable pressure from Maecenas and Augustus to compose epic poetry. Alvarez-Hernandez (1997) 115-6 argues for an artistic crisis prompted by the poet's admission to the circle of Maecenas, where he sees from close up the poetry of Horace and Vergil. Both he and Fedeli (2006) 313-4 however suggest that a change of content and style is being proposed here, rather than genre. Nethercut (1972) 79-94 interprets the poem as ironic, and sees it as a counterpart to 2.7.

repeal of a law that threatened to separate him from his mistress; in 2.8 he is miserable again, because despite everything he has done for her, she has gone off with another man; and, finally, in 2.9 he continues to bewail Cynthia's faithlessness: what gratitude did he receive for all his devotion to her when she was at death's door?

Cynthia, then, is ungrateful. All his love has been thrown back in his face. This is the dramatic situation that Propertius chooses to portray to the reader and therefore may be seen as the context for 2.10. Let us offer a possible paraphrase of the opening lines of the poem: "It is time to write a different type of poetry which commemorates the military achievements of Augustus. If I fail, I will at least be praised for my efforts (something that never happened when I wrote about Cynthia!). Youth is the time to sing of love, and maturity is the time to sing of war. I will sing of war now, since Cynthia, because of her treatment of me, is all written up. She has caused me to be no longer young." The motive for singing of Augustus' wars is the *laus* he will receive for his efforts, which is in stark contrast to the response his preceding elegies have elicited from Cynthia. Here Propertius recalls Vergil's claim in the opening to *Georgics* 3 (vv.1-48) that, by praising Caesar, he himself will win praise. Such a reward contrasts with the sentiment expressed by Propertius in 2.11.2, *laudet, qui sterili semina ponit humo*, whereby praise of Cynthia yields nothing in return. Thus, 2.10 can be read as a direct response to Cynthia's ingratitude.

Cairns rejects a causal reading of *quando* (v.8) in favour of a temporal one on the grounds that the logic of the poem, as a *recusatio* with a caveat that he will write of Augustus' wars in the future, dictates that the phrase should read: "I will sing of wars when I have finished writing about my girl."[48] Against the argument that such a reading should have *erit* rather than *est*, he provides several other examples in Latin poetry of the present tense used with a future sense. In response, I would argue that the ambiguity of the phrase *quando scripta puella mea est* may be functional in the context of this and the surrounding poems: Propertius is simultaneously pretending to be done with composing love poems to an ungrateful mistress *and* promising to do as Cairns suggests. The dramatic situation yields one meaning and the subtext another. This is typical of Propertius, most particularly demonstrated in the opening poem of Book 4, where the reader is left wondering whether or not Propertius is finished with love elegy.

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[48] Cairns (2006) 327-9. Cairns also rejects Wyke's convincing, and by now generally accepted arguments regarding *scripta puella*, whereby Cynthia, as a literary construct, is inseparable from her poems. (Wyke (1987) 47-61).

Such is the dramatic scenario that Propertius is using for his *recusatio*. But what sort of *recusatio* is it? Is he seriously contemplating a move from elegy to epic? I suggest not. Such an artistic crisis appears unlikely in one who was basking in the success of his first book and who only a few poems before, in 2.1, was confidently vaunting his love elegy. Moreover, the suddenness of his climb-down in the final couplet makes it hard to take the poem seriously. I suggest that Propertius is here merely availing of another dramatic situation in which to couch his love elegy, which at the same time enables him to indulge in a little witty and gentle polemic. The ingratitude theme allows him to engage in some generic banter with epic, and at the same time to hint that at some stage in the future he does envisage tackling more elevated themes in his elegy. I concur with Fedeli that he is not here, nor anywhere else in his oeuvre, seriously entertaining the notion of writing a poem in hexameters, but he does play with the terminology of epic because of the traditional dichotomy of elegy-love versus epic-war.[49] Hence we meet such words as *Haemonio...equo* (v.2, recalling Achilles of the *Iliad*), *turmas* (v.3), *castra* (v.4) and *bella* (v.8). Having thus adumbrated epic, he then solemnly announces:

> nunc volo subducto gravior procedere vultu,
> nunc aliam citharam me mea Musa docet.
> surge, anima, ex humili! iam, carmine, sumite vires!
> Pierides, magni nunc erit oris opus. (vv.9-12)

The term *procedere* connotes the solemnity of grander themes, and his Muse teaches him an *aliam citharam.* It is commonly assumed that the Muse referred to here is one of the nine that dwell on Helicon, since Propertius has already mentioned the mountain at the start of the poem. But he calls her ***mea** Musa*, and, as we have seen, in 2.1.3-4 he asserted that this was none other than Cynthia:

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

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[49] Fedeli (1985) 313-4, after Alvarez-Hernandez (1997) 126: "*Aliis* fa capire, però, che si tratta di danze diverse da quelle consuete, e dunque, fuor di metafora, di un mutamento di genere poetico, dalla poesia d'amore all'epos: anche se in definitiva, secondo l'interpretazione di Alvarez-Hernandez, che condivido, si tratterà non tanto un cambiamento di genere, quanto di un mutamento di contenuto e di stile, come induce a credere l'assenza di un qualsiasi accenno alla necessità di variare il metro e, dunque, il passo di danza."

I suggest that Propertius is referring to Cynthia in 2.10.10 - and there may well be some significance in the fact that she occupies an emphatic *sedes* in the tenth line of the tenth poem - and that he is humorously saying that because his Muse's bad behaviour has prevented him from writing about love, he will write instead about the opposite to love, i.e. war.[50] His surface posture is that of the indignant lover who, in a fit of pique, wishes to exact revenge on his mistress by refusing to write about her. His logic may go something like this: "Ok, then, if she insists on being so faithless despite all I have done for her, I will give up writing love poems to her, and if I can't write about love, I'll write about war." The reader is thus given the impression that Propertius is thinking about composing an epic for which he will receive the *laus* so lacking from Cynthia. If he is to undertake such a lofty theme as the commemoration of Augustus' achievements, he realizes that he needs to change the tone and style of his poetry, hence the appeal to his verses to rise up from their humble level and his appeal to the Pierides. The *magnum os* which he says will be necessary is the same one that is needed in 3.3.1-4 to drink from the gushing water of the Hippocrene at the top of the mountain. He is intimating that, if he is to compose such poetry, he will need the help of the Heliconian Muses, but in order for them to help him he needs to be invested as one of their protégés. A corresponding situation appears in the *Georgics* (2.475-94), in which Vergil aspires to writing philosophical poetry. The Muses make their first appearance in this poem, as Vergil appears as an initiate requesting admission to their grove and illumination, so that he may compose philosophical poetry. The appeal fails, however, and the poet retreats to the countryside, and the Muses are replaced by the Nymphs as inspirational deities. Hardie argues that this passage departs from the usual conventions of a *recusatio*, in which a poet is responding to pressure to compose in another genre, because Vergil is here referring to different levels within the same genre.[51]

Propertius' appeal also fails as he will never be invested as an epic poet, and his investiture as an elegist will not take place until the beginning of Book 3. However, a *recusatio* often offers the reader a taste of what the poet says he is unable to do.[52] What follows therefore, is a whimsical attempt at incorporating into his love elegy a miniature encomium of Augustus: in vv.13-18 he encapsulates an abridged version, a potted history of

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[50] The possibility that Cynthia = *mea musa* in this elegy is even stronger if we accept the argument by Lyne (1998) 21-36 that 2.10 is the final poem of the original Book 2. This may suggest some connection, if not ring composition with 2.1.

[51] Hardie (1986) 33-51.

[52] eg. Horace *S.* 2.1.10-15.

his leader's conquests.[53] This is all he is prepared to offer for now, because, despite what he says about Cynthia, he is still a committed love elegist. He has no intention for the moment of being any other type of poet, but he does not rule out the possibility of something greater in the future and this is why he then says:

> haec ego castra sequar; vates tua castra canendo
> magnus ero: servent hunc mihi fata diem! (vv. 19-20).

One day, he is saying, when he really is too old for love elegy, he will compose a higher form of elegy and he will be a *vates* poet like Horace and Vergil.[54] Propertius will, in fact, define himself as *vates* twice in 4.6 (vv.1 and 10), a poem about Augustus' victory at Actium. The simile that follows has Callimachean overtones: just as, when it is not possible to reach the head of tall statues, a garland is placed at their feet, so Propertius, unable to scale the heights of the poetry that would afford him such *laus*, must content himself with this paltry effort, which he terms *vilia tura* (v.24). Thus, despite appearances, Propertius is completely rejecting epic, while leaving the door open for the incorporation at some future date of loftier themes into elegy. The *vilia tura* may be read as a sample of encomiastic elegy (contained in vv.13-18), and the garland on the top of the statue represents the epic that he rejects by means of the modesty topos.

This brings us to the problematic final distich. A common interpretation of these lines is that the *Ascraeos fontes* represent the Hippocrene as the source of epic verse, and that the Permessus is the stream of love elegy.[55] The problem is, however, that nowhere else in ancient poetry has such a hierarchical ranking of springs on Mt. Helicon been attested. Moreover, as already stated, since the Permessus is situated on the same mountain as the Hippocrene, Olmeius and Aganippe, then why should it not be termed an *Ascraeus fons*?[56] Finally, the epithet *Ascraeus* is suggestive of Hesiod, who was a model for Callimachus' own initiation on Helicon, and indeed the model for his (elegiac) *Aetia.* Butrica has also shown that in later poetry the Permessus, as well as the Aganippe and Hippocrene, became

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[53] The passage recalls *Geo.*3.13-36 in which Vergil produces a sample of the epic which he promises to write in the future. He fulfils this promise, of course, with the *Aeneid.*

[54] It is noteworthy that Horos at 4.1.135-6 uses the term *castra* in reference to Propertius' elegies: *at tu finge elegos, fallax opus – haec tua* ***castra*** *-/ scribat ut exemplo cetera turba tuo.*

[55] Hubbard (1975) 74-5; Commager (1974) 60; Luck (1969) 139-141.

[56] A point made by Ross who, I believe, reaches an incorrect conclusion regarding the Permessus in 2.10. (see below, n.59).

conventional symbols for poetic inspiration in general, to the extent that even Hesiod was depicted as drinking from them, even though he never said so himself.[57]

Nevertheless, despite the extant literary tradition, Propertius is clearly making a distinction between the Permessus and the other springs in 2.10.25-6, and it has been generally accepted that the source of this distinction is Vergil *Eclogue* 6.64ff, in which he recounts Gallus' wandering by the Permessus before being led up the mountain by one of the Muses and presented with the Hesiodic pipes by Linus with which he will compose a poem on the origin of the Grynaean Grove. As we have seen, the Vergilian passage is probably an allusion to Gallus' own account of his poetic initiation.[58]

Propertius may therefore be alluding to Gallus' poetic initiation by the Muses; something that has yet to happen to him.[59] Before Gallus ascended the mountain he was 'wandering' (*Ecl.* 6.64*)* – and *errantem* is highly suggestive of the elegiac lover who lives his life *nullo consilio* (Prop.1.1.6) at the mercy of his *servitium* – by the Permessus. The implication in Vergil's poem is that this river is situated at the lower reaches of the Helicon, since he is led **up** the mountain by the Muse. We may therefore again be talking about points of access in 2.10.26. The water is Callimachean water - it is the source of inspiration for love elegy - but it differs from the water further up the mountain because it is not water used in consecration. It may therefore equate with the pure spring water (*puro de fonte*) to which Propertius refers in 3.1.3. Lyne has provided further support to the argument that the Permessus in 2.10 represents love elegy, by pointing out that Propertius is also directly alluding to the primary initiation scene by Hesiod in the *Theogony*: his Muses bathed in the Hippocrene, the Olmeius and the Permessus before going up to the summit of the mountain to dance. Once they were up there, they danced around the altar of Zeus and an unidentified "violet-dark spring". Propertius says his poems have not yet become acquainted with the *Ascraeos fontes*, but Love has only bathed (*lavit*) his poems in the Permessus. Lyne argues that the allusion is a kind of joke and that we need to recognize this joke if we wish to understand Propertius' message: the Muses bathe as a **prelude** to their dancing at the

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[57] Butrica (1996a) 121-5.

[58] See above, p. 107.

[59] Ross (1975) 33-4 argues that Gallus is not being initiated here, but recognized and rewarded for having already written Hesiodic-aetiological poetry. But this is because Ross wishes to reconcile the scene with his theory that Gallus began his poetic career by writing such elegies and progressed from there to becoming exclusively a love elegist, thus showing that Propertius took up where Gallus left off. But why would Vergil model such an event on Hesiodic and Callimachean initiation scenes? It seems more likely that Propertius' career corresponded to that of Gallus the other way round: that Gallus also began with the relatively humble love elegy and ascended up the elegiac register with his more serious elegy on the origin of the Grynaean Grove. This would perhaps explain Propertius' emphasis on youth as a prerequisite for love elegy and his declaration in 3.5 that when he is older he will tackle more serious subjects.

summit.[60] Propertius wittily replaces the Muses with *Amor* who, by having only bathed his poems in the Permessus, has not yet made an ascent up the mountain. I further suggest that Propertius also replaces the Muses with *Amor* because he wishes to emphasise that he is not yet looking to be conducted up the mountain, in Gallan style, by the Muses, as he is not ready to relinquish Cynthia as his sole Muse. Amor, as the god of love, is the only divinity to have dominion over him. Apollo and the Muses will come later.

The *Ascraos fontes*, on the other hand, are the waters of consecration: the waters with which the various poets are invested on their respective points of access up the mountain. That is why Propertius refers to them in the plural, as they may denote any poetry composed by a poet who has been initiated by the Muses: epic, in all its forms, lyric, and even elegy, but not Propertian love elegy as it is at the moment.[61] What Propertius seems to be saying is that he has not yet progressed beyond Cynthia-centred love elegy; Cynthia is still his Muse; his initiation by the Heliconian Muses has yet to take place.

A passage in 2.13, already mentioned in relation to its similarities with *Eclogue* 6, at first sight appears to contradict my analysis of 2.10:

> hic me tam gracilis vetuit contemnere Musas,
> iussit et Ascraeum sic habitare nemus,
> non ut Pieriae quercus mea verba sequantur,
> aut possim Ismaria ducere valle feras,
> sed magis ut nostro stupefiat Cynthia versu:
> tunc ego sim Inachio notior arte Lino. (2.13.3-8).

Here Propertius seems to be acknowledging the importance of the Muses and tells how he has been ordered to dwell in the *Ascraeum nemus* in lines that appear to echo Apollo's directing Propertius in 3.3 towards the grotto of elegiac inspiration where he was initiated by the Muses. How can this be? I suggest that Propertius is being deliberately misleading in his promotion of his Cynthia elegies and appropriating the language of Hesiodic initiation to do so. When we look more carefully we see that Amor, the only god to have dominion over the elegist, is this time replacing Apollo (whereas he replaced the Muses in 2.10), and he has ordered him not to disrespect the Muses, because they are *graciles*, and thus inspirers of slender verse; and the *Ascraeum nemus* is the poetic terrain of Helicon in its totality. There is no mention of springs here. What Propertius seems to be doing is 'correcting' Gallus, or at

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[60] Lyne (1998) 21-36.

[61] There is no need therefore for Butrica's proposed emendation from *fontes* to *montes* (1996a) 121-5.

least Vergil's Gallus. Gallus was presented in the Sixth *Eclogue* by Linus with pipes by which Hesiod was endowed with Orphic powers and charmed the trees down the mountain with his song. Propertius rejects these powers for himself: he does not ask to inhabit the mountain on these terms, in other words, as an initiated poet. What he wishes instead is to live there (i.e. compose his poetry) with the sole intention of hypnotizing Cynthia (and not nature) with his song. He therefore portrays a form of alternative initiation scene for himself, or even an anti-initiation scene, in which *Amor* plays the part of Apollo, and Cynthia is both the recipient of his poetry and his Muse. But Amor's admonition not to scorn the slender Muses is an intimation that in 2.1 and 2.10, Propertius is not so much rejecting them as postponing them until such time as he is ready to be consecrated.

In conclusion, 2.10 may be read not as a postponement of epic, but as a postponement of a higher form of elegy.[62] It is a *recusatio* of sorts, but Propertius is using the topos of insufficiency to excuse himself from incorporating higher themes in his elegy for the time being; by portraying himself as the exasperated lover having a tantrum about Cynthia's behaviour, he keeps the tone light and humorous. The dramatic situation prompts the reader at first to understand that the poet is saying, "I have finished writing poetry about love (elegy), so now I will write poetry about war (epic)." What actually happens, however, is that Propertius equivocates between the Roman-Callimachean opposition between war/epic and love/elegy, and a more subtle Vergilian-style distinction between different 'levels' within the same genre, with the ultimate implication that epic is not for him (the statue is too tall), but that he may compose more elevated, encomiastic elegy (*vilia tura*) along the lines of vv.13-18 at some point in the future.

It is now time to sum up the conclusions drawn from my analysis of the three poems. Firstly, the Permessus in 2.10 may represent 'subjective' love elegy after Vergil's Gallus in *Ecl.*6.64-73, which probably reproduces in some way a scene from Gallus' own poetry, where he describes his own stylistic ascent from love elegies to Lycoris to aetiological elegy of the type suggested by the description of the Grynaean Grove. From Vergil we can construct the possible Gallan scenario: Gallus described himself as 'wandering' (with the chosen demeanour of the conventional elegiac lover) by the Permessus at the foot of Helicon,

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[62] *Pace* Lyne (1998) 21-36, who argues that Propertius is postponing epic, using the excuse that he has not even attempted a higher form of elegy. I also disagree with Tatum (2000) 407, who argues that in this poem Propertius "is investigating the impossibility of locating, in generic terms, the very variety of the poem that 2.10 represents, the *recusatio.*" He also maintains that there is no room for this *recusatio* on the top of Helicon or on the plains below, because these areas have been annexed by epic. Does he propose that Callimachus' *Aetia* is thus excluded from such lofty regions?

drawing from the topos of the Lament by Water, as he, Orpheus-like, bewailed his recalcitrant mistress and then was led by one or more Muses up the mountain.[63] There he was invested as a poet and endowed with the wherewithal to compose a more elevated elegy on the origins of the Grynaean Grove. Even if this scene did not appear in Gallus, it is the situation in Vergil. Thus for Propertius, thanks to Vergil, or Vergil and Gallus, or Gallus by way of Vergil, the Permessus has come to represent the lowest and most humble form of love elegy: 'subjective' love elegy in which Cynthia is the centre of his universe. More crucially, perhaps, it represents the inspirational water of the as yet unconsecrated poet. It is still a Heliconian spring, albeit at the lower reaches of the mountain, and as such, it possesses the Callimachean purity required for the sort of poetry that he has been composing since the beginning of the first book. There is no doubting that Propertius was a fully paid up Callimachean poet from the start of his career.

This brings us back to 3.1 and 3.3. The opening poems of Book 3 are announcing a new start of some kind for his elegy, but what is it? Apollo is still directing him to compose love elegy; he is still composing in the elegiac couplet; he is still adopting the stance of one who, in devoting himself to love, declines the life of military or political activism. Nevertheless, Propertius has moved on from where he was at the end of 2.10, where he said that his poems did not yet know the Ascraean springs. Book 3 marks the stage where he announces that he is now ready to acquaint himself with these waters. He is ready to be consecrated as an elegist. To do so, he must relinquish his single Cynthia Muse in favour of the Muses of Helicon. In 2.1 he repudiated Calliope and her sisters, but now they supplant Cynthia as they invest him as a poet by anointing his mouth with the inspirational water in the grotto further up the mountain. The kinds of love elegies that they inspire in Propertius are essentially different from those of the first two books. Cynthia still has a role to play in them, although not always, and her prominence wanes progressively throughout the third book, culminating in his rejection of her at the end. What has happened is that Propertius now presents himself as a type of *vates* poet (although he will not actually use this term until Book 4: for the moment he calls himself a *sacerdos Musarum*), like Horace and Vergil, and he therefore now has assigned himself a public function of sorts, albeit one which may well have

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[63] Knox (1985) 118 suggests that Vergil's Gallus being led up the mountain represents a shift from Gallus' preoccupation with love poetry, and that he draws on the poetic associations of Orpheus: "The figure of Orpheus as a representative of his poetic inspiration is a particularly powerful and peculiarly personal development of Vergil's." In poetry this scene is particularly associated with Orpheus consoling himself over the loss of Eurydice.

raised a few eyebrows in conventional society.[64] He has partially abandoned the posture of the self-obsessed social pariah. Apollo himself has instructed him that his poems now have a public purpose, even if his *turba* of followers is a more humble one than that of the epic or, indeed, the lyric poet. His self-imposed exclusion from the higher realms of Helicon is now at an end and he has been assigned his own location on the mountain from which he draws the inspirational water of a more elevated form of elegy.

Thus, as an invested poet, he is now poised to explore the possibilities open to him for further raising the status of his elegy. He has released himself from the constraints that he imposed on himself in the first two books. His emancipation from his *servitium* has begun, and will be complete by the time he writes Book 4.

3.2

Carminis interea nostri redeamus in orbem,
  gaudeat ut solito tacta puella sono.
Orphea detinuisse feras et concita dicunt
  flumina Threicia sustinuisse lyra;
saxa Cithaeronis Thebas agitata per artem
  sponte sua in muri membra coisse ferunt;
quin etiam, Polypheme, fera Galatea sub Aetna
  ad tua rorantis carmina flexit equos:
miremur, nobis et Baccho et Apolline dextro,
  turba puellarum si mea verba colit?
quod non Taenariis domus est mihi fulta columnis,
  nec camera auratas inter eburna trabes,
nec mea Phaeac[i]as aequant pomaria silvas,
  non operosa rigat Marcius antra liquor;
at Musae comites et carmina cara legenti,
  nec defessa choris Calliopea meis.
fortunata, meo si qua est celebrata libello!
  carmina erunt formae tot monumenta tuae.
nam neque pyramidum sumptus ad sidera ducti,
  nec Iovis Elei caelum imitata domus,
nec Mausolei dives fortuna sepulcri
  mortis ab extrema condicione vacant.
aut illis flamma aut imber subducet honores,

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[64] Vergil applies this term once to himself in *Aen.*7.41. Horace uses it frequently, eg. *Epist.* 1.7.11; *Carm.* 1.1.35; 1.3.1; 2.20.3.

annorum aut ictu, pondere victa, ruent.
at non ingenio quaesitum nomen ab aevo 25
excidet: ingenio stat sine morte decus.

While the focus of the first five elegies of Book 3 is poetics, the particular theme of 3.2 is that of the immortality of the poet. It has often been rightly observed that this cycle of elegies is a response to Horace's *Odes*, and nowhere is this more obvious than in this elegy, rewriting as it does passages from both *Odes* 2.18 and 3.30. Nethercut has commented on the irony within the poem, whereby Propertius parodies his contemporary.[65] Miller argues that Propertius artfully contaminates the two Horatian sources and makes Horace a foil for his own elegy: by going further than Horace in claiming immortality for his *puella* as well as for himself, he effectively trumps the lyric poet.[66]

The elegy consists of three consecutive priamels, catalogues in which Propertius cites a list of examples which serve as preambular foils to a climax that returns to the poet's own situation.[67] Nethercut has observed that water is a recurrent motif in all three priamels, appearing twice in the first one and once in each of the following two.[68] It will be useful to examine each one in turn.

The first priamel (vv.2-10) deals with the great power of song, and Propertius resorts to his favourite method of drawing examples from mythology to illustrate his point. The first example is the power of Orpheus' song to control nature, for which *flumina* functions as a synecdoche. The reference to Orpheus recalls both Gallus and Vergil, as noted already in relation to Propertius 2.10, and the allusion is signposted by the word *dicunt* (v.2).[69] The reader is therefore alerted to some possible *aemulatio* on the part of Propertius with his elegiac predecessor and his older contemporary. The second *exemplum* is that of Amphion, whose lyre playing prowess was such that the stones that were being used to build the walls of Thebes moved into place of their own accord. The word *ferunt* (v.5) suggests that Propertius is again alluding to other poetry, and the story of Amphion was covered by Apollonius Rhodius, although some other lost source may be the target here.[70] The third *exemplum* is that of Polyphemus and Galatea. The more usual version of this story, as told by Theocritus, depicts Polyphemus, the somewhat buffoonish Cyclops, as suffering from

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[65] Nethercut (1970) 387.
[66] Miller (1983) 289-99. On Horace's influence, see also Solmsen (1948) 105-9.
[67] On the structure of this poem, see Mader (1993) 321-340.
[68] Nethercut (1961) 391.
[69] On *dicunt* and *ferunt* as Alexandrian footnotes see Hinds (1998) 1-5.
[70] Ap. Rhod. 1.735-43.

unrequited love for the sea nymph. In the Propertian version, however, Polyphemus is successful in wooing his beloved, and she responds with her "dripping horses" (*rorantis...equos,* v.8) to his overtures. Fedeli, citing Holland, has commented on the rarity of the Propertian version of the story, saying that it does not appear again until Nonnus, but agrees with Holland that its origin is probably Alexandrian.[71] What is interesting here, however, is that Propertius does not avail of a *dicunt* or a *ferunt*, and the couplet is written in direct speech. Clearly this is the most important *exemplum* of the three, as its content is erotic and it deals with the ability to woo a *puella.* Could Propertius be inventing his own version here? I suggest, moreover, that Galatea in this passage may be a metaphor for the sea, balancing the other musically susceptible components of nature, those of the *flumina* and the *saxa,* and that Propertius is humorously raising the bar with this *exemplum*: some poetry (that of Gallus and Vergil?) is good enough to control rivers; other poetry can move stones; but Polyphemus' love songs, representing love elegy because its purpose is erotic persuasion, can go one better because it can control the sea, for which Galatea is a metaphor. The seriousness of the message is undercut by Propertius' comical *alter ego*, Polyphemus, reflecting perhaps the new tone of detachment that appears in Propertian love elegy from Book 3 onwards. Nevertheless, Polyphemus' success is a dramatization of the purpose of love elegy, and it anticipates the new emphasis on this social function that is prescribed in 3.3. In validating his poetry, Propertius is claiming a place for himself as a love elegist in the pantheon of all the best poets.

The second priamel (vv.11-18) exploits the conventional topos of poetry versus wealth: Propertius does not possess a house endowed with marble pillars or gilded ceilings, recalling the opening lines of Horace *Odes* 2.18, but he also adds that he does not possess a garden that is artificially irrigated by water from the Marcian aqueduct: *non operosa rigat Marcius antra liquor* (v.14).[72] The sacred terminology *antra* and *liquor* evokes the grottoes of the Muses and it has been observed that Propertius is here referring particularly to those elaborate imitations of those grottoes that were known to have been popular in the gardens of the wealthy. But these gardens are, as the word *operosa* implies, mere imitations, and no substitute for the real thing, as confirmed by the subsequent distich, in which Propertius is able to boast that the real Muses, especially Calliope, are his friends. Thus the artificially procured *liquor* of the rich man is implicitly compared with the *aquam* of 3.1.6 and the

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[71] Fedeli (1985) 96. Holland (1884) 139-312.

[72] Horace uses the term *operosiores* in *Odes* 3.1.48, leading Nethercut (1970) 387 to suggest that this is another instance of *aemulatio* on the part of Propertius.

Philitea aqua of 3.3.52: the former may be inaccessible to Propertius, but he has exclusive access to the vastly superior latter. It is worth noting that, in support of the possibility that Propertius is deliberately alluding to the scene of his consecration, the verb *rigat* (v.14) also appears in 3.3.52 – *ora Philitea nostra* ***rigavit*** *aqua* – and that these are the only two occurrences of the verb in the corpus.[73]

Water appears in third priamel in the form of rain: even the greatest of monuments are susceptible to destruction by rain and the weight of time, unlike the fame of Propertius' genius, which is immortal. It has been well recognized that Propertius is here alluding to Horace's famous claims in *Odes* 3.30, and that what we have is *aemulatio* with his contemporary. The ultimate power of water is being expressed here: although it could be temporarily controlled in the first priamel by the power of song, and in the second by the engineering genius of mankind, all things must nevertheless eventually submit to its power to destroy.

It has to be said however that despite the presence of water as a recurring theme in this poem, its metapoetic significance is weak in relation to the other poems at the beginning of Book 3. This may be due to the essential message of the poem, which is a comparatively simple declaration of the poet's immortality in which the polemic dimension manifests itself, as we have seen, as a playful exercise in *aemulatio* with Horace. The message is more complex and programmatic in 3.1 and 3.3, heralding as they do a change within his own genre of elegy, and we shall see that in 3.4, 3.5 and 3.9 the elegist engages in a much more serious polemical dialogue with epic.

3.4

Arma deus Caesar dites meditatur ad Indos,
  et freta gemmiferi findere classe maris.
magna, viri, merces! parat ultima terra triumphos;
  Tigris et Euphrates sub tua iura fluent;
sera, sed Ausoniis veniet provincia virgis;
  assuescent Latio Partha tropaea Iovi.
ite agite, expertae bello date lintea prorae,
  et solitum, armigeri, ducite munus, equi!
omina fausta cano. Crassos clademque piate!

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[73] Moreover, it has been observed that the cave of 3.3.27ff actually evokes the elaborate gardens of wealthy Romans (see above, p. 110).

ite et Romanae consulite historiae!
Mars pater, et sacrae fatalia lumina Vestae,
ante meos obitus sit precor illa dies,
qua videam spoliis onerato[s] Caesaris axe[s],
ad vulgi plausus saepe resistere equos,
inque sinu carae nixus spectare puellae
incipiam et titulis oppida capta legam!
tela fugacis equi et bracati militis arcus
et subter captos arma sedere duces!
ipsa tuam serva prolem, Venus: hoc sit in aevum,
cernis ab Aenea quod superesse caput.
praeda sit haec illis, quorum meruere labores:
me sat erit Sacra plaudere posse Via.

Harmon and Nethercut interpret this poem as ironic.[74] Nethercut chooses to read Propertius' reluctance to compose epic as a direct result of antipathy towards Augustus and his regime. Harmon argues that the poet is essentially pro-Augustan, but opposed to his policy of expansion. Cairns, on the other hand, argues that Propertius' first patrons were adherents of Augustus, and that subsequently, under Maecenas, he was entirely dependent on the Emperor. Hostility towards the regime in his poetry therefore, makes little sense.[75] Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine a first century reader not seeing the apparent distance Propertius sets between himself and Augustus' putative Parthian campaign as provocative, whether or not such provocativeness is undermined by his stance as elegiac lover, or merely playful. On the other hand, it has been well acknowledged that the first five poems of Book 3 are overtly programmatic, whereby Propertius, mindful of the recent publication of the first three books of Horace's Odes, sets out to articulate his own poetic position. It is perfectly possible that the poem operates simultaneously on both a metapoetic and a political level, although I am inclined to believe that the political level is not particularly serious. One could argue that elegy is in its nature an oppositional genre, as its conventions demand that the elegiac lover-poet sets himself against everything outside his erotic milieu.

Looking at 3.4 through a purely literary lens, it is clear that Propertius is opposing elegy and the elegiac lifestyle to that of epic. If loving and love elegy are for the poet one and the same thing, and making love equates with composing love poetry, as so memorably

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[74] Harmon (1979) 330-1; Nethercut (1970) 393. See also Wilkinson (1960) 1093-1103.
[75] Cairns (2006) 441. Cairns argues that Propertius' first patrons were both Tullus and Gallus.

conveyed in 1.7.5, then the same can be said for the opposite.[76] Thus, the life of the soldier equates with epic poetry, and Propertius' contrast of the two lifestyles can be read as a thinly veiled contrast between the two types of poetry. The surface is a dramatization of that which lies beneath: a poetic message about literary canons which expresses his rejection of one in favour of another. The dramatic situation that he chooses to correspond to epic is, however, densely meaningful in itself. By choosing to compose a *propemptikon* dealing with Augustus' impending Parthian expedition and enthusiastically forecasting a favourable outcome (the matter was, in fact, peacefully resolved in 20 BC), Propertius is able to incorporate, in the manner conventional to *propemptikon*, praise for Augustus and at the same time pay homage to the poet who at that time was engaged in composing an epic that would glorify Rome and its leader. The allusions to the *Aeneid* are evident at the beginning and the end of the poem: the very first word – *arma* – recalls the *incipit* of that epic, and Aeneas himself is mentioned in line 20 of the poem. Cairns has further pointed out that *viri* in line 3 and *cano* in line 9, occupying the same *sedes* as the Vergilian counterparts, are also allusions to the poem.[77] Cairns speculates that the allusions are separated from each other probably because Propertius is half-attempting to preserve the confidentiality of the private recitations of the as yet unpublished poem. Propertius is wishing Augustus well on his forthcoming expedition, and at the same time conferring the same benevolent wishes on the Vergilian work in progress. Critics have seen his subsequent exclusion of himself from such a venture, expressing his preference for the role of mere observer, while in the arms of his girl, as a subversive indication of his distaste and disapproval of Augustus' plans.[78] But we cannot be sure about this: the conventional stance of the elegist is that of the peaceful lover who eschews the life of the soldier. He therefore has no alternative, as an elegiac poet, than to observe such goings on from the sidelines. The point may be literary rather than political. Moreover, he cleverly provides some common ground for the two diverging activities: he invokes Venus, the tutelary goddess of the Julian family by virtue of being their divine ancestor, to watch over the expedition. But Venus is, of course, the goddess of Love, and therefore central in the life of the elegiac poet.[79]

The poetic subtext of the poem is mediated by the references to water in the opening lines of the poem: Caesar is planning "to cleave the straits of the gem-bearing sea" with his

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[76] Prop. 1.7.5: *nos, ut consuemus, nostros agitamus amores.* On this, see Commager (1974) 6-7.
[77] Cairns (2006) 405.
[78] See, for instance, Stahl (1986) 192-5; Sullivan (1976) 56-61.
[79] Allusions to the New Gallus Fragment have also been detected. For a brief overview of the parallels, see Courtney (1993) 265. For a more recent and thorough analysis, see Cairns (2006) 404-443.

fleet. Propertius likes to combine the pursuit of war across the sea with that of wealth, as both are opposed to the elegist's life of peace and poverty. The crossing of this great body of water brings nothing but danger, and he reinforces the negativity of such water with the mention of the two great rivers of the Tigris and the Euphrates (v.4). These are all bodies of water over which Augustus will have dominion, and as such, they will become the subject matter for encomiastic epic composed specifically to praise him. But they also carry Callimachean connotations, recalling the epilogue to the *Hymn to Apollo*, and contrast with the small, still water of elegy depicted in the previous poem. Their sheer size puts them beyond the scope of slender elegy. The Callimachean opposition between carefully crafted poetry and clumsy Homeric imitation has, at the hands of Propertius, veered tendentiously into an opposition between Mars and Venus, or between epic and elegy. Once again, though, as before, Propertius incorporates in this *recusatio* a taste of what he professes to reject, in the form of a miniature encomium of the Emperor.

Here Propertius can be seen to be blending the literal with the symbolic. He dramatizes a real situation, incorporating his symbolic mediator that is once again that of water, and uses it to contrast epic and elegy. Epic is represented by the activity of crossing the sea in search of military renown and wealth, about battles involving great rivers that must be crossed, and that carry the blood and corpses of the fallen soldiers in their prodigious flow. Propertius can but stand and admire, because as a devotee of love elegy, he has chosen a different path. His encouragement on both the dramatic level to Augustus and on the metapoetic one to Vergil may (or may not) be unequivocal, but there is no doubting Propertius' steadfast adherence to his own literary choice.

3.5

Pacis Amor deus est, pacem veneramur amantes: 1
   sat mihi cum domina proelia dura mea.
nec tamen inviso pectus mihi carpitur auro
   nec bibit e gemma divite nostra sitis,
nec mihi mille iugis Campania pinguis aratur, 5
   nec miser aera paro clade, Corinthe, tua.
o prima infelix fingenti terra Prometheo!
   ille parum caute pectoris egit opus.
corpora disponens mentem non vidit in arte:

recta animi primum debuit esse via.
nunc maris in tantum vento iactamur, et hostem
quaerimus, atque armis nectimus arma nova.
haud ullas portabis opes Acherontis ad undas:
nudus at inferna[s], stulte, vehere rate[s].
victor cum victo pariter miscebitur umbris:
consule cum Mario, capte Iugurtha, sedes.
Lydus Dulichio non distat Croesus ab Iro:
optima mors, Parcae quae venit ante die.
me iuvat in prima coluisse Helicona iuventa
Musarumque choris implicuisse manus;
me iuvat et multo mentem vincire Lyaeo,
et caput in verna semper habere rosa.
atque ubi iam Venerem gravis interceperit aetas,
sparserit et nigras alba senecta comas,
tum mihi naturae libeat perdiscere mores,
quis deus hanc mundi temperet arte domum,
qua venit exoriens, qua deficit, unde coactis
cornibus in plenum menstrua luna redit,
unde salo superant venti, quid flamine captet
Eurus, et in nubes unde perennis aqua;
sit ventura dies mundi quae subruat arces,
purpureus pluvias cur bibit arcus aquas,
aut cur Perrhaebi tremuere cacumina Pindi,
solis et atratis luxerit orbis equis,
cur serus versare boves et plaustra Bootes,
Pleiadum spisso cur coit igne chorus,
curve suos finis altum non exeat aequor,
plenus et in partes quattuor annus eat;
sub terris sint iura deum et tormenta nocentum,
Tisiphones atro si furit angue caput,
aut Alcmaeoniae furiae aut ieiunia Phinei,
num rota, num scopuli, num sitis inter aquas,
num tribus infernum custodit faucibus antrum
Cerberus, et Tityo iugera pauca novem,
an ficta in miseras descendit fabula gentis,
et timor haud ultra quam rogus esse potest.
exitus hic vitae superest mihi: vos, quibus arma
grata magis, Crassi signa referte domum!

It has been well recognized that this poem forms a pair with 3.4, in that it ties closely with that poem by means of an oppositional relationship.[80] Leaving aside the more detailed analogies, the main ones are immediately obvious to the reader: whereas 3.4 begins with the epic *arma*, this poem opens with the elegiac *pacis*; the wars of Augustus referred to in the former poem contrast with the *proelia dura* (v.2) that Propertius engages in with his mistress in 3.5; and the concluding distich of 3.4, in which Propertius states that he will applaud those soldiers displaying their booty in the triumph that he forecasts, is recalled in the concluding distich of 3.5, in which he refers specifically to the standards of Crassus, the object of the military expedition.

3.5, then, presents the other side of the coin. The two elegies highlight the antithesis between war/epic and love/elegy that is such a fundamental feature of Propertius' poetry. It was there in the earlier poetry, such as in 1.7 and 1.9, but in Book 3 this antithesis assumes a greater importance as Propertius seems more intent on pushing his generic agenda than his stylistic one. One might surmise that his membership of Maecenas' circle has increased his awareness of his position in relation to his fellow poets, and prompted him to promote his own originality and immortality as the elegist *par excellence*. In 3.4, the lifestyle choice of war/epic poetry is for others to engage in, a pursuit that is so alien to him that he can only adopt the role of spectator. In 3.5, he is back in his own milieu, where the only battles he involves himself in are erotic ones with his mistress. The role of *miles amoris* is couched in epic terminology, in a display of intellectual irony that is typical of Propertius: the battles that confront him are also *dura* like those of war. Thus the role acts as a convenient mediator between the two antithetical life choices. Moreover, the emphasis on *pax* is also a fulfillment of the poet's obligation. As we are reminded by Cairns, in 3.1.17 Propertius refers to his work as *quod pace legas*; and his assertion in 3.5.21 that he delights in garlanding his head and drinking wine is a response to Calliope's instructions in 3.3: *quippe coronatos alienum ad limen amantes / nocturnaeque canes ebria signa fugae.*[81] Moreover, the juxtaposition of the two poems can be seen to echo the structure of the elegiac couplet: the themes of war in the 'hexametric' 3.4 are rejected in favour of those of peace in the 'pentametric' 3.5.

Propertius' opening diatribe against greed and wealth culminates in a reference to the sea voyage:

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[80] On this see Nethercut (1961) 395-7; Fedeli (1985) 175; Courtney (1969) 70-87; Conte (2000) 307-310.

[81] Cairns (2006) 345-7.

nunc maris in tantum vento iactamur, et hostem
quaerimus, atque armis nectimus arma nova. (vv. 11-12)

Cairns argues that these lines form part of a *psogos ploutou* in v.3-18, "a rhetorical-philosophical attack on wealth made up of commonplaces strung together in the manner of a diatribe cum declamation."[82] Perhaps so, but that does not mean that the elements of such a literary exercise are not significant, especially when the sea is involved. As in 3.4.2, it is affiliated with the war/epic theme. The lifestyle he proclaims for himself is, in keeping with his Callimachean credentials, one of simplicity and poverty. Wealth and the pursuit of it are aligned with the other side, the lifestyle he rejects. Instead of trying to read these lines as a criticism of Augustan expansionism, I suggest that a literary interpretation is a more productive one, and that travelling over the sea in search of the enemy may be a Propertian signifier for the poetry that he rejects, in the same way that the image will be used in 3.9.3-4 in response to real or perceived pressure from Maecenas to compose epic: *quid me scribendi tam vastum mittis in aequor? / non sunt apta meae grandia vela rati*).[83] Furthermore, a metapoetic reading is encouraged by *quaerimus*, a word that has technical connotations in relation to poetic composition, and if so, then *armis nectimus arma nova* may be interpreted as referring to the composition of new epics after old ones.[84]

In lines 19-46 Propertius is alluding directly to an important passage of Lucretius, as shown by the repetition of *iuvat* in vv. 19 and 21.[85] The text in question appears as a proem at the beginning of Book 4, at the midpoint of the entire poem:[86]

Avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante
trita solo. iuvat integros accedere fontis
atque haurire, iuvatque novos decerpere flores
insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam
unde prius nulli velarint tempora Musae:

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[82] Cairns (2006) 346.

[83] See below, p.147.

[84] On *quaerere* as a technical term in poetry, see Macleod (1973) 304 n.4 and Fedeli (1981) 230.

[85] In some MSS *iuvat* (v.21) appears as *iuvet* . On this, see Fedeli (1985)187 who supports *iuvet*, and Heyworth (2007) 301, who states: "There is no need for differentiation here; each line should have the same mood.", and he also points out that the repetition of the verb confirms the allusion to Lucretius.

[86] Lachmann wanted to delete these lines, since they are almost an exact repetition of 1.926-950. This has become a major crux in Lucretian scholarship: many more recent critics have wanted to delete the proem to Book 4 or have suggested it was a temporary stop-gap on Lucretius' part, but that he died before he had a chance to replace it. For a detailed *historia quaestionis*, see Gale (1994b) 1-17 who argues convincingly for the retention of the lines.

> primum quod magnis doceo de rebus et artis
> religionum animum nodis exsolvere pergo,
> deinde quod obscura de re tam lucida pango
> carmina, musaeo contingens cuncta lepore. (*DRN* 4. 1-10)

This is the standard scene of poetic inspiration, but Conte has shown how Propertius amusingly 'corrects' Lucretius in his depiction of it: whereas the older poet merely roams (*peragro*, v.1) in the same location as the Muses, Propertius makes so bold as to join hands with them to dance with them on Helicon; and whereas Lucretius merely wears a garland of new flowers on his head, Propertius sports one woven from spring roses.[87] Thus Propertius 'elegiacises' the inspirational experience of the older didactic poet. Conte has also exposed an example of Propertian humorous word-play in the phrase *me iuvat et multo mentem vincire Lyaeo* (v.21). The epithet *Lyaeus*, etymologically linked with the Greek verb 'to loosen' effects the paradoxical meaning of binding his mind with 'him who loosens' and contrasts amusingly with Lucretius' boast of loosening the bonds of superstitious beliefs (*animum... exsolvere*, v.8).

After v.21 Propertius then launches on an account of the sort of poetry that he will compose when he is too old for love elegy. The Lucretian themes that he lists, however, do not embody the sort of poetry to which he referred in 2.10.7, when he announced *aetas prima canat Veneres, extrema tumultus*. As suggested above, the theme of war was selected in that poem as a piqued reaction to the (temporary) failure of love poetry, and was not a serious proposition. In 2.34.27-8 and 51-4 he disparaged philosophical and moral themes as irrelevant to erotic elegy, but this time he is contemplating a poetic life after love elegy, and as a devotee of *pax*, he must look elsewhere than epic. There follows a long list of the themes he proposes to cover, once again providing the reader with a miniature sample of the poetry that he is postponing. Water plays a role in mediating the change of subject matter: the mysteries of the sea and its boundlessness, clouds, rain and rainbows, and even Tantalus' thirst are all referred to.

The aspiration to compose such poetry may be partly interpreted as conventional. An epigram by Philodemus (*A.P.* 5.112) refers to old age as the time to relinquish erotic pursuits and turn to more serious matters. Horace is of the same mind in the first *Epistle*, where he tells Maecenas that advancing old age has caused him to leave aside what he terms as *et versus et cetera ludicra* (v.10) in favour of philosophical themes. Vergil also, in *Georgics*

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[87] Conte (2000) 307-310.

2.475-82, aspires to poetry consisting of more serious philosophical themes, in a passage that is dense with Lucretian allusions. The Propertian passage may therefore be read as a sort of foil to the closing distich, in which Propertius returns once again to the subject of Augustus' proposed Parthian expedition.

> exitus hic vitae superest mihi: vos, quibus arma
> grata magis, Crassi signa referte domum! (vv.47-8).

The bringing home of Crassus' standards, and the encomiastic epics that will celebrate such an event is for others. Even when Propertius is too old for love elegy, he will still compose poetry that has nothing to do with war. He is effectively saying that if he were to write hexameter poetry (which he is not), it would not be martial epic.

However, the programmatic significance of the Lucretian intertext invites the suspicion that the function of Propertius' allusion is more than as a mere foil for his elegy and is intended to be similarly programmatic. There are good reasons for this. Firstly, Propertius had a certain amount in common with Lucretius, who used sea and storm imagery to orient his own philosophy and poetry against epic and traditional values, and the language of war to mediate between the poles of opposition. In *DRN* 2.1-4 the serene philosopher is portrayed as one able to gaze with equanimity from the peaceful shore over a storm-tossed sea, representing the troubles of the unenlightened. In *DRN* 1.62-79, Epicurus' achievements are described in epic terms: he is depicted as a warrior who has vanquished all others, an image which prefigures Propertius' poetic use of the *militia amoris* motif.[88] Secondly, Propertius would be following the examples set by Vergil and Horace, who alluded to the same Lucretian passage for their own poetic ends. Vergil's allusion occurs in Book 3 of the *Georgics*, a book which has been shown to be closely modelled on the *DRN*:[89]

> nec sum animi dubius, verbis ea vincere magnum
> quam sit et angustis hunc addere rebus honorem;
> sed me Parnasi deserta per ardua dulcis
> raptat amor; iuvat ire iugis, qua nulla priorum
> Castaliam molli devertitur orbitur clivo. (*Geo.*3.289-93).

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[88] On military imagery in Lucretius, see Hardie (1986) 193-200; Gale (1994a) 35; 117-19.

[89] See Gale (1994) 5.

Vergil is here making a similar claim for originality, in a poem which has generally been recognised to represent a transitional phase in his career, during the course of which he elevates his hexameter poetry from the slight pastoral *Eclogues* through the didactic poem of the *Georgics* to the heroic epic of the *Aeneid.*[90] Didactic poetry thus represents for him an intermediate genre between the two extremes. Horace alludes to the Lucretian passage in *Odes* 1.26:

> Musis amicus tristitiam et metus
> tradam protervis **in mare Creticum**
> portare ventis, quis ab Arcto
> rex gelidae metuatur **orae,**
>
> quid Tiridaten terreat, unice
> securus. **o quae fontibus integris**
> **gaudes, apricos necte flores,**
> **necte meo Lamiae coronam,**
>
> Pimplei dulcis. nil sine te mei
> prosunt honores: hunc fidibus **novis,**
> hunc Lesbio sacrare plectro
> teque tuasque decet sorores.

In this poem Horace rejects the themes of war, which he also associates with the sea, in favour of lyric poetry, which he associates with the Muses and their inspirational habitat, the *locus amoenus* replete with streams and flowers. Like Vergil, he imitates Lucretius' claim of originality. Lucretius treads places where no one else has trod (*loca nullius ante trita*), and there plucks new flowers (*novos flores*), from which the Muses weave him a garland that has crowned the brow of no one before (*prius*). Horace composes his verse on *fidibus novis*. But Horace also alludes to Lucretian subject matter: *securus* and *metus* are key Epicurean terms. Since this poet is at pains to orientate himself against the elegists in various places in the *Odes* and the *Epistles*, one may deduce that he also regards didactic poetry as a superior genre to love elegy.[91] He himself seems to have regarded his career in terms of an upward trajectory, beginning with his satiric *sermo* and rising up through the intermediary stage of

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[90] See Farrell (1991); Hardie (1970).
[91] *Odes* 1.33; *Epistles* 2.2.99-100.

iambus in the *Epodes* to the loftier *Odes*.[92] Propertius uses ambiguous vocabulary that recalls the claims of both Horace and Lucretius: he refers to his youth and his life of love as his *prima...iuventa*, and the spring flowers with which he garlands his head are a witty variation of the epithet used by the other two. Even though Propertius is ostensibly referring to his youth here, the engagement with the text of his model seems to (somewhat paradoxically) suggest that he is also drawing attention to the originality of his poetry. Moreover, this allusion to the Lucretian text recalls another one in 3.1.17-18, which we have already mentioned in relation to the *pax* motif: *sed quod pace legas opus hoc de monte Sororum / detulit* ***intacta*** *pagina nostra* ***via***. It seems that Propertius is playing clever intellectual games with the reader in order to draw attention to Lucretius' solemn poetic declaration and to match it with a much less solemn one as befits the tenor of love elegy, but whose message is no less genuine: when he is too old for love elegy he will need to find new and more serious themes to write about. War is out of the question, being the very antithesis of love, but the philosophical themes of didactic poetry might represent a logical advance in the trajectory of his poetic career: the former *praeceptor* of love might be able to apply his teaching skills to this higher calling.

By using the symbolic intermediary of water, Propertius has thus succeeded in contrasting his elegiac poetry with both martial epic and philosophical poetry. The sea with its dangers constitutes the milieu for epic poetry about war, the very antithesis of his non-violent love elegy, while the inspirational haunt of the Muses, with its clear springs, represents poetry of peace, the details of which he manipulates in order to differentiate his particular brand from that of Lucretius. One might even argue that his *verna...rosa* (roses are commonly associated with love/Venus, and spring with youth) is also an intentional 'correction' of the Horatian *apricos...flores,* in which case he also contrasting his elegy with lyric. But this polemic also functions as a means of conveying his ambition to elevate his poetry along the lines of both Vergil and Horace.

3.9

Maecenas, eques Etrusco de sanguine regum,
   intra fortunam qui cupis esse tuam,
quid me scribendi tam vastum mittis in aequor?
   non sunt apta meae grandia vela rati.

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[92] See Harrison (2007b) 8.

turpe est, quod nequeas, capiti committere pondus
et pressum inflexo mox dare terga genu.
omnia non pariter rerum sunt omnibus apta,
palma nec ex aequo ducitur ulla iugo.
gloria Lysippo est animosa effingere signa;
exactis Calamis se mihi iactat equis;
in Veneris tabula summam sibi poscit Apelles;
Parrhasius parva vindicat arte locum;
argumenta magis sunt Mentoris addita formae;
at Myos exiguum flectit acanthus iter;
Phidiacus signo se Iuppiter ornat eburno;
Praxitelen propria vendit ab urbe lapis.
est quibus Eleae concurrit palma quadrigae,
est quibus in celeris gloria nata pedes;
hic satus ad pacem, hic castrensibus utilis armis:
naturae sequitur semina quisque suae.
at tua, Maecenas, vitae praecepta recepi,
cogor et exemplis te superare tuis.
cum tibi Romano dominas in honore securis
et liceat medio ponere iura foro;
vel tibi Medorum pugnaces ire per hastas,
atque onerare tuam fixa per arma domum;
et tibi ad effectum vires det Caesar, et omni
tempore tam faciles insinuentur opes;
parcis et in tenuis humilem te colligis umbras:
velorum plenos subtrahis ipse sinus.
crede mihi, magnos aequabunt ista Camillos
iudicia, et venies tu quoque in ora virum.
Caesaris et famae vestigia iuncta tenebis:
Maecenatis erunt vera tropeaea fides.
non ego velifera tumidum mare findo carina:
tota sub exiguo flumine nostra mora est.
non flebo in cineres arcem sedisse paternos
Cadmi, nec semper proelia clade pari;
nec referam Scaeas et Pergama, Apollinis arces,
et Danaum decimo vere redisse rates,
moenia cum Graio Neptunia pressit aratro
victor Palladiae ligneus artis equus.
inter Callimachi sat erit placuisse libellos
et cecinisse modis, Coe poeta, tuis.

haec [c]urant pueros, haec [c]urant scripta puellas
   meque deum clament et mihi sacra ferant!
te duce vel Iovis arma canam caeloque minantem
   Coeum et Phlegraeis Eurymedonta iugis;
celsaque Romanis decerpta palatia tauris
   ordiar et caeso moenia firma Remo,
eductosque pares silvestri ex ubere reges,
   crescet et ingenium sub tua iussa meum;
prosequar et currus utroque ab litore ovantis,
   Parthorum astutae tela remissa fugae,
c<l>a<u>straque Pelusi Romano subruta ferro,
   Antonique gravis in sua fata manus.
mollia tu coeptae fautor cape lora iuventae,
   dexteraque immissis da mihi signa rotis.
hoc mihi, Maecenas, laudis concedis, et a te est
   quod ferar in partis ipse fuisse tuas.

This elegy starts off as what seems to be a regular *recusatio*. Maecenas has apparently asked him to compose an epic celebratory poem and Propertius responds with the usual plea of incapacity for such a task. After providing examples from the worlds of art and athletics to support his argument that each person should work within the bounds of his own limitations, he then courteously reminds Maecenas of his own own restraint in refusing public office or high military rank. He follows this with an assertion that he will not compose epic poetry about Thebes or Troy, as he is a committed follower of Callimachus and Philetas and his function as such a poet his to sing love elegy to inflame girls and boys. Then, towards the end of the poem (v. 47), comes a surprise: he turns to Maecenas and says, "*te duce*, I will cover such epic themes as Gigantomachy, Romulus and Remus, and Caesar's victories over the Parthians and Antony." The elegy then finishes with a request for his patron's encouragement in such an enterprise.

Much ink has been spilt in an attempt to explain the apparent contradiction in the elegy. How can Propertius reject and accept epic poetry in the same poem? Several scholars have explained the problem away by interpreting the poem as ironic. Camps, for example, argues that the meaning of the phrase *te duce* should be "by your example", and that Propertius is suggesting that he will compose epic if Maecenas is prepared to accept high public status, in the full knowledge that this will not happen.[93] This "I will if you will" type

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[93] Camps (1966b) 99.

of challenge, however, has been sensibly rejected by Fedeli and others on the grounds that it stretches too far the interpretation of *te duce.*[94] Bennett argues that Propertius is saying that he will compose epic poetry if Maecenas, as a Muse figure, inspires him.[95] But this still does not explain the apparent *volte face* that such a claim encapsulates, not only within the poem, but in relation to all of his poetry up to that point. It seems absurd that Propertius should go to such lengths to assert his elegiac identity in the first five poems of Book 3, only to betray it four poems later. I suggest, instead, that the water imagery in the poem may help us to understand the subtext of the poem, which is by no means a betrayal of Propertius' poetic affiliations, nor is it an ironic rebuttal, but rather a somewhat tentative expression of willingness to incorporate into his elegy patriotic themes in deference to his patron and his *princeps.*

Let us start at the beginning. Propertius addresses Maecenas, emphasizing both his status as an *eques* and as a descendant of the Etruscan kings, and asks him *quid me scribendi tam vastum mittis in aequor?* (v.3). It seems, therefore, that Maecenas has been exerting some pressure on Propertius to compose epic, in order to celebrate Augustus and his achievements. The Propertian response in the pentameter is predictably *non sunt apta meae grandia vela rati:* the sails of his small boat of elegy are not equipped for such a task. Thus far, then, Propertius is availing himself of the Callimachean imagery of the sea of epic and of the small boat of slender poetry that is his elegy. Once again Propertius is using Callimachean water terminology as a means of rejecting epic, even though this was not its original function. A list of examples from art and athletics to show the diversity of artistic inclinations then precedes the crowning example of all, that of Maecenas himself, who has chosen, despite his birthright, to obey his own natural inclinations and stay out of the public limelight.[96] Such a preferred lifestyle is an analogue for that of the elegiac poet, and this prompts Propertius to employ another nautical metaphor to describe Maecenas' restraint: *velorum plenos subtrahis ipse sinus* (v.30).

The metaphor is carefully chosen to assimilate itself with the emphatically Callimachean declaration that follows almost immediately afterwards in lines 35-36:

> non ego velifera tumidum mare findo carina:

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[94] Fedeli (1985) 327-8. See also Richardson (1976) 354 arguing that Camps' interpretation "puts a great weight on one tiny phrase that is not apt to be immediately read as a condition."

[95] Bennett (1968) 318-40.

[96] These lines are distantly reminiscent of Horace *Odes* 1.1, a poem that is also addressed to Maecenas and concerned with genre, among other things.

tota sub exiguo flumine nostra mora est.

This couplet amounts to a repetition of lines 3-4: the poet's artistic milieu is not the sea of epic, but rather the small water, the *exiguum flumen*. The rejection of epic is unequivocal, which he corroborates in vv.37-42 by saying that he will not compose poetry about the events of Thebes and Troy. Such subject matter was popular fodder for Cyclic epic and disparaged by Callimachus in his famous epigram (*AP*. 12.43 = 28Pf), and thus the lines lead naturally to his affirmation of Callimachean and Philetean credentials in 43-44:

inter Callimachi sat erit placuisse libellos
et cecinisse modis, Coe poeta, tuis.

There follows a repetition of his poetic function as *praeceptor amoris*. This is where his talents lie, and the two iussive subjunctives (*urant...urant* v.45) imply that he is requesting Maecenas to respect this.

To recapitulate so far: Propertius has employed the same water terminology that he has used in his previous programmatic elegies to symbolize the two antithetical genres of epic and elegy. In all these poems, epic is represented by large volumes of moving water, most usually the sea, but also immense rivers such as the Euphrates and the Indus. The act of composing epic is equated with voyaging on the sea in a ship with large sails, capable of negotiating the dangers of such a hostile element. Elegy associates itself with small rivers and clear springs, where the flow is slight, and the composition of this poetry is represented by a skiff with small sails. The image is Callimachean, with a twist. What was for Callimachus a matter of style has been manipulated by the Roman Callimachus into a matter of genre, and thus, as a self proclaimed Callimachean poet, epic seems utterly out of the question.

With this in mind, we therefore need to look again at the last section of 3.9. Propertius is saying that *te duce* he will *vel* ('even', 'assuredly', 'certainly') sing of such topics as Gigantomachy, Romulus and Remus, and Caesar's wars against the Parthians and Antony. These are epic themes, certainly, but that does not mean that they cannot be incorporated into an elegiac framework. Lines 45-6 suggest that Propertius would be happier composing elegy for his audience of young girls and boys, but he is willing, with Maecenas' help and encouragement, sometimes to elevate his elegy so that he can include these topics too. Vergil does something similar in *Geo.* 3.13-36, where he promises to elevate his hexameter poetry and praise Augustus in lines that resemble a mini-epic.[97] It is easy in this light to understand why Propertius is prepared to cover Augustus' recent successes, but less explicable is his suggestion that he could also cover the themes of Gigantomachy and Romulus and Remus. Indeed, he actually ruled out Gigantomachy in 2.1.39 as an un-Callimachean theme:

sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
  intonet angusto pectore Callimachus.

But the Propertius of Book 3 is older and wiser, and it is very possible that, as a fully paid up member of Maecenas' circle, he had become acutely conscious of both Vergil's and Horace's employment of Gigantomachy as an allegory for Augustus' restoration of order over the chaos of civil war, and of Vergil's emphasis on the mythological origins of Rome in his epic.[98] Cairns, recognising the applicability of such topics for celebratory epic concludes, "Propertius is willing in 3.9 at least to imagine himself writing an epic on the foundation of Rome (49-51), a subject which he had excluded absolutely in 2.1.23."[99] I would argue instead that Propertius never entertained the notion of writing an epic, but he was prepared to honour his patron's (real or fictitious) request within the constraints of his elegy, and the first sign of such an attempt appears two elegies later, in a poem that celebrates the defeat of Cleopatra.[100] The phrase *te duce* can perhaps be better understood when considered in relation to the *iussa* of line 52. As Propertius' patron, he is portrayed as a military leader, and he has issued 'instructions' to his 'soldier' Propertius to compose a national epic.[101] Propertius may well be looking for guidance from his patron, while at the same time saying, "Since you are my leader, I will do what you ask and cover some national themes, but only as an elegist." At the same time, by using marine metaphorical terminology to indicate Maecenas' own modesty in relation to his public role, he is reminding him that he has succeded in displaying his loyalty to Augustus without compromising his own natural inclinations, and therefore he has unwittingly provided himself as a role model for Propertius' determination to adhere to his

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[97] See above, p.118.

[98] On Gigantomachy as a political allegory and panegyric in Vergil and others, see Hardie (1986) 85-156.

[99] Cairns (2006) 268. Romulus and Remus will in fact appear in Propertius 4.1.

[100] The only testimony we have of pressure from Maecenas on his protégés to compose certain types of poetry is remarks made in their poems. Such requests may have been a convenient fiction invented by the poets themselves as a peg on which to hang generic programmes, or praise of Augustus. On this, see White (1993) 134-8.

[101] It may be relevant that Maecenas himself composed poetry, although Courtney (1993) 277 states that "the preciosity and the neuroticism of the author come through strongly in the fragments." His style was Catullan.

poetic principles. With such a role model, Propertius may be prepared to venture out into slightly deeper waters, but always within reach of the shore.

In the final four lines, Propertius asks Maecenas for encouragement and acceptance of this higher literary venture. The argument that he is still thinking in terms of elegy is supported by his choice of the term *mollia* to describe the metaphorical reins that Maecenas controls over Propertius' poetic chariot. *Mollis* is an elegiac term denoting elegy, in contrast with *durus*, which denotes epic.[102] Thus, it seems that Propertius is asking Maecenas to accept that he is acquiescing to his request for higher poetry in the only way he can, that is, as an elegist. One may compare him to Horace, who offered his Roman Odes as a kind of lyric alternative to epic. Moreover, since Callimachus himself wrote encomiastic elegy (the *Victoria Berenices* and the *Coma Berenices*), he had an excellent precedent.

Nevertheless, how could Propertius, the champion of peace, justify the incorporation of Augustus' military successes in his elegy, as he seemed to promise to do in 3.9? One explanation might be that the love/war antithesis was of necessity an over-simplification, its principal function being to enable Propertius to claim a unique place for himself and his elegy in the Augustan canon. To begin with, his elegy *was* just about love, but gradually the need to expand its scope, if it was ever to become worthy of the status enjoyed by epic and indeed lyric, became obvious. Moreover, he clearly wishes to depict himself as under pressure from Maecenas to incorporate praise of Augustus in some form or other. We therefore have a paradoxical situation at the beginning of Book 3: Propertius wished to promote his elegy and claim equal high status for it in terms of respect, but to do so he had to demonstrate its unique identity. The problem was, however, that this identity was still evolving in the hands of the poet, and it seems that he was not himself yet absolutely sure about what he could do to elevate it from the humble status of Cynthia-centred love elegy. Thus he retained the love/war antithesis as a fundamental identifying feature, even though he knew that, for his elegy to grow, it would have to be much more complex than before, and that somehow he would have to include subject matter that at first sight seemed to contradict his programmatic claims. Moreover, this simplification of the opposing characteristics of epic and elegy can also be ascribed to what Hinds terms "the taxonomic bias of Alexandrian and Roman criticism" whereby there was a tendency of theorists to stereotype the essential characteristics of the different genres.[103] This inevitably created a tension between those definitions and the

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[102] On *durus* and *mollis* as epic and elegiac terms respectively, see Fedeli (1980) 214-5 and (1981) 227-242. Vergil similarly refers to Maecenas' *haud mollia iussa* in *Geo.* 3. 41.

[103] Hinds (2000) 225.

reality, whereby 'non-epic' elements of epic (such as erotic episodes and the role of women) were in practice an important part of the genre, despite their exclusion from any theoretical definition. The same can be said for elegy in relation to epic subject matter, and thus, despite the sweeping programmatic claims made by Propertius regarding love and war, there is already plenty of scope and precedent for him to transgress the official generic boundaries and renegotiate them according to his needs.

The opposition between love and war is a conceit that derives partly from Propertius' "creative misreading" of Callimacheanism.[104] Just as Callimachus rejected long-winded Homeric imitation in all poetry, but presumably especially cyclic epic (cf. Epigram *AP*. 12.43 = 28Pf.), the 'Roman Callimachus' rejected epic *tout court*, since it was the poetry of war. The epic he usually disparaged was that of cyclic epic: in 1.7 he chastised Ponticus for composing a poem about Thebes. Similarly, in 2.1, he included Thebes as one of the mythological subjects that he refused to tackle.[105] It seems that Propertius, in deference perhaps to Callimachus' pronouncements, rejected particularly the cyclic epic or any attempt to compose an epic about any of the mythological themes that have been overdone at this stage. In 2.1.39-42 he also claimed insufficiency for composing a poem on Caesar's military successes, but this is at the beginning of his time under the patronage of Maecenas.[106] He still saw himself as a love elegist in thrall to Cynthia and adopted the pose of one whose demise would be from love, and therefore there was no serious consideration of other more weighty themes. It is only when he actually contemplated growing too old for love elegy that he would entertain such ideas. This is mentioned for the first time in 2.10.

Elegy is about peace; but the peace that Propertius enjoyed in his life had been endowed by Augustus, and so possibly he felt he could retain a certain amount of credibility by celebrating his wars and incorporating any mythological material that had become symbolic for Rome and the new regime. Moreover, such subject matter was not hackneyed, and thus it fulfilled an important Callimachean requirement. If Propertius and his contemporaries were beginning to see the *pax Romana* as a genuine and wonderful reality after so many years of turmoil and bloodshed, it would seem quite natural for Propertius, under the patronage of Maecenas and Augustus, to be willing to include such material in his stylistically ascending elegy, albeit in a veil of ambiguity. In some ways, he was hoist with

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[104] A term used by Hunter (2006) 37.

[105] Prop. 1.7.1-2: *Dum tibi Cadmeae dicuntur, Pontice, Thebae / armaque fraternae tristia militiae;* 2.1.19-21: *non ego Titanas canerem, non Ossan Olympo / impositam, ut caeli Pelion esset iter, / nec veteres Thebas....*

[106] Prop. 2.1.39-42: *sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus / intonet angusto pectore Callimachus, / nec mea convenient duro praecordia versu / Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.*

his own petard: he rejected epic/war to promote his love/elegy but then, in order for his elegy to survive and grow in status, as well as earn the respect of his benefactors, he needed to go back on his word by incorporating some war into it. Thus its essential identity gradually changed. In 3.1-5 he proclaimed that he was an initiated poet and poised to progress from Cynthia-centred poetry. But at the same time, this new elegy was still being presented as love elegy and the antithesis of epic poems of war. By Book 4, however, the ambiguous first poem heralded a tension between this type of love elegy and elegy on more serious themes.

In conclusion, the water imagery in Callimachus that became paradigmatic for the Romans was adapted by Propertius to suit his generic needs. Following the examples of Vergil and (Vergil's) Gallus, he inscribed himself in the tradition of poetic consecration, finding a place for himself on Helicon from which he could draw the clear water of elegy which I have already suggested he intended to portray as being more Callimachean than that of the other access points, by virtue of its comparative distillation and exiguity. It is in fact this very smallness of his genre of poetry that enabled him to simplify the Callimachean opposition between slender polished poetry and long-winded bombastic Homerising to a more straightforward opposition between elegy and epic. On the other hand however, he actually complicated the water symbolism used by Callimachus in opposing these styles. Because of his generic concerns, he inserted the sea into the equation in a way not intended by Callimachus. In the famous epilogue to the Hymn to Apollo, Callimachus responded to the accusation that his Hymn was too short and turned the discussion into one of style, rather than length: long poems are not necessarily good ones and can be full of rubbish like the Euphrates. Propertius brought these two together: the open sea, representing epic, became for him a no-go area, and thus the equivalent of the Euphrates. He therefore presented the sea of epic as non-Callimachean poetry, even though Callimachus himself did not quite say this. In contrast to the open sea, the sea that is close to the shore, however, was by no means out of bounds: Apollo advised Propertius in 3.3.22-24 to skim the waters with one oar, while scraping the sand with the other. Thus, in addition to the small pure spring, Propertius associated his elegy with the small boat that hugs the shore. The two oars, as I have already suggested, indicate the elegiac couplet and it is a fair bet that Propertius intended the seaward one to represent the hexameter line. Elegy can therefore draw from the sea of epic with this oar, but the other one prevents him from taking too much. This in some ways is symbolic of the dilemma that faced Propertius: just how much water could he draw on the seaward side before the entire boat of elegy capsized?

CHAPTER FOUR

BOOKS ONE AND TWO: DEFENDING AND DEFINING LOVE ELEGY

Polemical Posturing.

It is now time to look back at the elegies composed by Propertius before he embarked on the programmatic ones of the previous chapter. The place to begin our investigation of the first two books is with 1.8A and its concomitant 8B. There has been much critical debate as to whether we are dealing with one or two poems.[1] The MS present them as one continuous elegy, but the dramatic change in tone and the jump from second person to third at v.27 has prompted the imposition of a division into two separate poems at this point. Whatever is the case, it is clear that 8B depends on 8A for its meaning, and that they are therefore designed to be read and interpreted together. I would venture to suggest that my analysis of this diptych lends credence to the MS' presentation of one continuous poem, but it is no less valid if we accept the division theory.

Scholarship to date has recognized that 8A, consisting of a *propemptikon* to Cynthia who is considering embarking on a voyage across the sea with a rival, is an allusive response to Vergil's 10th *Eclogue.*[2] In that poem Vergil portrays Gallus as lamenting the fact that his girl Lycoris has left him for a rival. In an exercise in courteous polemic, Vergil suggests that Gallus' love elegies are futile and he portrays the poet as resolving to try his hand at pastoral. Servius' commentary at v.46 states that the lines in this part of the poem are an imitation of Gallus' own words. Propertius' 1.8A.7 – ***tu*** *pedibus* ***teneris*** *positas fulcire pruinas* – has been recognized as an allusion to *Ecl.* 10.49 – *a,* ***tibi*** *ne* ***teneras*** *glacies secet aspera plantas.*[3] Cairns has recently provided a thorough account of all the possible allusions to Gallus, while Fedeli has argued that the deployment of the noun *Vergiliis* in 1.8A.10 is evidence of a subtle intellectual joke with Vergil, whereby he is gently responding to that poet's equally gentle

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[1] See Butrica (1996b) 83-91, who argues for two separate elegies. For a thorough analysis of the problem see Heyworth (2007) 37-8.

[2] On this, see Ross (1975)85-106; Fedeli (1980) 201-229; Cairns (2006) 203-4; Keennedy (1982) 371-389. On *Eclogue* X as an exploration on the boundaries of a poetic genre, see Conte (1986) 100-129, whose persuasive analysis has been developed by Harrison (2007) 59-74 into a study of how Vergil's pastoral poem is "generically enriched" by its engagement with Gallan love elegy.

[3] See Ross (1975) 85; Cairns (1972) 132; Fedeli (1980) 213; Gold (1985/6) 151.

polemic with Gallus.[4] The polemic function of the allusions to both of these poets becomes clear in 8b when Gallus' failure to prevent Lycoris' departure is trumped by Propertius' success in persuading Cynthia to stay. Vergil gently chides Gallus for composing futile love elegy; Propertius shows both poets that his brand of love elegy is anything but futile. The *rivalis* (v.45) that loses out to Propertius also has literary connotations, since, as Coutelle reminds us, the etymology of the term is a watery one: a *rivalis* originally signified a riverside resident who shared the water source with his neighbours.[5] Gallus, as his elegiac predecessor, and as the principal object of *aemulatio* in this poem, is a *rivalis* who draws from the same inspirational water. Gold quite rightly concludes that "1.8A and B are, like most of Propertius' poems, more about poetry than they are about Cynthia and Propertius" and that the elegist is principally concerned with "his own poetic lineage, talent and immortality."[6] As she and others have pointed out, there are plenty of poetic references to both epic and elegy throughout the pair, not least the rejection by Cynthia of an epic style journey on a *dura nave* (1.8A.6) in favour of remaining with Propertius in his Callimachean *angusto lecto* (1.8B.33).[7] Clearly there is metageneric play here, inviting the conclusion that Propertius is opposing epic to elegy, coming down in favour of the latter in 8B, and thus reaffirming his dedication to the slender Muse of elegiac poetry.

In 8A one might be tempted to see Cynthia's proposed sea voyage as some sort of expression of artistic tension on the part of Propertius whereby he is considering leaving elegiac poetry:[8] Cynthia seems prepared to brave the stormy sea (*tune audire potes vesani murmura ponti* v.5) to accompany a rival to the chilly places beyond the reach of the poet, making her bed on the *dura nave*; the high sea of epic is also evoked by the participle *provectas* (v.14) as Propertius envisages his girl as being carried away from the safe haven of elegy in her *ratis*; the images of Cynthia on the shore of the *Tyrrhena...harena* awaiting a fair wind and of her enclosed in the faraway harbour of Oricum on the other side of her voyage evoke the usual symbolic terms for the opposition between epic and elegy. However, if we look more closely at 8A and B as a whole, three things become clear. Firstly, Cynthia's disappearance from Propertius' elegies will never be final, as expressed by Propertius in the last six lines of 8A, which, paraphrased, say that in her absence he will always complain at

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[4] Fedeli (1980) 212-3. His response to the suggestion by critics that Propertius made a prosodic error with *Vergiliis* is that he may have intentionally varied the quantity of the word in order to highlight his act of homage to Vergil.

[5] Coutelle (2005) 224.

[6] Gold (1985/6) 151 and 154.

[7] On *durus* as a term connoting epic see p. 150 n.102.

[8] A possibility argued by Coutelle (2005) 194-213.

her threshold, and he will never cease enquiring from sailors about her whereabouts, because no matter how far away she is, she will always be his.[9] Secondly, her disappearance from his elegies does not actually happen, as we discover in 8B. Thirdly, whether her hypothetical absence is long term or short term, Propertius is steadfast in his devotion to her.

It seems therefore that there is no question of doubt about Propertius' commitment to love elegy. The (epic) journey is simply a threat that is destined to be unfulfilled, thanks to the power of his poetry. Moreover, it is another example of the paradoxical nature of elegiac love whereby the very threat of the *puella*'s disappearance is precisely what engenders the elegy itself. If she did not threaten to leave Propertius, he would not have an elegiac voice. The paradox resembles that of Propertius' struggles against the shackles of his *servitium*; if they were actually to be removed he would cease to be an elegist. Love elegy is founded on such a two-sided dynamic, symbolized by the threshold, and in fact Propertius portrays himself as an *exclusus amator* in this poem, with characteristic originality and ambiguity. In this scenario, the *puella* is potentially absent from the other side of the door, and therefore the poet will be *exclusus* from her by the barricade of the sea, and by extension by her betrayal. Thus we have a fusion of this motif with that of Lament by Water, in which Propertius hyperbolically envisages himself in the role of Ariadne on the deserted beach.

It seems therefore that any suggestion that Cynthia / Cynthia poetry is in danger of transgressing the boundaries of elegy is in fact a false one. Cynthia may well consider the harsh (epic) sea, but the questions posed by the poet in the opening 8 lines are rhetorical ones, for he already knows the answer. Cynthia, with her metrically and elegiacally "tender feet" (*pedibus teneris*, v.7) is not congenial to full-blown epic. Already her future capitulation to Propertius' pleas is inevitable, because it is a textual necessity. It is also important to bear in mind that the format of 8A is conventional: *schetliasmos* followed by *propemptikon.*[10] According to the prescription of these topoi, the tone changes from the schetliastic at the beginning to one of acceptance in the *propemptikon*, and this is what lies behind Propertius' apparent change of heart. If Cynthia insists on going, he will wait for her to return. No matter how far she goes on her 'epic' journey, he will always expect to get her back, and 8A ends with a confident assertion on the part of Propertius as he knows that she will always be his: *illa futura mea est.* (v.26)

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[9] On the role of the *limen* in this poem as a metonymy for Cynthia's presence, and as a line to be transgressed on several levels, both literally and rhetorically, see Pucci (1978) 52-73. On the central role of the *limen* in Propertian elegy in general, see DeBrohun (2003) 118-155.

[10] On this see Cairns (1972) 132.

8B then vindicates this confidence. Propertius' *preces* have prevailed and Cynthia has, of course, decided to stay. She has forsaken the opportunity of a journey on the (epic) sea in favour of staying on *terra firma* with Propertius: her elegiac milieu. Her bed will now be the Callimachean *angustus lectus* of love elegy as opposed to the harsh one on the *dura nave* of epic.[11] There follows a predictable exultation in the power of his poetry as he revels in the superiority of his *blandi carminis obsequium* over material wealth and he finishes with a characteristically ambiguous flourish in the final six lines: his obsequiousness has restored Cynthia to his bed, but although the literal Cynthia appears to enjoy the upper hand in the relationship, her written version has become merely the means by which Propertius will achieve literary glory.[12] On the dramatic level, Cynthia uses Propertius; on the metapoetic one, however, the roles are reversed. The references to Apollo and the Muses (*sunt igitur Musae, neque amanti tardus Apollo,* v.41) leave us in no doubt as to which version of Cynthia is the most important and they prompt the boast *nunc mihi summa licet contingere sidera plantis* (v.43), a line that is a likely imitation of Horace's similar claim to fame in vv.35-6 of his introductory *Ode*: *quodsi me lyricis vatibus inseris, / sublime feriam sidera vertice.*[13]

In total, 8A and B can be read as a polemical celebration of love elegy and an exercise in *aemulatio* with both his elegiac predecessor and his contemporaries, most particularly Vergil and Horace. It may also be seen as a sort of *recusatio* against any real or imagined pressure to compose epic (with perhaps an oblique allusion, in the form of *Vergiliis*, to the embryonic *Aeneid*), but in this case the standard humility and plea of insufficiency for such a task is replaced by unashamed flaunting of his own poetic prowess and the omnipotence of love elegy. However, I would like to push the discussion a little further, and demonstrate that in fact there is another dimension to this poem which relates to its physical form, whereby we are dealing not so much with an opposition between epic and elegy as with the nature of the genre of elegy itself.

The situation of 8A and B within Book 1 is of vital importance in understanding the function and underlying message of the poem. In 1.7, Propertius is warning the epic poet

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[11] Another example of Propertius' *deformazione* of the Callimachean opposition of bombastic and slender poetry into one of epic and elegy.

[12] See Lee-Stecum (1998) 286-309 on the dominance of the beloved over the poet-lover as an inversion of the normal dynamic of gender-relations in Rome. He points out that the disjunction between the poet-persona and the author of the poems complicates the power relationship between reader and text; the reader's position of superiority over the servile and deluded lover is ironically undermined by the fact that he is being manipulated by the poet who is in complete control of the poem. A similar ironic undermining can be seen to be taking place here in relation to Cynthia.

[13] *Odes* 1.1.35-36.

Ponticus not to scorn his love elegies because his cyclic *Thebaid* will be of no use to him if he falls in love; in 1.9 the same Ponticus has indeed fallen victim to passion and Propertius delights in his friend's struggle to find a creative outlet for his feelings with the *schadenfreude* of one who has been proven to be correct. Between these two poems Propertius inserts 8A and B, and it has been amply documented that they embody a practical demonstration of the sort of poetry he is enjoining Ponticus to write.[14] The first half of the diptych, then, consists of *werbende Dichtung,* an embodiment of the function of Propertian love elegy, expressed in 1.7.6 as *aliquid duram quaerimus in dominam*; the second half is proof of the success of such an attempt. In this respect, therefore, 8A has the function of what Stroh terms a *Mustergedicht.* I suggest that in addition to this, *in both substance and form*, both 8A and B together encapsulate a showpiece of Propertian elegy and as such, I would like to demonstrate that, in creating such an outstanding *exemplum* of Propertian artistry, he deploys the full armoury of his ingenuity and *lusus.*

As we have seen, epic resonances abound in 8A, and yet there is no indication of an intention on the part of Propertius to transgress the elegiac code; on the contrary, he throws himself wholeheartedly into the role of elegiac lover. Why, therefore, does he portray Cynthia, his *scripta puella*, as contemplating such an 'epic' journey over the sea? The point is, I think, that Cynthia is only *threatening* to stray into the epic domain. In 8B, she has undergone a sudden change of heart: Propertius' *querela*, his *preces* (v.30) have literally brought her back to earth. Cynthia was never really destined to experience the high seas of epic, because of the power of Propertius' poetry. She was always going to be reined in from straying from the confines of love elegy, because such is the nature of the genre: the elegiac couplet permits of flights of grandiose fancy in the epic hexameter line, but the pentameter always keeps such excesses in check. One is reminded of the image of the rower in 3.3.22-23, where Propertius was advised to stay close to the shore in his small boat of elegy, sweeping the sea with one oar and scraping the sand with the other.

Thus the bipartite format of the poem(s) embodies a dramatic illustration of the elegiac couplet itself: the hexametric first half, with its references to the sea voyage, contains epic connotations, reminding the reader of the fact that elegy is in reality an offshoot of epic and therefore able to sustain a certain amount of epic subject matter; the pentametric second half shows Cynthia back onshore where she belongs. It is not surprising therefore, that 8A consists of 26 lines, whereas 8B is suitably shorter at 20 lines. Elsewhere in the corpus,

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[14] On this see especially Stroh (1971) 35-53.

Propertius has embedded subtle references to the metre of his elegy: besides the aforementioned rower image in 3.3, there is also *alternis vocibus* in 1.10.10, in relation to Gallus' exchanges with his *puella;* the ghostly Cynthia's reminiscences of her climbing down a rope from her window with *alterna manu* to the embrace of her lover in 4.7.18; and 1.11.12, where, as we shall see in more detail below, Propertius envisages the ideal Cynthia as swimming on a small lake with alternate hands (*alternae manu*).[15] Since 1.8A and B constitute such a self-conscious display of elegiac excellence, it is entirely appropriate that Propertius should also choose to feature the elegiac couplet, particularly in relation to his criticism of epic poetry in the two framing elegies. The pentameter line always tempers the scale, protecting elegy from the prolixity and pretentiousness that makes epic objectionable to a Callimachean elegist.

Furthermore, the two poems to Ponticus have an alternation of their own going on, which somewhat parallels the hexametric/pentametric structure of 8A and B. Propertius' rebuke of Ponticus in 1.7 for his engagement in the composition of his Thebaid, with its *armaque fraternae tristia militiae* (v.2) is followed in 1.9 by his gloating over the epic poet's recent subjection to the arrows of Cupid. In 1.7 Propertius tells Ponticus that one day, if he ever falls in love, his epic poetry will be of no use to him and so he will try his hand at love poetry, an endeavour that is doomed to failure because his love will have come too late:

> et frustra cupies mollem componere versum,
>   nec tibi subiciet carmina serus Amor.   1.7.19-20

In the sequel that is 1.9, we then see Ponticus being urged by Propertius to discard his epic and take up elegy. The distich 15-16 gives us pause for thought:

> quid si non esset facilis tibi copia?
>   insanus medio **flumine quaeris aquam**. 1.9.15-16

The expression in v.16 is proverbial, as pointed out by Fedeli and originates in the myth of Tantalus.[16] This fact does not deter Stahl from equating the *flumen* with the Callimachean

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[15] Sharrock (1990) 570-571 recognised the reference to the elegiac couplet in 1.10.10, supporting her argument with 3.3.23-4, as well as citing several instances of *alternus* as a term denoting elegy in Ovid: *Fast.* 2.121; *Trist.* 3.1.11; 3.1.56; 3.7.10; *Ep. Sapph.* 5f; *Am.* 3.1.8. See also Hinds (1987) 119-20 on *alternus* as a programmatic term in Ovid *Fast.* 4.484. The elegiac connotation of 4.7.18 has also been recognised by O'Rourke (2008) 154.

[16] Fedeli (1980) 240-1. He cites Ovid *Trist.* 5.4.10 *nec pleno flumine cernit aquas*; *Met.*9.671 *mediis sitiemus in undis;* Petron. *Frg. 35.5* Buecheler *flumine vicino stultus sitit;* Valg. *Poet. Rom. Frg.* 2.7-8 (p.343 Baehrens) *falleris insanus quantum si gurgite nauta / Criseae quaerat flumina Castaliae.*

Euphrates and offering the following interpretation: "Now you actually are in the position of one who is floating amidst his stream of epic vocabulary and is looking for the clear well of love poetry – and does not find it."[17] Heyworth finds such a reading implausible, but suggests that the word *copia* does not just mean 'access', as proposed by most commentators, but also 'poetic material' and therefore gives credence to Yardley's more moderate suggestion that the *flumen* and *aqua* both refer to poetic inspiration.[18] My view is somewhere between Stahl and Yardley. Despite the fact that the expression is a proverbial one, Propertius' choice of words in v.16 (*flumine* and *aquam*, combined with *quaeris*, which we have seen can be a technical term for poetic composition) and his declaration in1.7.19-20 make it difficult to ignore the possibility that there may also be a subtle metapoetic dimension to the statement.[19] I suggest that the water terminology may refer to the antithesis later articulated in 3.3 between the strong flow of epic and the still water of elegy, rather than that of the muddy Euphrates versus the clear spring. The surface meaning seems to be that Ponticus has plenty of poetic material right under his nose, if only he could only see it. But since he already warned in 1.7.19-20 that a love-struck Ponticus would fail as a love elegist (presumably because of a lack of a lifetime's experience in love), the subtext may be seen to be confirming this prediction. In other words, Propertius is mocking Ponticus by goading him to compose love elegy in the full knowledge of his inevitable failure.

Thus, 1.7 deals with Ponticus' activities as an epic poet, while 1.9 considers him as a (failed) love elegist: the epic poet preoccupied with war and then love. This double bill of unsatisfactory poetry encloses Propertius' own contrastingly effective supreme example of love elegy, consisting of a hexametric half, followed by an attenuated pentametric half. The result is that the framework acts as an effective foil for the central display.

To summarise, in this showcase of love elegy that is 8A and B, Propertius has marshalled the most important and characteristic motifs and ingredients of the genre, such as *Werbende Dichtung, propemptikon, schetliasmos*, *servitium amoris*, *exclusus amator* and material wealth versus the poverty of the poet; he has indulged in characteristic polemic with his forbear and at least one contemporary; he has paraded his Callimachean credentials. But as well as this, he has brilliantly exploited the watery *mis en scene* as a way of illustrating the

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[17] Stahl (1985) 65-6.

[18] Heyworth (2007) 44-5. Yardley (1981) 322-325. On *copia* as referring to both 'access' and 'poetic material' see Davis ((1972) 503-6. See also Coutelle (2005) 234-9 on the water theme as not just a proverbial expression to illustrate Propertius' point, but part of the literary polemic: Propertius is ridiculing Ponticus for his preoccupation with finding only large supplies of water. As a love-struck poet he now has access to the elegiac sources of inspiration but he is aesthetically blind to it.

[19] On *quaerere* as a technical term, see above p.140 n.84.

nature of the metre of his chosen genre. Thus the diptych embodies in both form and content a dazzling example of his craft. It is a complete and thorough demonstration of his artistic talent.

The literary landscape of two poems addressed to Tullus, 1.6 and 1.14, is again that of water, the former being that of the sea and the latter the banks of the Tiber. The function of both elegies is to contrast the diametrically opposing lifestyles of poet and addressee and as such, they serve to elucidate further the nature of Propertian love elegy.

1.6 has many parallels with 1.8A. Both are *propemptika*, both are about proposed voyages across the sea, but the tone of this elegy is quite different, as is the nature of the type of *propemptikon* that is deployed. In this elegy, Propertius appears to be turning down an invitation on the part of Tullus to accompany him on a voyage to Asia; Propertius demurs, explaining that it is not fear that holds him back, but his mistress, whose passionate reaction to such a proposed departure is so extreme that he dare not leave her; nevertheless, Tullus should go on this voyage and fulfil his public role as a man of action and civic duty according to his birthright; he is immune to love, unlike Propertius who is not suited for arms; his battles are confined to the bedroom, but he hopes that wherever Tullus goes he will spare a thought for the erotic hardships that assail his unfortunate poet.

The Tullus of this poem has been identified as the nephew of L.Volcacius Tullus, the consul of 33 BC, and widely accepted to be Propertius' patron at the time of his first book.[20] Cairns probably correctly argues that both Tullus and Gallus were his patrons at the time, given the number of poems addressed to each man in the book, but that Tullus was most likely to have been the principal patron, as the addressee of the prologue and epilogue. As Propertius' patron, he presumably appreciated and had an understanding of the genre of erotic elegy. It rather begs the question therefore, as to why he should be inclined to invite Propertius, an urban poet whose métier requires that he exempt himself from public life ostensibly to devote himself to his *servitium amoris*, to accompany him on a sea voyage, in the full knowledge that acquiescence to such a request is professionally impossible. It seems more likely, therefore, that Propertius creates a fictional situation as the starting point for his portrayal of the differences between their respective vocations and this is the scaffold on

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[20] The family was evidently rich and powerful and may have come from the same part of Italy as Propertius. Tullus is also the addressee of the opening poem of Book 1, an honour usually reserved for the patron. On his possible connections with Propertius, see Cairns (1974) 157 and (2006) 35-42; Fedeli (1980) 73; Camps (1961) 57; Butler and Barber (1933) 162.

which Propertius hangs his *recusatio,* inventing the fact that he has been invited to accompany his patron.[21]

In 1.8A, Cynthia's proposed departure across the sea carries epic connotations. In this elegy however, the connotations of the sea voyage are not quite so circumscribed. Tullus' forthcoming expedition encapsulates a holistic representation of the public role of the military and politically engaged young man, the traditional paradigm of ideal citizenship. We have seen in 3.4 and 3.5 that, just as loving and love poetry are assimilated with each other, the same can be said for the opposite: soldiering and poetry about war. In this poem, however, Tullus' soldiering is not equated with epic poetry as he is not a poet, but the suggestion of such a journey enables Propertius to throw into relief the opposing lifestyle associated with his vocation.

Propertius' opening address to Tullus implies that he is responding to a taunt from his patron that it is fear that holds him back from a trip across the *Aegeao salo* (v.2).[22] Cairns points out that the Aegean was traditionally perilous and that the word *salum* denotes the open sea.[23] Propertius, however, counters that it is not the danger of the journey that he fears, but the wrath of his mistress and then he launches into a depiction of her emotional reaction to the suggestion of such a departure, lines which embody a propemptic *schetliasmos*. Propertius is being inventive here, as he inserts this *schetliasmos* into a *propemptikon* that is addressed to someone else. In fact, thanks to Cairns, we can identify the *propemptikon* as Menandrian 'type three', that of an inferior to a superior, and therefore conventionally devoid of *schetliasmos* (unlike 8A, which is 'type two', and between two equals), and distinguished by an encomium.[24] In this *schetliasmos* Cynthia is playing a similar role to that of Propertius in 8A, albeit in a more unrestrained manner. The schetliastic section is then followed by the requisite encomium to Tullus, in which Propertius encourages him to fulfil his civic duty. The novelty of this elegy lies in the reversal of epic and elegiac terminology in this part of the elegy. This is the first and only instance in Book 1 of the motif of *militia amoris*, as Propertius' erotic battles with Cynthia are portrayed as being positively 'epic' in their *duritia*

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[21] Cairns (2006) 43 suggests that Tullus' military career may have been more administrative than anything else, and that "his '*militia*' consisted in a special commission to accompany his uncle to the province of Asia in 29BC with praetorian status in order to oversee the return of looted temple treasures." Whether the proposed trip overseas is real or hypothetical is neither here nor there, however; the function of the elegy is to oppose the two contrasting lifestyles, so that if Tullus did not have an occasion for such a journey, Propertius would have had to invent one for him. Moreover, Tibullus 1.3, a recusatio addressed to Messalla, suggests that this was an elegiac convention.

[22] See Stahl (1985) 81-82.

[23] See *OLD* 2; Cairns (1974) 150.

[24] Cairns (1972) 4-6.

(*vivere me duro sidere certus eris*, v.36), whereas Tullus' *militia* by comparison is *mollis* (*seu mollis qua tendit Ionia,* v.31).[25] By such *Umkehrung*, a technique he also uses in 1.7, he succeeds in heightening the contrast between the two lifestyles, emphasizing the relative difficulty of his own, and, by extension, the sheer arduousness of his poetic craft.[26] Tullus by comparison will not only enjoy the accolade of the establishment (*ibis et accepti pars eris imperii,* v. 34), but he will also enjoy material wealth, symbolized by the river Pactolus, famous for its golden sands, mythologically attributed to Midas' washing there to relieve himself of his lethal gift (thus perhaps hinting at the curse of wealth?).

Elegy 1.14 dwells on Tullus' wealth rather than his political and military life, and here again Propertius uses water as the dramatic backdrop. Tullus is depicted in luxurious repose on his estate on the bank of the Tiber, watching the boats as they pass, and taking pleasure from the beauty of his surroundings. The term *molliter*, placed prominently in the opening line, confers an elegiac connotation on his repose: he is *iners* like the elegist, and the quaffing of wine surrounded by trees and water is suggestive of a *locus amoenus.* But such an inspirational impression is but a mirage and is subsequently undermined by the extreme rapture experienced by a loved-up Propertius, again depicted in terms of water:

> tum mihi Pactoli veniunt sub tecta liquores
>   et legitur Rubris gemma sub aequoribus. (vv.11-12.)

Tullus had to go to the Pactolus in 1.6, but in this elegy Propertius endows himself with the power to bring it symbolically under his very roof, thereby focusing on the contrasting situation of the elegiac poet who eschews foreign travel. The *gemma* symbolizes the poetic wealth of Propertius in comparison with the material wealth of Tullus, and the interlacing of the life of love with that of poetic composition invites the consideration that it also functions as a metaphor for his poetry: if his extreme happiness equates with the retrieving of a pearl from the Indian Ocean, it is not difficult to equate this precious stone with the literary product of such joy, particularly if we interpret *legere* in its other sense of 'to read'.

By situating Tullus in a seemingly elegiac setting, Propertius is able to create a competitive arena in which he emerges as the clear winner and water is one of the means by which he expresses his victory. The pleasure derived from the 'elegiacally' calm waters of the Tiber which enhance the beautiful gardens of Tullus' estate is nothing compared to the

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[25] On *durus* and *mollis* as technical terms denoting epic and elegy respectively, see p. 150 n.102.

[26] In 1.7 Propertius wishes Ponticus well with his Thebaid, saying, *sint modo fata tuis* ***mollia*** *carminibus* (v.4) and compares his own situation in which *aliquid* ***duram*** *quaerimus in dominam* v.6).

erotic (and literary) joy of Propertius which he hyperbolically equates with gold and precious jewels extracted from exotic and mythical waters.

In summary, in each of these two elegies water plays a role in contrasting the genre of elegy and its inseparable ideology with the antithetical vocation of the soldier and statesman. For the moment, however, in 1.6 the sea voyage merely symbolizes the sort of activity shunned by Propertius as a committed love elegist; it belongs to the socially engaged Tullus. However, as we have seen, the theme will be fully developed in the programmatic poems of Book 3 (3.4, 3.5 and most notably 3.9), where sea travel becomes a vital part of the epic/war nexus that is opposed to that of love/peace/elegy: just as making love and composing love elegy are often indistinguishable from each other, epic poetry becomes fused with the activities that are so often its subject matter. In 1.14, Propertius uses the fresh waters of the Pactolus and the Tiber, as well as the Indian Ocean, to expose the relative inferiority of Tullus' material wealth. His experimentation with the motif of the artificial *locus amoenus* as a setting for the quasi-elegiac relaxation of Tullus in his luxurious gardens will reappear in 3.2, where the wealthy man's enjoyment of his impeccably contrived *locus amoenus* is compared with the poet's delight in the real one, replete with his friends the Muses. In the final chapter of this thesis we will see how Propertius reaches new levels of sophistication in his manipulation of this inspirational space.

'The anxiety of influence'

Harold Bloom's memorable expression regarding the relationship between poets and their precursors applies much more explicitly to the Greek and Romans, who engaged consciously and openly with the tradition in which they worked. The elegies considered in this section are particularly representative of Propertius' agonistic relationship with his predecessors, and reveal also an 'anxiety of influence' that works in the opposite direction, in which he seems painfully aware of the transcendent power of his successors.

The issues in 1.11 are of both elegiac style and the elegiac tradition, and the central position of this poem in Book 1 underscores the significance of such a declaration of aesthetic credentials. Commager, writing in 1974, was perhaps the first to recognize that the elegy resonates with metapoetic subtext, but since then analysis and interpretation of the possible programmatic messages therein has been surprisingly exiguous.[27] Commager himself limited himself to an observation that Cynthia's activities in vv.9-17 refer metapoetically to Propertius' love elegy, without attempting to contextualize them in relation to the whole poem. Two years later Saylor investigated the "symbolic topography" of the poem without drawing any metapoetically programmatic conclusions, and taking a biographical approach.[28] Recently, however, Coutelle has offered a radical metapoetic interpretation of the poem, arguing that Propertius, "abandoned by inspiration, allows himself to resort to jealousy and expresses wishes that Cynthia stay the central subject of his poems, but he cannot prevent himself from committing numerous transgressions against the elegiac code. Thus on a metapoetic level, the accusations and reproaches formulated in the text against the waters of Baiae and more precisely against the failure of *foedus amoris*, constitute a *crimen amoris*, i.e. a grave fault against the principles which govern elegiac writing, and most particularly a failure of *servitium amoris*, despite the warnings announced by the author in the previous text, and an abusive employment of the grand style."[29] While Coutelle is to be commended for attempting a holistic analysis of the metapoetic content of this elegy, I find his hypothesis unconvincing: separation from his beloved is such a recurrent theme in Book 1, and indeed in love elegy generally, that it is hard to see it as representing a failure in inspiration. Moreover, since 1.11 occupies the central position in Book 1, one might expect a certain amount of programmatic content in the poem which is positive rather than negative.

Two allusions to Catullus 68 have been observed by Fedeli: vv.19-20 ***ignosces igitur**, si quid tibi triste libelli / attulerint nostri* seems to allude to Cat. 68.31: ***ignosces igitur,** si quae mihi luctus ademit*, and Propertius' declaration in vv.23-4: *tu mihi sola domus, tu, Cynthia, sola, parentes, / omnia tu nostra tempora laetitiae* recalls Cat.68.35-6: *illa mihi sedes, illic mea carpitur aetas, / huc una ex multis capsula me sequetur.*[30] Catullus in that poem mourns the loss of his brother and thus can be seen to provide a paradigmatic situation of loss and separation, which emphasizes the familial link that Propertius wishes to express with Cynthia. Greene observes that vv.23-4 also recall Catullus poem 72, in which he

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[27] Commager (1974) 10-12.

[28] Saylor (1976) 126-137. His biographical approach can be summed up in his conclusion: "Throughout then, medium functions as message: each part of the elegy represents a kind of relationship in love along with the manner in which it inspires the poet. ...The overall thematic form of the poem is a gradual coalescence in feeling, style, and topography which shows instead of telling her that with all the elegy's implications there is no Cynthia like home." (136-7). For a feminist reading of the poem, see Greene (1995) 303-318.

[29] Coutelle (2005) 254 (my translation).

[30] Fedeli (1980) 279-282 acknowledges that the archetype for 1.11.23-4 is Andromache's plea to Hector in *Il.* 6. 429-30, but argues that Propertius is directly referring to Catullus.

declares that his love for Lesbia is as that of a father for his son.[31] Propertius reverses this by assigning the parental affection to the beloved, and putting himself in the role of the child. Moreover, he goes even further by declaring that Cynthia is to him **both** of his parents, thus 'correcting' Catullus. It is notable that both poem 68 and 72 consist of elegiac couplets and thus Catullus may be seen as standing at the beginning of the Latin elegiac tradition, even if elegy was only part of his repertoire, and indeed he appears in Propertius' canon of love poets in 2.34.85-94 (Varro, Catullus, Calvus and Gallus), to the end of which he inscribes his own name.

More numerous, however, are the possible intertextual echoes of his more immediate predecessor Cornelius Gallus, suggesting that the influence of this poet is strong in the elegy. Firstly, Cairns has drawn attention to the numerous polysyllabic pentameter endings in the poem: *litoribus* (v.2); *nobilibus* (v.4); *carminibus* (v.8); *compositam* (v.14); *laetitiae* (v.24); and *discidium* (v.28).[32] Endings of this type are generally considered to be evidential of earliness of composition, a theory which Cairns takes to be correct, but he adds that there are other factors which influence their employment by Propertius: one is his 'neotericism', or Alexandrianism; the other is his deliberate choice of such an ending, with the implication that that the word in question carries some literary significance, namely that it reflects the imitation of Gallus. Cairns supports his argument by reference both the New Gallus Fragment (which contains several polysyllabic endings that regularly reappear in the Propertian corpus) and to those poems which are generally acknowledged to be strongly influenced by Gallus (especially 1.18 and 1.20), and which contain numerous examples of endings of this type. The (polysyllabic) word *nobilibus* is also according to Cairns evocative of Gallus because it belongs to the semantically linked nexus of terms (*nomen, notus, nota, noscere, nobilis/nobilitas, ignotus*) that are "emblematic of Gallan elegy."[33] Moreover, Cairns advances the attractive theory that Gallus was himself interested in water. A brief look at the evidence seems to bear this out. Firstly, Vergil's "Gallus" seems to be attracted to watery landscapes: in *Eclogue* 6 he is depicted as wandering by the Permessus before being led by one of the Muses higher up Mt Helicon where he undergoes an initiation in which Linus

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[31] Greene (1995) 314. Greene recognises Cynthia as *materia* for Propertius, and as such she is subordinated to the poet's literary concerns despite his profession of *servitium amoris* and "reveals a version of male desire that devalues women and turns them into objects of male fantasies of erotic domination." (p.305).

[32] Cairns (2006) 204-6. On Gallan metrics in general see chapters 4 and 5.

[33] Cairns (2006) 78-9 and 97-9, arguing that Gallus claimed in his poetry to be 'well-known' and "employed prominently a group of terms which became particularly emblematic of Gallan elegy." (p.79). While this is an attractive theory and may well be correct, it should perhaps be advanced with more caution than Cairns chooses to do.

presents him with a Hesiodic pipe and instructs him to compose a poem on the Grynaean Grove. Cairns justly conjectures that Gallus' own account of his initiation involved the imbibing of spring water, as Propertius' initiation in 3.3 does. In *Eclogue* 10, Arethusa is invoked at the beginning of the poem; "Gallus" is again weeping by a river, in the presence of the Naiads; he worries about the absent Lycoris far away on the banks of the Rhine and imagines that he could live in Arcadia among the *gelidi fontes* (v.42) with his beloved. Secondly, the one surviving line that remained of Gallus' work before the Qaşr Ibrîm discovery - *uno tellures amnis dividit duas* (fr.1 Courtney) – refers to the Hypanis, a river that makes its appearance along with the Eridanus in 1.12.4. Cairns suggests that Gallus inherited an interest in rivers from Callimachus (cf. frr. 457-9 Pf.) and that he may have been particularly interested in boundary rivers (such as the Rhine), mythological ones, and those nearer home.[34] Such an interest may also have been mediated to him by Parthenius, fragments of whose work also seem to betray an interest in waters and littorals.[35] Finally, in Prop.1.20.7-10, the poet addresses "Gallus" in the following way:

> hunc tu, sive leges umbrosae flumina silvae,
>   sive Aniena tuos tinxerit unda pedes,
> sive Gigantea spatiabere litoris ora,
>   sive ubicumque vago fluminis hospitio

All these possible haunts that "Gallus" may find himself in are watery ones (and therefore potentially hazardous for Gallus' 'Hylas'). Cairns makes the following point: "Inevitably the thought arises that 1.20.7-10 incorporate a hitherto unrecognized example of the ancient convention, well known to Propertius, whereby a poet is said to do what he writes about."[36] If this is indeed the case, then v.9 is of particular interest because it refers to the same *Herculeis semita litoribus* of 1.11.2, the area of Baiae. It is eminently plausible therefore that watery places were a significant feature of Gallan elegy, and, most significantly for our understanding of 1.11, that Baiae was one of those places that he wrote about.

It thus seems that 1.11 is particularly influenced by Gallus and to a lesser extent by Catullus. We have seen that Catullus also thematises separation in his poem 68, and it is

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[34] Cairns (2006) 206.

[35] Cairns (2006) 245 cites as examples frr.28.4-5 Lightfoot; frr.3.16 and schol.; 11; 14; 23; 24(a); 24(b); 29;32;36; ?54; 56.

[36] Cairns (2006) 227 supporting his statement with the following examples: Thuc. 1.5.2; Moschus *Epitaph. Adon.* 81-4; Virg. *Ecl.* 6.45-6, 62-3; Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.36-7; 2.5.40-1; Stat. *Silv.* 2.7.77-8; Prop. 2.30.19-22; 3.3.40-2.

tempting to consider that the Gallan passages that may lie behind 1.11 have some explicit or implicit parallel resonance. It certainly seems plausible that Baiae played a role in the earlier elegist's work, given the suggestion in 1.20.9-10 that it is a regular haunt of the 'Gallus' to whom that poem is addressed. If that is the case, then Propertius may be seen to be signalling the Latin literary tradition to which his elegy belongs, and setting up an opportunity for some timely *aemulatio* at this central point in his Book.

The poem itself consists of an outer frame whose setting is Baiae, where Cynthia has chosen to spend some time without Propertius, enclosing an alternative setting, where he would prefer Cynthia to be situated. Both of these locations are watery ones, but very different from each other and the curious fact that Propertius does not implore Cynthia to come back home to him, but instead proposes an alternative locus of separation from her should alert the reader to a possible programmatic subtext, particularly in the presence of the cluster of terms that are programmatically important elsewhere in Propertian elegy, such as, for example, *cumba* (v.11), *molliter* (v.14), *alternae...manu* (v.12) and *tenui...unda* (v.11).

In the first eight lines we have an ἔκφρασις τόπου, a "learned *amplificatio*" which describes the geographical area of Baiae:[37]

Ecquid te mediis cessantem, Cynthia, Baiis,
qua iacet Herculeis semita litoribus,
et modo Thesproti mirantem subdita regno
proxima Misenis aequora nobilibus
nostri cura subit memores a! ducere noctes?
ecquis in extremo restat amore locus?
a te nescio quis simulatis ignibus hostis
sustulit e nostris, Cynthia, carminibus*?* 1.11.1-8.

Such an erudite introduction is reminiscent of Callimachus and the Alexandrian *penchant* for scholarly details. Furthermore, Baiae, as a favourite seaside resort for the Romans in the summer months and renowned for sexual promiscuity, is exactly the sort of place shunned by Callimachus in epigram 28.3-4 Pf., the same poem in which he disdains Cyclic epic and promotes originality:[38]

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[37] As identified by Fedeli (1980) 265.

[38] On Baiae as a place of immorality, see Cicero, *Pro Caelio* 35. 10; 38.11; Ovid *A.A.* 1.255; Seneca the Younger, *Epp.* 51.4 and 12; Mart. 1.62 (who claimed that a woman who visited the place arrived as a Penelope and left as a Helen).

Ἐχθαίρω τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικὸν οὐδὲ κελεύθῳ
χαίρω, τίς πολλοὺς ὧδε καὶ ὧδε φέρει·
μισῶ καὶ περίφοιτον ἐρώμενον οὐδ' ἀπὸ κρήνης
πίνω· σικχαίνω πάντα τὰ δημόσια.
Λυσανίη, σὺ δὲ ναίχι καλὸς καλός· ἀλλὰ πρὶν εἰπεῖν
τοῦτο σαφῶς, ἠχώ φησί τις· „Ἄλλος ἔχει.

Propertius' Baiae then, can be seen to equate usefully with Callimachus' public fountain and thus represent the sort of poetry that he and his Greek mentor reject. Moreover, if Baiae is Gallan poetic territory, then there is even more reason for Cynthia to avoid it on Callimachean grounds of exclusivity. In 3.3.23-24 Apollo instructs Propertius to keep his elegiac boat close to the shore, scraping the sand with one oar, and sweeping the sea with the other. Baiae, as a sandy place by the sea, could be seen as an apposite symbolic setting for love-elegy, but the presence there of the *profanum vulgus* makes it unacceptable for Cynthia-poetry. Baiae can thus be seen as the 'Cyclic epic' of elegy, crowded with imitators of the *protos heuretes* of the genre. The anxiety expressed by Propertius here that Cynthia, forgetful of her loyalty to him, will yield to the charms of another may be interpreted metapoetically in terms of rivalry with other poets. The word *hostis*, being stronger than *rivalis,* with his *simulatis...ignibus*, can be interpreted as referring to a rival love elegist whose literary attempts are both insincere and unoriginal. *Ignis* is a term used by Horace, Vergil and Ovid for love or passion, but it also metaphorically represents love poetry.[39] The literary connotation is reinforced by the term *carminibus* in the following line, and, as a polysyllabic pentameter ending, it may point to Gallus. Thus the literal meaning of the narrative, which is an expression of fear that someone else has stolen his girl, and therefore he will no longer write about her, may conceal a metapoetic 'anxiety' about his ability to rise above his rivals in his poetry. The fact that his rival's attempts are designated as *simulatis*, however, suggests that his anxiety is but a pose.

The alternative scene that Propertius prescribes for Cynthia is, of course, away from the crowded one of Baiae:

atque utinam mage te, remis confisa minutis
parvula Lucrina cumba moretur aqua,
aut teneat clausam tenui Teuthrantis in unda

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[39] *ThlL* VII 1, 295, 54-55. Propertius never explicitly uses the term for his love elegies, but this meaning can be seen to be implicit in some elegies other than 1.11, such as 1.5.3, 1.9.17 and 2.34.44.

alternae facilis cedere lympha manu,
quam vacet alterius blandos audire susurros
molliter in tacito litore compositam!
ut solet amota labi custode puella,
perfida communis nec meminisse deos?
non quia perspecta non es mihi cognita fama,
sed quod in hac omnis parte timetur amor.
ignosces igitur, si quid tibi triste libelli
attulerint nostri: culpa timoris erit. (1.11.9-20.)

He imagines her firstly in a *parvula... cumba* (10) with *remis...minutis* (9) on the nearby shallow and sheltered Lucrine lake. The term *cumba* appears in 3.3.22, where Apollo tells Propertius that the small boat of his elegy should confine itself to the shoreline, and the image also recalls 3.9.35-6, where Propertius compares his elegy to epic (*non ego velifera tumidum findo carina: / tuta sub exiguo flumine nostra mora est.*) Alternatively, Propertius would have Cynthia swimming in the enclosed area which he terms *tenui Teuthrantis in unda* (v.11), an unidentified but clearly small piece of water nearby which is shallow and safe enough for Cynthia to swim in. *Facilis cedere* (v.12) has sexual overtones, but it also invites comparison with 1.20.49, *facili liquore*, where the Dryads pull Hylas down into the water. That poem's possible programmatic water symbolism will be analysed in detail below, but it is sufficient to note here that the Dryads find their parallel in 1.11 in Propertius' choice of the term *lympha* (v.12), which is more than a synonym for *aqua*: it has divine connotations, being both the term for the nymphs themselves and for their haunt, and thus suggestive of poetic inspiration.[40] This water of inspiration, which by being *tenuis* is endowed with the Callimachean quality of *leptotes*, is to be plied with *alternae..manu* (v.12), suggestive of the easy swimming strokes in accommodating water, but also irresistibly of the alternative metre of the elegiac couplet, especially when one considers the role of the hands in artistic creation.[41] Cynthia's solitary act of rowing or swimming on a small lake may be seen to represent the Callimachean endeavour to produce poetry that is not a mere imitation of his predecessor, but something new and unique, another step forward in the literary continuum of Latin love elegy. The limitations imposed by the metre are illustrated both by the sense of confinement in these small places and the alternating movement of both Cynthia's oars and hands.

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[40] *OLD* 1055 "app. by dissim. from Gk. νύμφη cf. Var. *L*.7.87."

[41] See above, p.158 and n.15.

The distich vv.13-14 possibly adds another dimension to the metapoetic level of meaning. The literal one is perfectly clear: Propertius does not wish Cynthia back on the shore where she may be prey to the persuasive attentions of a rival lover. The words *molliter* and *compositam,* however, carry strong metapoetic connotations, the former being the adverb of the technical adjective that denotes elegy, and the latter evoking the act of poetic composition.[42] Propertius may be expressing a fear that Cynthia-poetry will be composed by another poet; in other words, that he will be imitated by another, who may possibly surpass him in his creation of love elegy dedicated to one woman. The *litus* on which Cynthia may find herself appears at first sight to be the shore of the secluded waters, given that it is *tacito*, in comparison to the crowded Baiae. However, *litus* more properly denotes the shore of the sea, rather than a lake or a pool, and *tacito* may simply mean that Cynthia and her hypothetical admirer are unheard by others because they are whispering.[43] In Propertius' mind, the symbolic area of danger for Cynthia may be the whole area around Baiae, and that Cynthia is only safe when she is actually on the water. One other possibility lies in the fact that the shore is a silent witness, much in the same way as Propertius is in the preceding poem addressed to Gallus, where he observes him making love to his girl. Whatever the case, the rival adumbrated in this line may represent a potential successor to Propertius, just as he is to Gallus. This possibility is reinforced by the following couplet (vv.15-16), in which, evoking the *paraclausithyron*, Propertius suggests that if his girl loses her guardian (i.e. Propertius), she is liable to violate the *foedus amoris* by which he and she are joined. If the term *meminisse* is an allusive trope, Propertius may be seen to be referring to his future imitator's 'memory' of his predecessor Propertius.[44] Nevertheless, it has to be said that, despite the apparent metapoetic connotations of *molliter* and *compositam*, it is difficult to pin down a coherent interpretation of vv.13-16, and the words may merely be there to emphasise Cynthia's literary identity as *scripta puella.*

After Propertius' declaration of filial love for Cynthia and his utter dedication to her in vv.21-6, the final four lines of the poem (vv.27-30) effect ring composition, bringing us back to the beginning: Propertius begs Cynthia to leave Baiae, which he describes as *corruptas* (v.27), metapoetically spoiled by having been already traversed by Gallus and his hypothetical imitators. These shores, disparaged by the term *ista* (v.28), and emphasized by

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[42] See Fedeli (1980) 198; and Commager (1974) 8 n.12.

[43] On *litus* see *OLD* 1037.

[44] Hinds (1998) 3-4 on "reflexive tropes of allusivity": besides the more overt Alexandrian footnotes such as *dicuntur,*he lists words denoting memory, imitation/mimicry, echo and imitation as covert examples, being more deeply embedded in the text. There is perhaps a case for reading *memores...noctes* (v.5) in a similar way, given that here also Propertius may be seen to be preoccupied with being eclipsed by another poet.

repetition (*litora*, v.28...*litora*, v.29) are hostile to *castis...puellas* (v.29). On the literal level, Cynthia is being placed in the (somewhat unlikely) role of chaste girl in danger of being seduced against her will, but on the metapoetic one, Propertius may be seen to wish his love elegy to adhere faithfully to his Callimachean aesthetic principles of purity, and to rise above that of his predecessors and his successors. The conventional malediction formula at the end of the poem, *ah pereant Baiae, crimen amoris, aquae* (v.30), is characteristically ambiguous: the waters of Baiae are destructive to love, but also to Propertian love elegy.

In summary then, in 1.11 Propertius is not concerned with intergeneric polemic but concentrates exclusively on love elegy. The poem may be seen to be both a declaration of Callimachean poetics as being fundamentally essential in his poetry and an acknowledgement of the literary tradition of love elegy, but one in which, like Janus, he looks in both directions. While he stands as a Latin elegist in the tradition of Gallus and Catullus before him, his succession from them is governed by his Callimachean principles, which dictate that a predecessor must be transcended and improved upon. Baiae may be seen as the literary landscape of previous elegy, perhaps chosen by Propertius because it was a poetic haunt of his predecessor, and now tainted by poetic traffic. But he also seems to be expressing an awareness of those who will succeed him, and the possibility that their poetry may transcend his, since it behoves every self-respecting Callimachean artist to carve his own niche in the literary continuum. To borrow from Heraclitus, such a poet cannot step into the same river twice.

Elegy 1.20 is a poem that is so idiosyncratic as to have baffled critics, but one which abounds with references to water, in the form of the sea, rivers and a spring, and in which a character actually drowns. It is a treatment of the myth of Hylas and resembles the hypothesized Greek narrative elegies, with their subjective framework and mythical narrative inset.[45] The poem is addressed to one Gallus, and its neoteric diction with its archaisms, its polysyllabic pentameter endings, uses of hyperbaton, as well as striking affinities with the New Gallus Fragment, has led critics to the convincing conclusion that the addressee is in fact the poet Cornelius Gallus.[46] Moreover, its position in the book, coming as it does immediately after the last poem addressed to Cynthia and before the final *sphragis* of the two epigrams at the end, suggests that the poem is rich in metapoetic content and that Propertius

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[45] On Greek narrative elegies see especially Cairns (1979) 214-230.

[46] e.g., see Ross (1975) 8; Fabre-Serris (1995) 131-137; Cairns (2006) 219-249.

is engaging in some sort of dialogue with his predecessor. Ross concludes that the elegy is an imitation of Gallus' poetry: "here at last is a full-scale Gallan production, a delighted hyperbole in the manner of the master, permitting full realization of just how different, and how personal, Propertius' own book of elegy really is."[47]

Vergil's famous comment in *Geo.* 3.6, *cui non dictus Hylas puer?*, is an indication of the popularity of the myth as poetic subject matter. We have two extant treatments of the myth in Greek literature, both of which are Hellenistic: one by Apollonius Rhodius in his epic, the *Argonautica*, and one by Theocritus, in his 13th *Idyll.* We have no firm evidence as to which one of these preceded the other, although there is a general consensus that one was drawing on the other.[48] It has also been possible to reconstruct a version by Nicander, and we know that the story was also covered by Aratus, Euphorion and Phanocles.[49] Callimachus also appears to have treated the subject: Hylas is introduced in *Aetia* 1 fr.24-5, and Cameron believes that he was probably the subject of fr. 596.[50] We have no Latin version of the myth before Propertius, but it seems very likely that Gallus also wrote one, given the alleged popularity of the subject. The mention of Hylas in *Eclogue* 6.43-44 is interpreted by Skutsch as a reference to a Gallan poem, as he argues that the song of Silenus lists a series of subjects treated by Gallus in his elegies.[51] Ross expands on this theory, reading the whole *Eclogue* as a commentary on Gallus' career, a view sustained by Fedeli and more recently by Cairns.[52] Cairns also convincingly suggests that Parthenius wrote a (Greek) version, since it is known that he composed a *Hercules* and a *Metamorphoses*, both of which could have plausibly contained the story of Hylas.

Hylas, therefore, appears to have been a generically promiscuous character, appearing in epic, bucolic and elegy, but why was he so popular, especially for the Alexandrian poets? One possible reason is that Hylas was for such poets a highly symbolic figure. Mastronarde argues that Theocritus' 13th *Idyll* is a veiled polemic against Hellenistic epic.[53] By juxtaposing traditional epic details with pastoral, realistic and rustic ones, Theocritus displays the incongruity of an epic hero in love: Hercules is emasculated by his passion for Hylas and made to look ridiculous. The Argonauts have been placed in a rustic setting, and here, away

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[47] Ross (1975) 81.

[48] On this, see Gow (1952), who argues that Theocritus was improving on Apollonius' version, and Köhnken (1965) who takes the opposite view.

[49] Fabre-Serris (1995) 124; Bramble (1974) 82.

[50] Cameron (1995) 428. On a Callimachean version, see also Heerink (2007) 618 n.49.

[51] Skutsch (1906). Ross (1975) 85-106 .

[52] Ross (1975) 75-81; Fedeli (1980) 455; Cairns (2006) 220; *contra*, Lightfoot (1999) 467.

[53] Mastronarde (1968) 273-90, arguing that the Alexandrian poets questioned the traditional value of the epic and heroic in contemporary literature.

from their natural epic surroundings, they lose their heroic identity and become mere men. The new Hellenistic preoccupation with amatory subject matter and the psychology of individual characters has rendered old-style epic obsolete, and Hylas is symbolic of this newer poetic sensibility. Mastronarde's view is endorsed by Van Erp Taalman Kip, who also concludes that Hylas represents subject matter that is not suitable for old style epic, but relevant to Hellenistic concerns.[54] Apollonius' *Argonautica*, although an epic, displays a similar shift from the strong heroes of old epic to more human characters, exemplified by the unheroic Jason and Hercules, and his version of the Hylas myth has much in common with that of Theocritus.[55]

Hylas therefore, with his symbolic and erotic associations, is a likely candidate for metapoetic treatment by Propertius, and Ross' observations in relation to Propertius' engagement with Gallus have been borne out by close readings of the text by subsequent scholars.[56] What has not been so clear, however, is the exact motivation behind such an exercise. Why did Propertius depart so radically from his usual style of elegy to compose this poem, and what is the point of such an imitation, if that is what it is? Why would he not instead compose his own version, in his own style, thereby displaying his own mastery of elegy in the true spirit of *aemulatio*?

Petrain has shed some valuable new light on the issue.[57] Central to his argument is what he identifies as bilingual etymological wordplay regarding the name Hylas:

> est tibi non infra specie, **non nomine dispar,**
> Theiodamanteo proximus ardor **Hylae**:
> hunc tu, sive leges umbrosae flumina **silvae, . . .** (vv. 5-7)

Silva can be translated into Greek as ὕλη and the wordplay is signposted by *non nomine dispar*. Both *Hylae* and *silvae* are situated at the ends of consecutive lines, and this 'vertical juxtaposition' also draws attention to the link between the two. It is also significant that the term *Hylaei* is used in 1.1.13 as an epithet for the wooden club that wounded Milanion.[58] Thus the word is alluded to in the first and last full-length poems of the book, alerting the

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[54] Van Erp Taalman Kip (1994) 153-69. She states that "Theocritus does not take a stand against Homer and other predecessors, but he does realize that it is impossible to continue in the same way." (p.168).

[55] On this, see DeForest (1994) 62-70.

[56] Most particularly Petrain (2000) 409-421 and Cairns (2006) 219-249. On the 'Galluses' of Book 1, see Pincus (2004) 165-196.

[57] Petrain (2000) 409-421.

[58] It is also significant that Milanion has been often associated with Gallus. On this see, for example, Ross (1975)61-5; Rosen and Farrell (1986) 241-254; Cairns (2006) 89-90.

reader to a possible programmatic significance. Both *silva* and ὕλη are recognized literary terms for 'subject matter', and the possible metapoetic function of these terms in 1.20 is further supported by Hylas' quest for water in v.24:[59]

> raram sepositi quaerere fontis aquam.

a golden line which Petrain describes as "an affirmation of Callimachean aesthetics in miniature", in that *raram...aquam* evokes the pure spring water of Callimachus' epilogue to the *Hymn to Apollo* and *sepositi* recalls his repudiation of the common spring in epigram *AP* 12.43 (=28Pf), so that *fons* reads like 'source' in the literary sense.[60] The epistolary introduction of the poem resembles Theocritus' address to the poet Nicias at the start of *Idyll* 13, which strengthens the impression that the Gallus of 1.20 is indeed the poet Cornelius Gallus.[61]

From all this Petrain deduces that Propertius is warning Gallus "to defend his poetic territory from rivals who might usurp his subject matter and make it their own", and that the theme of romantic advice, expressed by *monere* (v.1 *monere;* v.51 *monitus*) is the way in which Propertius engages with rival poets.[62] The ultimate irony in the poem is that Propertius, while in the course of advising Gallus to protect his subject matter against theft, is precisely committing such a theft, "taking over in his own poem Gallus' subject matter and perhaps even some of his poetic idiosyncrasies."[63]

Most recently, Heerink has employed the tool of "retrospective interpretation" to investigate the poem through the prism of Valerius Flaccus' later epic version of the myth.[64] Arguing that Valerius Flaccus carefully read and analysed Propertius' poem in a metapoetic way, Heerink focuses on the phrase *processerat ultra* of v.23, which is repeated by Valerius in his *Argonautica*:

> e quibus Herculeo Dryope percussa fragore,
> cum fugerent iam tela ferae, **processerat ultra**
> turbatum visura nemus **fontem**que **petebat**

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[59] On *silva* as a literary metaphor, see *OLD* "*silva*" 5b; Coleman (1998) xxii-xxiii; Hinds (1998) 10-16 on this metaphor in *Aen.* 6. 179-82. He states: "*Silva* is used metaphorically in various contexts in Latin to represent ὕλη, in the sense 'matter', 'mass of material', 'raw material'(for which the normal word is *materia*)." (p.12). He also cites Cicero, *Orat.* 12 and Suetonius, *Gram.*24.

[60] Petrain (2000) 414.

[61] On the identity of Nicias, see Hunter (1999) 215.

[62] Petrain (2000) 416.

[63] Petrain (2000) 418-9.

[64] Heerink (2007) 606-620. The term "retrospective interpretation" is attributed to P.R. Hardie.

> rursus et attonitos referebat ab Hercule vultus. (*Argon.* 3.529-32).

The repetition of this phrase in the same metrical *sedes* and the appearance of *fontemque petebat* in the following line, recalling the second line of the Propertian distich points to metapoetic play with Propertius and thus he interprets it as an expression of an intention to go further than one's poetic predecessor. He argues that Propertius was reacting to the version of the myth by Apollonius Rhodius, while Valerius Flaccus was reacting to that of Propertius. Propertius imitates Apollonius, but 'goes further' by incorporating such hitherto unattested elements as the episode of the Boreads and the depiction of Hylas picking flowers, and he concludes that both poets were engaging in a metapoetic play on genre: Propertius and Apollonius were both reacting to a (now lost) elegiac version of the myth by Callimachus in the *Aetia*; Apollonius situates the myth in epic while adhering to Callimachean principles, whereas Propertius 'goes further' by composing a properly Callimachean elegiac version.

Heerink's arguments certainly seem to suggest that the phrase was intended to be a vector for concealed metapoetic *aemulatio* on the part of each poet, but he confines himself to a consideration of the extant versions of the myth (those of Apollonius and Theocritus) and omits any mention of Cornelius Gallus, the putative addressee of the poem. In my view, however, it defies logic to ignore the possibility that Propertius was responding particularly to a version of the myth by that poet, especially in the light of Petrain's analysis, and of the now persuasive body of evidence that points to Gallan influence in the poem, even if that evidence is only conjectural. His proposal that the episode of the Boreads is a Propertian invention is to ignore the very real possibility that Gallus, and even perhaps Parthenius, covered it. One might even surmise that the alternating action of the two sons (*hunc super et Zetes, hunc super et Calais,* v.26; *oscula et alterna ferre supine fuga,* v.28 – both occurring in consecutive pentameters, and therefore *versus elegiaci*) deliberately points to the elegiac couplet and alludes to Gallus' putative elegiac version of the myth.

I would like to offer my own contribution to the interpretation of the poem, which is broadly in agreement with Petrain, but close analysis of the water symbolism in the poem has led me to conclude that Propertius has a more complex agenda than a merely agonistic one with his predecessor by imitating him and stealing his subject matter: as befits a poem that is placed at the opposite end of the book to his inaugural programmatic elegy, it is also itself intensely programmatic. By gathering some observations of my own in relation to some of the key parts of the poem, I will try to demonstrate that in this final full-length poem of the collection, Propertius uses the mythical drowning of Hylas to comment on the nature of literary tradition, and the place of elegy within that tradition.

crudelis Minyis dixerit **Ascanius**. (v.4)

The Minyans are the Argonauts and therefore may be an allusion to Apollonius.[65] In relation to the Ascanius, Cairns makes the interesting observation that this may be an allusion to Parthenius, since this river was located in Bithynia, Parthenius' homeland, and he provides epigrammatic evidence that this poet may even have been known as "the man from Askania".[66] The word appears a second time in v.16, also at the end of the line, indicating that this may be a deliberate allusion to the Bithynian poet. Thus, besides the obvious possible models of Apollonius, Theocritus, Callimachus and Gallus, we have another one to bridge the gap between the Greek tradition and the Latin.

Theiodamanteo proximus **ardor Hylae** (v.6.)

The word *ardor* suggests that *Hylas* may function here as a symbol for Gallus' love elegy, in which he apparently told the story of Hylas. This term appears only four times in Book 1, most significantly in 1.10.10: *tantus in alternis vocibus* ***ardor*** *erat*. In this elegy, addressed to 'Gallus', Propertius presents himself as having been a witness to Gallus' lovemaking. Sharrock has shown how *alternis vocibus* evokes the elegiac couplet and that the night of voyeurism can be interpreted as a night of reading Gallus' poetry.[67] Thus it can be inferred that *ardor* in that poem indicated Gallus' elegies, and that it was possibly a Gallan word, since in 1.13.28, another poem addressed to Gallus, Propertius uses the term again in relation to Gallus' passion: *addictum te tuus* ***ardor*** *aget*.[68] This may therefore be another example of the poet doing what he writes about, as mentioned already in relation to 1.11 and Baiae. It

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[65] Apollonius Rhodius explains in *Argon.* 1.229 that the heroes were called Minyans because the majority of them claimed descent from the daughters of the legendary king Minyas.

[66] Cairns (2006) 240-2. He draws his evidence from the first couplet of an elegiac epigram ("the glorious (?name?tomb) of the poet, Parthenius, whom the Ascanian land bore") probably composed by Hadrian, which was discovered during the Renaissance on the restored tomb of Parthenius. Hadrian, a lover of all things Greek, had rebuilt the tomb after it was damaged by flood water, and had the epigram inscribed on it. This may indicate that Parthenius described his birthplace as "the Ascanian land" in his poetry, either in a *sphragis*, or a significant passage.

[67] Sharrock (1990) 570-1. See also above p.112 n. 20.

[68] The other two occurrences of the term in Book 1 are 7.24 (***ardoris*** *nostri magne poeta iaces)*, a poem that is densely programmatic, and 3.13 (*et quamvis duplici correptum* ***ardore*** *iuberent).* The word appears twice more in Book 2 (13b.15 and 28a.7), but not at all in Books Three or Four. This pattern seems to correspond with the trajectory of Gallus' influence on Propertius.

seems possible, therefore, that Gallus' relationship with Hylas was merely a literary one, his depiction in this poem as being involved with an *eromenos* may be another instance of *deformazione* so evident in the other poems to Gallus, where the poet is depicted as a previously philandering, relatively inexperienced rival lover (1.5, 1.10 and 1.13).[69] In all of these poems Propertius assumes the role of *praeceptor amoris*, and this is how he engages in *aemulatio* with his predecessor.

> hunc tu, sive leges umbrosae flumina silvae
> sive Aniena tuos tinxerit unda pedes,
> sive Gigantea spatiabere litoris ora,
> sive ubicumque vago fluminis hospitio
> Nympharum semper cupidas defende rapinas
> (non minor Ausoniis est Amor Adryasin); (vv. 7-12.)

The *Gigantea ora* has already been referred to in relation to 1.11, as denoting Baiae, and possibly Gallan poetic territory. In fact all of the watery regions in the above passage may well be yet another example of Gallus being described as doing what he wrote about, and so these watery regions that Gallus might wander through may well refer to specific poems, with *silvae* (v.7) standing as a metaphor for the poetic terrain. A close examination of the *Culex* in relation to passages from Propertius and Vergil's Sixth and Tenth *Eclogues* has led Kennedy to deduce that the main source of inspiration for this poem is Gallus, and that the Hamadryades, Pan, Silvanus, Dryads, Naiads, and Pales, were all Gallan figures of inspiration and congregated in his landscapes.[70] He also posits that *vagus* is a Gallan word, and that 'wandering' around the countryside was a key element of his elegies.[71] None of this would be surprising if, as Cairns has suggested, Gallus shared Propertius' interest in water. The rapacious nymphs, who are dangerously capable of stealing Hylas, *qua* poetic material, may on this level refer to other poets, all clamouring to treat this popular theme.

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[69] Nevertheless, Kennedy (1982) 380 n.56 argues that Verg. *Ecl.* 10.37f (*certe sive mihi Phyllis sive esset Amyntas / seu quicumque furor...*) seems to indicate homosexual themes in Gallus' poetry. On *deformazione* in regard to Gallus in Propertius, see Cairns (2006) 104-9.

[70] Kennedy (1982) 371-389. See also Kennedy (1987) 57-59 on Arcadia as the landscape of the sufferings of the distraught lover and probably the setting for Gallus' erotic suffering, where he carved the name of his *amores* on the trees.

[71] Kennedy (1982) 389 n. 99.

(non minor Ausoniis est amor Adryasin); (v.12.)

Propertius' warning that the Ausonian (i.e., western) dryads are no less amorous than their sisters is another way of saying that the Italian nymphs are equal to those of Greece. This can be interpreted as a declaration that the Latin versions of the myth (especially this one) are by no means inferior to the earlier Greek ones – a possible compliment to Gallus, or even a warning that his Italian version may be trumped by another.

ne tibi sit **duros montes** et **frigida saxa,**
  Galle, neque expertos semper adire lacus:
quae miser ignotis **error** perpessus in oris
  Herculis indomito **fleverat** Ascanio. (vv.13-16.)

The depiction of Hercules in these lines is profoundly reminiscent of the elegiac lover in the wilderness, as Propertius presents himself in 1.18, Milanion in 1.1, and, most saliently, as Vergil presents Gallus in *Eclogues* 10 and 6 (*et **gelidi fleverunt saxa** Lycaei*, 10.15; ***errantem** Permessi ad **flumina** Gallum,* 6.64). Since 1.18 has been identified by many as a particularly Gallan poem, and Milanion has similarly been associated with Gallus, it seems very likely that Propertius is here imitating a typically Gallan scene, if not alluding to a particular poem.[72] Butler and Barber isolate *neque* from *expertos* and translate it as "lakes tried by lovers to their cost."[73] Fedeli prefers to interpret the whole phrase *neque expertos…lacus* as the equivalent of *inexpertos lacus.*[74] The ambiguity is perhaps deliberate, but Fedeli's rendering places Hercules literally and generically totally out of his element in his role as elegiac lover in elegiac territory.[75] In the role of *exclusus amator*, he is playing out the topos of Lament by Water, so common in elegiac poetry. There may also be a degree of polemic here, as Hercules' predicament is a potential one for Gallus as the somewhat naive elegiac lover, as he is portrayed in 1.5, 1.10 and 1.13. Thus Propertius is presenting himself as the more experienced lover, and therefore a better love elegist than Gallus.

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[72] On this see Ross (1975) 60-5, 71-4, 88-91; Rosen and Farrell (1986) 241-54; Cairns (2002) 471-477.
[73] Butler and Barber (1933) 184.
[74] Fedeli (1980) 466.
[75] A situation which will recur in 4.9, as will be shown in the next chapter.

namque **ferunt** olim Pagasae navalibus Argon
  egressam longe Phasidos isse viam,
et iam praeteritis labentem Athamantidos undis
  Mysorum scopulis applicuisse ratem.
hic manus heroum, placidis ut constitit oris,
  mollia composita litora fronde tegit. (vv.17-24.)

Heerink identifies these lines as a 'mini-*Argonautica*', encapsulating as they do in just a few lines the entire voyage up to the Argonauts' arrival in Mysia. He points out a cluster of allusions to that epic, but also recognizes that the final couplet alludes to both Apollonius and Theocritus.[76] The word *ferunt* seems to indicate that Propertius was indeed looking to his sources, as the word has been recognized as a typical "Alexandrian footnote".[77] Harrison, as we have seen, has made the attractive suggestion that there existed a pre-Homeric account of the Argonautic saga, and that it is alluded to by Catullus at the beginning of poem 64 by a similar use of the Alexandrian footnotes *quondam* (v.1) and *dicuntur* (v.2).[78] If so, then it is possible that the Hylas story appeared in this epic, and thus Propertius may not be simply alluding to the aforementioned extant and hypothesized Alexandrian and later treatments, but to the entire literary history of the myth. Accordingly, there may well be more at stake in this elegy than mere *aemulatio.* If Propertius is situating both his and Gallus' Hylas poems in a literary landscape that goes all the way back to the very origins of literature, symbolized by the *fons* that Hylas is seeking, it suggests that he is also taking a broad look at poetry in general and exploring the relationship of elegy to all the other genres. Thus, he may have been drawing his inspiration from Catullus' highly allusive opening to 64, where Harrison argues that he draws attention to the very origins of the Greek epic genre in order to situate his poem within this tradition. It may therefore also be more than coincidental that the phrase *namque ferunt olim* also appears in v.212 of that same poem, in relation to Theseus and his father.

at comes invicti iuvenis processerat ultra
  raram sepositi quaerere fontis aquam. (vv.23-4.)

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[76] Heerink (2007) 619-20.
[77] See Hinds (1998) 1-2.
[78] See above, p. 86. On the numerous Catullan allusions in the poem, see Fabre-Serris (1995) 132-3.

Heerink notes that this is the point where Hylas leaves the epic territory of the heroes and the sea and enters elegiac territory, and that such a transition is signalled in the previous couplet, where the epic context of *manus heroum* in the hexameter line yields to the elegiac *mollia*, in reference to the leafy beds on the beach, in the pentameter.[79] In the light of Propertius' references to the Argonautic expedition in the preceding lines, one might be tempted to read his story of Hylas as an allegory for the development of Latin love elegy itself, depicted as a sort of offshoot from epic, in which the love element, already present in a small way in the *grande* genre, becomes preeminent and all the previously epic characters are transformed to suit the new, smaller genre. Hylas starts off in epic, perhaps as far back as Harrison's posited pre-Homeric saga, and hence the Hylas story is as old as poetry itself. It is therefore fitting that he should come from the sea, the source of all poetry, and move to the pure, Callimachean water of a sequestered spring. Propertius literally plucks him from the epic sea, which he chooses to portray in his work as antithetical to his Callimachean principles, and locates him in the elegiac territory: a *locus amoenus* with the nymphs in their role as surrogate muses and the inspirational water. Theocritus did something similar, removing Hylas from the sea to his slender bucolic poetry, and Callimachus himself probably led the way in migrating him to elegy, possibly followed by Parthenius and Gallus, and then Propertius.

> a dolor! ibat Hylas, ibat Hamadryasin. (v.32.)

Why does Propertius have Hylas going towards the Hamadryads, who are tree nymphs, and also unable to leave their trees, instead of the naiads, the water nymphs who inhabit fountains? The actual rape is perpetrated by the dryads, other tree nymphs who are not confined to trees, but these do not appear in Apollonius and Theocritus.[80] One answer might be that Propertius wanted to make it clear that he was alluding to Gallus, who may have used all the nymphs of the countryside as surrogate Muses, but in particular the Hamadryads because their confinement to their trees bore a relation to Gallus' carving of his *amores* on

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[79] Heerink (2007) 620.

[80] In Apollonius, it is one water nymph, rising from the spring, who sees and seizes Hylas. In Theocritus, there are three nymphs, named Eunica, Malis and Nychea. These names are possibly inventions of the poet, although it is likely that Malis, meaning 'apple tree' was intended to be a tree nymph.

trees.[81] By choosing these instead of the naiads, he would therefore be alerting the reader to Gallus' poetry in particular, rather than other versions of the myth, and thus the rape as described in 1.20 represents Propertius' theft of Gallus' version. In other words, it dramatizes the latest instance of one poet (Propertius) transcending another (Gallus). Hylas goes down into the spring water to join all the other versions of himself.

> hic erat **Arganthi** Pege sub vertice montis
>   grata domus Nymphis umida Thyniasin,
> quam supra nullae pendebant debita curae
>   roscida desertis poma sub arboribus,
> et circum irriguo surgebant lilia prato
>   candida purpureis mixta papaveribus.
> quae modo decerpens tenero pueriliter ungui
>   proposito florem praetulit officio,
> et modo **formosis** incumbens nescius undis
>   errorem **blandis** tardat **imaginibus**. (vv.33-42.)

Cairns' suggestion that Mount Arganthus, situated in Bithynia, is a reference to Parthenius enhances the possibility that this Italian *locus amoenus* also contains the footprints of this poetic predecessor, and from whom Gallus, masquerading as a nymph (or nymphs), perpetrated a similar 'theft' of subject matter. The very centrality of the description of this *locus amoenus* in the poem is an indication of its importance as the scene of the main action, and its constituent elements are suggestive of a Golden Age landscape, with its uncultivated apples, and poppies mixed with white lilies in the water-meadow. Poppies, which do not normally grow near water, are perhaps included because of their association with forgetfulness, and thus draw attention to poetic transcendence.

The inspirational water of the spring is *formosus,* 'finely formed'. This might be considered a strange choice of adjective for water, until one realizes that this water carries

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[81] Kennedy (1982) 378, arguing that, when Vergil's Gallus in *Ecl.*10.52f carves his *amores* on the trees, the poet is exploiting the ambiguity of *amores* and that their prospective growth in stature links them to the motif of the Hamadryades, who are surrogate Muses for Gallus' poetry. The possibility that Gallus also depicted himself as carving his *amores* on trees is strengthened by Propertius 1.18.21-22 (*ah quotiens vestras resonant mea verba sub umbras, / scribitur et teneris Cynthia corticibus!*) – a poem that is very concerned with pastoral poetry and dense with possible Gallan allusions. Propertius also mentions the Hamadryades in 2.34.75-6 (*quamvis ille sua lassus requiescat avena / laudatur facilis inter* ***Hamadryades***) in relation to Vergil's *Eclogues*, inviting the consideration that the passage contains a compressed reference to the influence of Gallus on Vergil at that point in his career.

Hylas' reflection; he is again described as *formosus* in the final line of the poem. Such a Narcissistic scene seems to be confirmed in the pentameter, where the boy is distracted from gathering the water by *blandis…imaginibus.* Clearly he seems to be admiring his own reflection, but the plural *imaginibus* suggests that there is more than one. Hylas, gazing into the water, is beguiled by so many (poetic) versions of himself, that he is caught unawares and snatched away. Such is the nature of poetic succession: every time Hylas drowns in the spring another one comes along to take his place. *Formosus* may thus also carry the metapoetic connotation of finely formed poetry, as Hylas, representing love elegy, confronts his earlier poetic versions in the inspirational source.[82]

> prolapsum leviter **facili** traxere **liquore** (v.47)

In 1.11.12 the small body of water where Propertius had Cynthia ideally swimming is *facilis…lympha.* In Theocritus' 13.49 the water that Hylas gets dragged into, by contrast, is μέλαν ὕδωρ. In Propertius' poem the water is *facilis* because it is the metapoetic clear spring water that facilitates good Callimachean elegy.[83]

> cui procul Alcides iterat responsa, sed illi
> nomen **ab extremis fontibus** aura refert. (vv.49-50.)

Hylas makes a noise, to which Hercules responds, but his name echoes *ab extremis fontibus.* Most editors have accepted Heinsius' amendment to *montibus*, because of the apparent oddness of the echo emanating from the water, despite the compelling fact that this is what happens in Theocritus. Moreover, it makes more sense if the echoes of Hylas' name do come from the water, as both the source of inspiration for such poetry and the place where Propertius metapoetically consigns all the earlier versions of the myth. A poem about Hylas is composed from other versions which embody the essential source of the myth: they are its

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[82] Vergil also uses this term at the beginning of the first *Eclogue*, in a passage that is embedded with Callimachean terminology: *tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra / **formosam** resonare doces Amaryllida silvas.*(vv.4-5). The first two lines announce the 'slender' poetry that is to follow: *Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi / silvestrem tenui Musam meditaris avena.*

[83] See also 2.1.10 *miramur, **facilis** ut premat arte manus.* Propertius' possible pointed reference to Gallus in 2.34.76 *laudatur **facilis** inter Hamadryades* (see n. 77).

inspirational well-spring. Thus Hylas' name echoes from this source and the echoes are mere shadows of the original versions. Propertius' own poem has seen to that.

In conclusion, I suggest that the metapoetic subtext in the poem is more complex than has so far been appreciated. Firstly, its situation at the end of the book, after the last poem to Cynthia and before the closing two epigrams, sets it apart from the rest of the volume. This and the fact that it is addressed to Gallus should have alerted the contemporary reader that something significant is being imparted here. A reader familiar with Gallus' poetry would have immediately recognized the putative Gallan allusions in the poem, and may well have been amused that Propertius, in the spirit of playful but respectful rivalry, used one of Gallus' own poems to get one over on him. At first reading, then, he would have recognized the poem as both homage to Gallus and an exercise in *aemulatio* with him. However, the presence of other models in the text suggests that Propertius is also engaging with the whole poetic tradition, including non-elegiac poetry: he is commenting on the universality of poetic subject matter, and how it can be manipulated to conform to particular generic requirements. By taking epic subject matter from the sea and cleansing it in the pure Callimachean spring water he is dramatizing his version of the Callimachean aesthetic, defining the nature of his elegy and in his own way continuing what Callimachus and his fellow Alexandrians did to transform the old epic subject matter. Moreover, the entire poem can also be read as an illustration of the rite of literary succession in general that every poet worth his salt must undergo in his efforts to transcend his models and create something new and original.

Shipwreck Scenes.

I now return to the 'shipwreck' elegy of 1.17, in which I have already argued that Propertius draws from several traditions to "dramatise a metaphor"; that metaphor being the Sea of Love, in which the poet's love affair is depicted as a sea voyage and the shipwreck symbolizes his state of mind. Cairns, who originally identified the conventional framework of the elegy as an inverse *epibaterion*, has also more recently argued that the poem may well be a reworking of a Hellenistic version of the myth of Ceyx and Alcyone, and that it was possibly mediated to him via Gallus, since the first pentameter ending in the poem is the polysyllabic *alcyonas* (2).[84]

Strahan, in his paper: "A Literary Crisis? A Reassessment of the Symbolism of 1.17", has gathered together metapoetic evidence in the poem which seems to indicate clearly that Propertius was not merely interested in exploiting the traditional Sea of Love symbolism in this poem.[85] It can be usefully summarized at this point. The sea voyage that Propertius depicts as ending in shipwreck was purportedly bound for Cassiope, which is in fact Phaeacia, where Odysseus was shipwrecked in *Od.* 5.299-312.[86] Propertius is thus identifying himself with Odysseus, on an epic journey that results in shipwreck. The place where he ends up is *ignotis circumdata litora silvis* (v.17). The term *litus*, observes Strahan, has "something of the status of a keyword", and that "to embark upon long journeys or to engage in public service of any kind is to turn one's back on one's *métier* as an elegiac poet".[87] Hence Propertius' voyage can be read as an abandonment of love poetry, or at least of poetry about Cynthia, the result of which is disastrous. The foolhardiness of such an attempt may be reinforced by an allusion in v.15 (***nonne fuit levius*** *dominae pervincere mores*) to *Ecl.* 2.14-15 (***nonne fuit satius*** *tristis Amaryllidis iras / atque superbia pati fastidia?*), where Corydon, by forsaking Amaryllis for Alexis was making the mistake of straying from the bucolic world into the elegiac one. Propertius is therefore making the parallel suggestion that he should not have considered a similar transgression from elegy to epic. The declaration in v.13 (*a pereat, quicumque ratis et vela paravit*) is what Strahan terms an "ironic cross-reference" to 1.6.12 (*a, pereat, si quis lentus amare potest*), in which elegy Propertius predicted the angry reaction he would receive from Cynthia in the event of his hypothetical departure. Propertius now realizes that his sentiments in 1.6 were correct, and that he should not have left Cynthia - *quamvis* ***dura*** *tamen* ***rara*** *puella fuit* (v.16). This line contains two cross-references to important elegies in Book 1: *dura* refers back to 1.7.6 (*atque aliquid* ***duram*** *quaerimus in dominam*) where he compared his own literary endeavours with those of the epic poet Ponticus; and the only other occurrence in the Book of *rara* is 1.8.42 (*…Cynthia* ***rara*** *mea*

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[84] Cairns (1972) 63-66; Cairns (2006), 210-212 arguing that *alcyonas* as the first pentameter and *litoribus* (with Gallan associations) as the last one look like signposts for a model; and that it thus pairs well with 1.18, which also may be a Gallan reworking of a Greek model (Callimachus). Nevertheless it has to be said that Cairns' arguments for the detection of Gallus in the work of Propertius, though clever and attractive, border on the extravagant and I would hesitate to accept them as certainties.

[85] Strahan (2003) 275-289.

[86] Tibullus does something similar in 1.3, another inverse *epibaterion*, in which he complains that illness has forced him to abandon a voyage to the east with Messala and he languishes in Corcyra, which he identifies with Phaeacia.

[87] Strahan (2003) 286.

est!), where he exults in the success of his efforts to retain Cynthia. Finally, the poet's appeal to the Nereids to grant him shores that are *mansueta* (***mansuetis*** *socio parcite litoribus*, v.28) recalls the programmatic use of the same term in 1.9.12 (*carmina* ***mansuetus*** *lenia quaerit Amor*).

To this compelling body of evidence I would like to add one or two observations of my own, and to offer a modification of Strahan's overall conclusions. Firstly, there may also be metapoetic implications in vv.9-10:

> tu tamen in melius saevas converte **querelas**:
> sat tibi sit poenae nox et **iniqua** vada.

The term *querela* has been shown by Saylor to be Propertius' "distinctive, technical term for his own kind of elegy". Since here the source of the *querelae* is Cynthia herself, via the winds, Propertius may be alluding specifically to his love elegy.[88] There might also be some play on the term *iniqua*, which etymologically derives from *in-aequus*, 'unequal': its appearance in the pentameter of the distich, in reference to the *vada*, denoting the treachery of the shallower water near the shore, may also refer to the unevenness of the elegiac couplet. Thus the whole distich may conceal a suggestion that the metre of his chosen poetry is that of elegy, not epic. Secondly, Strahan indicates that *ignotis circumdata litora silvis* (v.17) may imply an abandonment of elegy. I further suggest that such an interpretation is corroborated by the use of the term *silva*, which can denote subject matter.[89] The 'shipwrecked' Propertius, by abandoning his elegy, has found himself in alien literary territory.

Finally, although I agree with Strahan's thesis that Propertius is metapoetically referring to a desertion of love elegy for epic, with catastrophic results, I differ slightly from his conclusion as to the underlying dynamic of this metapoetic 'situation'. Strahan interprets it as evidence of a possible literary crisis on the part of the poet. Like Coutelle in relation to 1.11, he seems to think that the underlying cause of his turning away from elegy towards epic is an abandonment of inspiration, or some frustration with the limitations of elegy. I suggest instead that this poem is not an indication of writer's block, but in fact just the opposite.

When Propertius addresses his friends in 1.1.29-30,

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[88] Saylor (1967) 782-793. Saylor notes that Propertius' poetry contains 15 examples of *querela* and *queri* in the context of a lover's complaint, and Horace also uses the term in this way when he urges the elegiac poet Valgius to *desine mollium tandem querelarum* (*C.* 2.9.17).

[89] See above, p.174 n.59.

> ferte per extremas gentes et **ferte per undas**
> qua non ulla meum femina norit iter.

he is challenging them to find for him a remedy for his amatory agonies. But, although the topos of *remedium amoris* was a conventional one in literature, its efficacy had already been shown by Vergil's 'Gallus' in *Ecl.* 10.69 to be nothing but a chimera:

> omnia vincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori.[90]

One of the fundamental tenets of Latin love elegy is that there is no cure for elegiac love; it is love until death. What Propertius is therefore doing here is proving on the dramatic level that this is so. Just as it is highly unlikely that this elegy is recording a real shipwreck in Propertius' life, it is also perfectly plausible that the metapoetic journey from elegy to epic was equally a non-event, and in keeping with the episodic nature of Propertian elegy, especially in Book 1. The poem may therefore be read as an enactment of the challenge issued to his friends in the opening poem, and a demonstration that such an attempt is doomed to failure. But there is more: Propertius' allusion in v.15 (***a pereat, quicumque*** *ratis et vela paravit*) to 1.6.12 (***a pereat, si quis*** *lentus amare potest*) may be read as a deliberate reminder to the reader of that poem in which he politely refuses to make a sea voyage with Tullus, on the grounds that Cynthia's anger holds him back. Elegy 1.17 may therefore be read as a dramatic sequel to 1.6.15-18, where he depicts Cynthia's incensed reaction to his hypothetical departure, because his shipwreck continues the story, as it were, and portrays the inevitable result of the ensuing hypothetical journey. Since in 1.6 he explains to Tullus that he is naturally unsuited, as an elegiac poet/lover, for such a venture, he is demonstrating in 1.17 that once he is out of his element, he is quite literally out of his depth.

In this poem Propertius takes a fictional situation and presents it as a real event; at the same time he deftly interlaces an innovative treatment of the symbolism of the Sea of Love with metapoetic water imagery; he uses the conventional inverse *epibaterion* as a scaffold; he incorporates allusions to other literary sources, including himself. As a *tour de force* of complexity and skill, it thus seems much more likely that its metanarrative embodies a confident reaffirmation of his commitment to love elegy, rather than a betrayal of any sort of literary equivocality.

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[90] On *remedium amoris* in 1.1, see Cairns (1974a) 102-107; for the journey motif, see Theoc. 14.52-56.

A contrasting shipwreck occurs in 2.26A. The MSS present 2.16.1-58 as one poem, with the exception of N, which indicates a new elegy from line 29. Some scholars have tried, unsuccessfully in my view, to maintain and justify the integrity of the 58 lines as one poem.[91] Fedeli concurs with Van Lennep and Burman who separate the brief 21-28, in which Propertius is euphoric because he has succeeded in obtaining the *servitium* of Cynthia and extols both *fides* and *constantia* as indispensable elements of love, from 1-20 and 29-58.[92] Fedeli believes that 21-28 are the fragments of a now lost larger elegy. Thus he divides the poem as follows: A= 1-20, B=21-28 and C=29-58. Despite the common motif of the sea in A and C, A does seem to be a completely separate elegy, and I therefore comply with Fedeli's divisions of A,B and C.

Vidi te in somnis fracta, mea vita, carina
  Ionio lassas ducere rore manus,
et quaecumque in me fueras mentita fateri,
  nec iam umore gravis tollere posse comas,
qualem purpureis agitatam fluctibus Hellen,
  aurea quam molli tergore vexit ovis.
quam timui, ne forte tuum mare nomen haberet,
  teque tua labens navita fleret aqua!
quae tum ego Neptuno, quae tum cum Castore fratri,
  quaeque tibi excepi, iam dea, Leucothoe!
at tu vix primas extollens gurgite palmas
  saepe meum nomen iam peritura vocas.
quod si forte tuos vidisset Glaucus ocellos,
  esses Ionii facta puella maris,
et tibi ob invidiam Nereides increpitarent,
  candida Nesaee, caerula Cymothoe.
sed tibi subsidio delphinum currere vidi,
  qui, puto, Arioniam vexerat ante lyram.
iamque ego conabar summo me mittere saxo,
  cum mihi discussit talia visa metus.

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[91] See, for example, Macleod (1976) 131-6: he reads the 58 lines as a *propemptikon*; the dream of 1-20 functions as a premonition which should induce Cynthia not to leave (but why, then, does he have a dolphin save her?); Cynthia is duly won over, and after confessing her misdeeds, has begun to be dedicated to the poet. He fails to explain why Cynthia would be so ready to embark on a voyage after such a declaration of devotion. See also Wiggers (1980) 121-8, who postulates that the whole of 2.26 should be read as a poetic triptych in which Propertius reveals a deep-rooted ambivalence towards love.

[92] Fedeli (2006) 734-736. So also Heyworth (2007) 222-3 stating that "there is no need to make a single poem of material that stems from two quite separate beginnings (a dream, 1; a voyage conceived, 29). In particular 1-20 is rounded off by the waking from the dream and the echo in *visa* (20) of the opening *Vidi*; and verses 21-8 have only the most tenuous connections with what precedes and follows."

This elegy appears to be a fantasy of Cynthia's vulnerability. She is shipwrecked, on the verge of drowning, and calling upon Propertius to save her. Thus their roles are unusually reversed: Cynthia needs Propertius this time. Hollemann posits that the dream has a symbolic value and that the turbulent sea may represent what separates the two lovers, while the shipwreck may allude to the eventual dramatic end to their love affair; if Cynthia is in danger, then so is his poetry; her final salvation by the dolphin is an allusion to the immortality of his poetry.[93] Wiggers rejects any interpretation that the dream is an unconscious expression of the poet's erotic preoccupations, on the grounds that Propertius 1.3 demonstrates that the poet is sceptical about the validity of dreams. Instead she ascribes the nightmare to emotional insecurity and says that Propertius must wake up because saving Cynthia goes against his stance in the motif of *servitium amoris.*[94] What has especially exceeded the grasp of generations of scholars is the enigma that Propertius was preparing to jump into the sea precisely **after** the dolphin goes to the aid of Cynthia. Jacobsen argues that we have been deluded by our own cultural expectations: Propertius' proposed leap into the water was not in order to rescue his mistress.[95] There are virtually no instances of swimmers rescuing people from drowning in the literature of the 1st century BC, despite the vast amount of shipwrecks contained in it, simply because the sheer folly of such an attempt in the days before lifesaving techniques made it an unthinkable act. He proposes instead that what Propertius was about to do was the so-called 'lover's leap' into the sea as a conventional cure for unrequited love, an action that would have been immediately understood by a contemporary reader. Having seen Cynthia on the verge of drowning and having heard her confessions of infidelity, he is no longer sure that he wants to jump. Jacobsen's theory, however, seems logically deficient:
Cynthia's calling out of Propertius' name seems to suggest that she expected that he would try to save her. Moreover, why would he even consider jumping to his death just when Cynthia shows that she needs him? Her confession implies that from now on she will requite his love, if he can save her. Holleman may be closer to the mark when he suggests that the word *puto* in v.18 gives us a clue: in his own mind the poet perceives the dolphin as the very same one that rescued Arion and his lyre and that therefore it is now his poetry that is in

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[93] Holleman (1970) 177-180.

[94] Wiggers (1980) 121-8. Her analysis of the poem is based on the biographical fallacy of assuming the veracity of the love affair, and she contends that the poet is able to respond to Cynthia aesthetically, but fails to involve himself personally in her suffering.

[95] Jacobson (1984) 137-40.

danger.[96] This is what finally galvanizes him to action. Holleman recommends that either no punctuation or a comma be placed at the end of line 18 to bring out the simultaneity of the realization and of the intention to jump.

Holleman's suggestion encourages us to entertain the possibility that the elegy as a whole may sustain a metapoetic interpretation. Moreover, coming as it does towards the end of the second book and before the programmatic poems at the beginning of Book 3, there is a cogent case for arguing that Propertius avails himself of the dream motif to intimate his awareness of the finite nature of his life as a lover-poet and that the dream may function as both predictive of the future and as an articulation of the poet's waking poetic anxieties. My following analysis is therefore intended to suggest that Propertius is both anticipating the impending eclipse of Cynthia-poetry and articulating a certain amount of trepidation about the poetic task before him.

In the first line of the elegy, Propertius refers to Cynthia as *mea vita*, immediately reminding the reader of the inextricable link between his love life and his literary one, and that therefore an address to Cynthia functions equally as an address to (or a comment about) his poetry. Cynthia is drowning in the sea because her boat (*carina*, v.1) has been broken up (*fracta*, v.1) by the waves. *Carina* is the word he uses for his elegy in 3.9.35 – *non ego velifera tumidum mare findo* ***carina*** – where we have seen that he rejects the sea of epic in favour of the small water of elegy. In v.2, Cynthia's hands are *lassas*. This contrasts with their description in the programmatic 2.1.10 – *miramur,* ***facilis*** *ut premat arte* ***manus*** – where he extols the virtues of his Cynthia/poetry. We have also seen in 1.11.12 that her hands evoked the elegiac couplet – *alternae* ***facilis*** *cedere lympha* ***manu*** – where this time it is the water that is *facilis*, in contrast to her hands in 2.1.10, but in both cases it seems that the poet is referring to the simple elegance of his elegies. Now, however, Cynthia's hands are tired, and she is in danger of disappearing, no longer able to deal with the spray (*rore,* v.2) of the sea. The word *ros* has poetic connotations because it commonly denotes 'dew', the substance on which the Callimachean cicada-poet feeds.[97] It is also used by Horace (*qui rore puro Castalia lavit / crines solutos, C.*3.4.61-2) in relation to Apollo. The possibility of a metapoetic implication is also encouraged by the following line, where Cynthia is depicted as barely able to lift her hair (*graves...comas*, v.4) from the water (*umore*). Her disarrayed locks here are the inverse of their elaborate ornamentation in 1.2.1 (*ornato...capillo*) and 1.2.3 (*aut quid Orontea crines perfundere murra*). In that poem, Propertius' censure of Cynthia's over-

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[96] Holleman (1970) 179.
[97] Callimachus fr.1.32-36 Pfeiffer. *OLD* 1661.

styled coiffure may be interpreted as a rejection of artificial, mannered poetry. In 2.26A, her disordered tresses, heavy with the weight of the water, provide an arresting contrast and are suggestive of the dissolution of Cynthia-poetry. Fedeli notes that *umor* is a new poetic synonym for water possibly introduced by Ennius (*Var.* 46V), and Propertius uses it programmatically in 3.3.2 in reference to the strong flow of Ennian-epic water that the elegist erroneously envisaged drinking in that other dream which resulted in his poetic initiation: [98]

> Visus eram molli recubans Heliconis in umbra,
> Bellerophontei qua fluit **umor** equi (3.3.1-2)

The *ros* thus contrasts with the *umor*: the small spray that is more appropriate for his Cynthia-poetry, usually manageable from the *carina* of elegy as long as it hugs the shore, is overwhelmed by the much larger *umor* of the sea. What may we deduce from this? I suggest that the sea here is a metaphor, not of epic particularly, but of poetry in general, and Cynthia's potential drowning represents the cessation of Cynthia-poetry. The vivid image of her tired hands grappling with the spray may be seen as an acknowledgement of the fact that the days of his Cynthia-elegy are numbered: love elegy is a young man's genre and sooner rather than later he will have to move on to poetry more appropriate to a mature poet.

In v.5 Cynthia is compared to the hapless Helle, who drowned in the sea after falling off the back of a ram. In Propertius' version of the myth, he transforms the ram into a ewe, whose back is elegiacally *mollis*. This transformation is appropriate, for, as Dalzell states, "epic material could only be used if it underwent a transformation to conform to the needs of elegy".[99] Moreover, it is particularly reminiscent of the Theocritean technique of what Halperin terms 'epic subversion', whereby the poet reduces heroic themes to a more modest scale.[100] Poignantly, Propertius chooses to do this in the pentameter, the non- epic line of the elegiac couplet. Thus, by feminizing the ram, he is downgrading a theme from mythological epic and rendering it suitable for love elegy. At the same time, however, he uses this *exemplum* to adumbrate its imminent demise.

The following couplet presents interesting possibilities:

> quam timui, ne forte tuum mare nomen haberet,
> teque tua labens navita fleret aqua! (v.7-8)

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[98] Fedeli (2005) 737.
[99] Dalzell (1980) 31.
[100] On this, see Halperin (1983) 217-48.

The surface meaning is of course that Hellespont took its name from the death of Helle by drowning and Propertius worries that Cynthia will suffer a similar fate. The word *nomen* opens up the possibility that Propertius is referring to his fame as the author of the Cynthia poems, and the *navita* who will elegiacally weep in her water is another elegiac lover/poet following in the tradition established by Propertius. That Cynthia's drowning might result in that patch of water bearing her name implies that Propertius considers that he has created a unique place for his Cynthia-poetry in the literary landscape, but there may also be a suggestion of anxiety about the security of his legacy in the face of competition, transmitted by *quam timui.* On the other hand, modesty tends to be an affectation on Propertius' part, and we have seen that his poems resonate with confidence about his powers as an elegist.[101] One other possibility is that *quam timui* refers to Propertius' anxiety about moving on from Cynthia-poetry so that the *navita* in v.7-8 is in fact Propertius as he glides away (*labens*), elegiacally weeping over his lost subject matter.

Propertius' depiction of his apostrophe to Neptune, Castor and Pollux, protectors of shipwrecked sailors and drowning persons, and to Leucothoe, the goddess who, in her former incarnation as Ino, had been the pursuer of Helle, is followed by another couplet in which he graphically depicts Cynthia's predicament:

> at tu vix primas extollens gurgite palmas
> saepe meum nomen iam peritura vocas. (v.11-12).

Cynthia's arms are now submerged and she is scarcely able to keep her hands above water. More metapoetic possibilities abound: if one interprets the word *palma* in its other sense, 'prize', *primas...palmas* may embody a reference to the early acclaim for his Cynthia elegies. *Perire* is a term regularly used by Propertius as a by-word for the condition of the elegiac lover suffering from unrequited love.[102] Here, however, Propertius applies it to Cynthia, as it is she (love elegy) rather than he who is in danger. Her frequent calling of Propertius' name suggests again that the poet is concerned with his literary fame, and his fear that Glaucus, enchanted by Cynthia's eyes (*ocellos*, 13), just as Propertius had been in 1.1.1, might take her for himself, may imply a real or feigned anxiety that his fame might be eclipsed by a rival,

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[101] Most particularly in the sequence of 1.7, 1.8A and B and 1.9.

[102] See Prop. 1.4.12, 1.9.34, 1.11.30, 1.13.33, 1.14.14, 1.15.41. See also Vergil *Ecl.* 10.10, where Gallus is portayed thus: *indigno cum Gallus amore peribat.* This suggests that Gallus also used the term to describe his own *servitium amoris.* On the motif in Propertius and its possible Gallan origins, see above pp. 31-32.

that his love elegy might be surpassed by another poet. The suggestion that she may become one of Glaucus' sea deities may also prefigure the imminent downgrading of her status as Propertius' sole Muse.

But Cynthia does not drown in this dream. Her rescue by the dolphin ensures her survival. Moreover, this is not just any dolphin: it is the one that transported Arion, that legendary poet of poets, and thus Cynthia's rescue by it appears to ensure her immortality and transports her to legendary status. Wiggers usefully points out that the lyre, indispensable to Arion for the success of his poetry, corresponds with Cynthia, without whom Propertius would not be a poet.[103] Such a possibility is reinforced by the fact that Cynthia herself is depicted playing the lyre in 2.1.9-10 and 23.19-20. The dolphin's association with Apollo and the foundation of his temple at Delphi cannot be overlooked either.[104] Cynthia's survival then is no longer in doubt, but the mammal does whisk her away from Propertius, which is why he prepares to jump. The immortality of his love elegies is assured, but the next phase of his career is symbolized by the impending jump into the poetic sea. The word *summo* (v.19) may signify that Propertius is aware of the fact that, in abandoning Cynthia-poetry, he may never again attain the same high level of success. It is the fear of this jump (*metus,* v.20) that wakes Propertius up. He is not quite ready for this action, but it will happen soon. It seems that the fear is twofold: on the one hand there is anxiety about the future; on the other, there may be a degree of anxiety about the past. Has he done enough to ensure the immortality of his Cynthia-poems? The dolphin's appearance seems to confirm that he has.

Thus the sea in this elegy may be seen to sustain a number of simultaneous symbolic interpretations. Firstly, the nightmare of Cynthia drowning at sea is a predictable analogue for an elegiac lover's erotic anxieties. Secondly, as Hollemann suggests, the sea may represent the impasse that often exists between the lover and his less than willing beloved. Thirdly, the sea and the shipwreck may be interpreted as belonging to the epigrammatic sea of love motif, within which Propertius innovates by transferring the drowning to the beloved rather than the lover because he is indulging in the impossible fantasy that their roles are reversed. Finally, the metapoetic interpretation of the sea and Cynthia's near-death experience as symbolic of

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[103] Wiggers (1980) 124. In contrast, Holleman (1970) 179- 80 argues that in this dream Propertius sees himself as both a Glaucus, beguiled by Cynthia's contrition, and a dolphin, ready to leap in to the water to save her.

[104] The Homeric *Hymn to Pythian Apollo* (vv.388-502) tells the story of the foundation of the temple of Delphi: after travelling all over Greece in search of a suitable site for the temple Apollo chose a cave nestling at the foot of Mt. Parnassus, which was guarded by the dragoness Python. After slaying her he went off and hijacked a Cretan merchant ship, leaping aboard the boat in the guise of a dolphin. While the terrified crew huddled below deck, the dolphin Apollo instructed the winds to blow the boat to the harbour just below Delphi and then ordered the hostages to serve as priests to the temple.

the impending end of Cynthia-poetry reveals a self-conscious reflection of the poet's poetic preoccupations, and all of this neatly embedded in a vignette that is so graphically explicit as to suggest that the poet may well have drawn inspiration from a painting.

In regard to the rest of 2.26, as stated above I concur with Fedeli who postulates that vv. 21-28 (B) constitute the fragments of a now lost larger poem, and that vv. 29-58 (C) is a separate elegy, as presented by N. I therefore pass over vv.21-28, and move on to 2.26C: At first reading, the dramatic situation in this elegy seems to contradict everything that the poet has so far presented as standard for the life of the elegiac lover-poet: the marginalized and despairing *exclusus amator* has been replaced by a jubilant and requited lover, whose previous antipathy to sea voyaging seems to have been forgotten, as he anticipates crossing the sea with Cynthia. What are we to make of this?

Williams argues that Propertius is drawing from the Cyclops serenade in Theocritus *Idyll* 11 as well as more conventional epic material, thereby creating a generic tension in order to stretch the boundaries of the genre of elegy.[105] She argues that Propertius portrays himself as both a Cyclops (the love poet as madman) and a Ulysses, and that the voyage that he envisages with Cynthia is a mini-epic. Despite the fact that I do not find Williams' correspondences between the Cyclops and Propertius to be strong enough to convince me that bucolic song is the most important influence on this elegy, she may be nearer the mark when she states, "Propertius concentrates on creating a picture of a voyage that becomes a mini-epic." I will show that the elegy may be read as a counterpart to 2.26A: just as I have argued that in that elegy Propertius uses a dream to intimate the impending end of Cynthia-centred love elegy, in 2.26C it can be argued that Propertius avails of a fantasy to do essentially the same thing. By presenting the elegy as a sort of 'elegiacized' mini-epic, Propertius uses the sea voyage as a metaphor for his career as a composer of his Cynthia elegies, culminating as it (potentially) does in their joint death.[106] The theme of the sea voyage and their drowning allows him to reassert his Callimachean credentials, to polemicise playfully against epic, to express confidence in his poetry, and to conflate the different symbolic values of water in relation to love, death and poetry.

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[105] Williams (2000) 20-42. I would argue instead that the perceived correspondences with *Idyll* 7 are a reflection of the affinities between bucolic hexameter and love elegy (as displayed by Vergil in *Eclogue* 10), belonging as they do to the lower echelons within their respective generic registers, rather than the result of a conscious deployment of Theocritus as a model in this elegy.

[106] Propertius may be thus following the examples of Catullus, Vergil and Horace, as discussed above in pp. 84-7.

The poem can be divided into four distinct sections. In the first one (vv.31-34) Propertius sets out his Callimachean credentials, before he embarks on the mini-epic, thus subverting the 'epic' nature of what is to follow, because, as we have seen, Propertius time and again equates his Callimacheanism with the slender genre of elegy as opposed to the grander one of epic. The second section (vv.35-44) draws from traditional mythological examples from epic, most particularly the *Odyssey*, and Propertius presents himself as an elegiac version of shipwrecked Ulysses, with a particularly elegiac fate.[107] The third section (vv.45-58) exploits the conventional topos of the immunity of lovers to danger by referring to the amatory exploits of Neptune and Boreas as the reason for the likelihood of their benevolence towards Cynthia and himself, and their elegiac transformation from grim destroyers of sailors to sympathetic saviours of lovers is comparable to that of Helle's ram to ewe in 2.26A. Finally, the concluding couplet (vv.57-8) returns to the theme of death alluded to in the second section. I shall take each section in turn.

The MSS present the first word of 2.26C as *seu*, leading most editors to assume a lacuna before v.29 in which an alternative journey by land is mooted. Camps and Fedeli adopt the emendation *heu*, which, along with Heyworth, I favour on the grounds that a corresponding *sive/seu* before v.29 would result in a very unbalanced poem given that the sea voyage occupies the remaining lines.[108] The first couplet arouses surprise on the part of the reader: Cynthia is thinking (once again) of making a journey across the sea, but this time Propertius makes the bold assertion that he will accompany her:

> heu mare per longum mea cogitet ire puella
> hanc sequar et fidos una aget aura duos.
> unum litus erit sopitis unaque tecto
> arbor, et ex una saepe bibemus aqua;
> et tabula una duos poterit componere amantis,
> prora cubile mihi seu mihi puppis erit. (vv.29-34).

Not only will he follow her, but they will be inseparable. Whether they put to shore for the night, or stay on board, they will share the same bed and drink the same water. The search for water once they reach the shore recalls Hylas in 1.20.23-4:

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[107] Odysseus' adventure after his shipwreck is itself a markedly erotic episode; thus one could say that in this poem Propertius is highlighting the erotic dimension in Homer. On Homeric themes in Propertius, see Berthet (1980) 141-155; Benediktson (1985-6) 17-26.

[108] Camps (1966a) 179-80; Heyworth (2007) 225-226.

at comes invicti iuvenis processerat ultra
raram sepositi quaerere fontis aquam.

The metapoetic connotations of those lines have been discussed above, and it is tempting to surmise that the reader is supposed to recall them here, a possibility that is encouraged if, as Heyworth suggests, the apparent superfluity of *saepe* prompts the conjecture *ex* ***uno fonte*** *bibemus* ***aquam***. Moreover, the sheltering tree and the water supply can be interpreted as suggestive of the *locus amoenus,* and therefore of poetic inspiration, an inspiration that is Callimachean, given the dimensions of the bed that Propertius envisages for himself and Cynthia: either small enough to be sheltered by a single tree, or merely a *tabula* on some part of the ship, implying a small plank for both of them to lie on. Such a bed is comparable to the *angusto...lecto* of 1.8B.33, in which poem Cynthia has opted to refrain from such a voyage in favour of remaining with Propertius on land, and also the same phrase in 2.1.45 (*nos contra* ***angusto*** *versamus proelia* ***lecto***), a context that is explicitly programmatic.[109] Thus the *tabula* may be ambiguous here, referring also to the writing tablet, a possibility that is bolstered by the poet's choice of verb- *componere* – which can connote literary composition.[110]

These are the conditions, then, under which Propertius is prepared to undertake such an 'epic' journey. He is not about to desert his literary principles, his version of Callimacheanism being poetry that avoids the *grande* (of epic) in favour of the *tenue*. His envisaged journey is therefore an epic journey that is 'elegiacized', and this is precisely what follows:

omnia perpetiar: saevus licet urgeat Eurus ;
velaque in incertum frigidus Auster agat;
quicumque et venti miserum vexastis Vlixem
et Danaum Euboico litore mille ratis;
et qui movistis duo litora, cum ratis Argus
dux erat ignoto missa columba mari.
illa meis tantum non umquam desit ocellis,
incendat navem Iuppiter ipse licet.
certe isdem nudi pariter iactabimur oris.
me licet unda ferat, te modo terra tegat. (vv.35-44)

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[109] On Propertius 2.1, see Stahl (1985) 162-71; Papanghelis (1987) 20-49.
[110] *OLD* 8 (a). See above, p. 170, on 1.11.13-14.

The possibility that the sea voyage in this passage may be read as a metaphor for Propertius' poetic career to date is enhanced by the reference to the Argo which, as Harrison has argued, is probably the first appearance in Latin poetry of the metaphor of the poetic voyage.[111] The epic allusions are immediately obvious: the winds recall the Homeric list in *Od.* 5.292-6, in which Odysseus is shipwrecked; the ships on the Euboean shore in v.38 refer to the famous shipwreck of the fleet of Achaeans, on their return from Troy, provoked by Nauplius to avenge the murder of his son Palamedes (Apoll. 2.1.5 and *Epitome* 6.11; Euripides *Helen* 766f and 1126ff; Servius on Vergil's *Aen.* 11.260); the two shores in v.39 are the Symplegades, the famous clashing rocks negotiated by the Argonauts by means of the dove (*Argonautica* 2.317-40, 556f); and v.42 can be read as an allusion to Odysseus' false tale in *Od.* 14.305-15, or even the story of the Trojan women setting fire to the ships, mentioned in *Aen.* 5.604-63.[112] Most salient is the fact that Propertius models himself on Ulysses, since he also was washed up naked on the shore after having been mercilessly tossed backwards and forwards by the opposing winds. However, in contrast to that hero, whose shipwreck induced profound dismay, the same nautical emergency will confer on the elegist the utmost masochistic pleasure, as he seems to positively revel in the prospect of being tossed up onto the shore naked with Cynthia.[113] The sexual connotations are unmistakable. Papanghelis argues that the destination of the voyage actually lies here in line 43, water, love and death being an indissoluble nexus in Propertian elegy.[114] The certainty of such a climactic finale to their lives, however, is somewhat surprisingly undercut by the following pentameter, where the poet rather magnanimously states that as long as Cynthia receives a proper burial, it does not matter if he is washed away to sea. But such apparent selflessness, implying as it does a separation from Cynthia, may conceal a message about his future career as a poet: the *unda* may carry him away to new poetic territory, while Cynthia's memorialisation by means of a proper burial will ensure her fame as his completed work.[115]

The next section of the poem entails a change of tone, as Propertius deploys the well-known topos of the sacrosanct lover, expounded also in 3.16.11-20, by Tibullus in 1.2.25-34, and by Horace in *C.*1.22:

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[111] See above, pp. 84-7.

[112] Although in that story the Trojan women were provoked by Juno, and it was Jupiter who provided the rain that extinguished the fire.

[113] Odysseus' separation from Penelope contrasts here with Propertius' 'unheroic' action of bringing his beloved with him on the voyage.

[114] Papanghelis (1987) 93.

[115] Cynthia's burial site on the banks of the Anio is specifically noted in 4.7.85-6.

> sed non Neptunus tanto crudelis amori,
> Neptunus fratri par in amore Iovi:
> testis Amymone, latices dum ferret, in Argis
> compressa, et Lernae pulsa tridente palus.
> iam deus amplexu votum persolvit, at illi
> aurea divinas urna profudit aquas.
> crudelem et Borean rapta Orithyia negavit:
> hic deus et terras et maria alta domat
> crede mihi, nobis mitescet Scylla, nec umquam
> alternante vorans vasta Charybdis aqua;
> ipsaque sidera erunt nullis obscura tenebris,
> purus et Orion, purus et Haedus erit. (vv.45-56).

In 3.16 and Tibullus 1.2, the lovers' inviolability came courtesy of the goddess of love herself. In Horace it came as a result of moral rectitude. Here, however, it is Neptune and Boreas, the very gods who are responsible for the behaviour of the wind and the waves, who will protect Propertius and Cynthia, the reason being that they themselves are no strangers to love. The myth alluded to in relation to Neptune is, in point of fact, a watery one: Amymone, one of the fifty daughters of Danaus, who became king of Argos, was sent along with her sisters to look for water in a period of drought brought on by the anger of Neptune; while she wandered around in search of a spring, she was assaulted by a satyr, who by mistake had been struck by an arrow; she calls on the help of Neptune who appears and dispatches the satyr with a blow of his trident, and then has his way with the compliant Amymone.[116] Propertius omits the assault of the satyr, but includes the conclusion of the myth, in which Neptune strikes the rock with his trident causing the triple spring of Lerna to gush forth. The sexual connotations are again obvious, and it seems that Neptune has been well and truly 'elegiacized': not only is he capable of love, but he has proved himself to be susceptible to the persuasive *querelae* of a beautiful *puella*; her search for the spring (like that of Hylas in 1.20) and his deliverance of it are suggestive of poetic composition and there is a certain irony in the image of the god of the sea (of epic) behaving as a character in elegy and dealing with small amounts of spring water as opposed to his more usual boundless oceanic supply. Similarly, it is Boreas' erotic, rather than his rescuing activities that are emphasized in this elegy. As god of the winds, he is particularly feared and prayed to by sailors on account of his savage breath, but he also fell in love with Orithyia, daughter of Erechtheus, king of Athens,

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[116] Apollodorus 2.1.4; Hyginus *Fab.* 169.

and snatched her off to Thrace where she gave birth to Calais and Zetes.[117] The same episode is referred to in a somewhat different light in 3.7.13, where Boreas (here given his Latin name Aquilo) is depicted as having got his way with the hapless Orithyia by force:

> infelix Aquilo, raptae timor Orithyiae

But in 2.26C Propertius tendentiously portrays him in a more benign elegiac light, where although Orithyia is snatched by the god, she welcomes his advances and is tamed in the same way as the lands and the seas are. In addition to these two gods, Propertius includes the example of Scylla, the notorious devourer of mariners along with Charybdis, the whirlpool opposite, both of whose merciless ferocity had to be negotiated by Ulysses and his men, with fatal results. In contrast with the bitter experience of those epic heroes, Scylla and Charybdis will be elegiacally mollified towards the lovers, allowing them safe and easy passage, and unlike the Argonauts, who in Ap.Rh. 4.1694-701, had to drift over the sea in darkness without any stars to guide them, Propertius and his *puella* will enjoy clear skies.

The polemic seems clear: elegiac characters fare much better in this 'epic' journey than real epic ones, because of the power of love elegy. In 1.7 Propertius stressed the futility of epic poetry in the face of great love. These lines can be read as a dramatization of the same point. But the journey is not quite a 'mini epic': it may be better described as an 'elegiac version of epic' as the characters within it have been stripped of their epic identity and transformed into elegiac ones.

The final couplet represents another *volte-face* in the logic of the poem. Despite the assertions of safety for the pair of lovers, Propertius cannot resist returning to the theme of death, reminding the reader of the image of their being tossed up naked onto the shore in v.43:

> quod mihi si ponenda tuo sit corpore vita,
> exitus hic nobis non inhonestus erit. (vv.57-58).

Papanghelis has drawn attention to the parallel between this passage and 1.13.17-18:

> et cupere optatis animam deponere labris,

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[117] Apollodorus 3.15.2; Hyginus *Fab.* 14 and 19. An analogous situation occurs also in Ovid *Am.* 1.6.53-4, where the lover asks for help from Boreas in the name of his experience as a lover, and in *Her.*18.39-40 where Leander seeks his indulgence remembering his own love affair with Orithyia.

> et quae deinde meus celat, amice pudor.

Both passages use the local ablative. In 1.13, Propertius is describing how he witnessed the lovemaking of Gallus and his girl. The expression 'to breathe forth the soul on the beloved's lips' is, argues Papanghelis, an elegiac euphemism for the climactic moment and he postulates that 2.26C.57 similarly represents "the climactic breath as well as the last one".[118] Certainly, Propertius seems to be deploying the motif of *perire amore* in its full range of possibilities, but at the same time I suggest that what we have here is not just the 'dying' from *amor*, but also the dying days of his *amores* for Cynthia. Such a death will not be *inhonestus*, it will be distinguished and deserving of *honor.*

The very ambiguity inherent in the logic of the poem, where one minute they are certain to drown together, and at the next they are ensured salvation by the gods, has the effect of postponing the inevitable. Propertius himself stated that love elegy is a young man's occupation.[119] It is therefore fitting that the end should be portrayed in this way, where neither he nor Cynthia grow old; they merely die together in an image that is a fusion of the climactic moment of sex and drowning; and since the elegiac lover and his love elegy are inextricably linked, mutually dependent for their very existence, then one cannot go without the other. This is the death of Propertius-as-lover, as distinct from Propertius-as-poet: he must depict his own death in order to allow the *unda* to move him on to other poetic territory, and just as the dolphin at the end of 2.26A seemed to ensure Cynthia's literary immortality, this glorious death will do the same.

Consideration of the metapoetic water symbolism in the elegies in this chapter has revealed a poet who, in the first half of his career, is engaged in a programmatic agenda which entails a strong defence and promotion of his chosen literary path, and a desire to define his own brand of elegy within his own 'misprision'of the Callimachean aesthetic: he appropriates the Callimachean application of the sea, rivers and springs but often manipulates what was for that poet an antithesis between good and bad style generally into one between epic and elegy. Elegy seemed to offer Propertius the best method of creating small, refined, well-honed poetry and he therefore wished to elevate its status in relation to all other genres.

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[118] Papanghelis (1987) 88-90.

[119] See Prop. 2.10.7: *aetas prima canat Veneres, extrema tumultus*; 3.5.23-4: *atque ubi iam Venerem gravis interceperit aetas, / sparserit et nigras alba senecta comas...*

It is also clear that he is keenly aware of the literary tradition to which he belongs, both in the narrow sense as an elegist, but also in the broader sense as a Roman poet, and that he possesses an acute sensitivity regarding the potential power of his legacy. It is not until the latter part of Book 2 that we begin to sense a shift in his stance as a fully dedicated *exclusus amator*, in thrall to his one mistress. He begins to display a certain awareness that such poetry is the preserve of youth and that it cannot continue indefinitely. If he is to maintain credibility as an elegiac poet, it will be necessary for him artistically to reinvent himself. This reinvention, forecasted in 2.10 and adumbrated in 2.26, begins its process at the start of Book 3 and is completed in Book 4. It is to these two Books that we shall finally turn.

CHAPTER FIVE

BOOKS THREE AND FOUR: ELEGIAC RENEWAL

Book 3: Seafaring.

Propertius returns to the theme of shipwreck in elegy 3.7, the so-called 'Lament for Paetus'. In this poem, Paetus, a young man who has embarked on a sea-voyage to Alexandria in his quest for *pecunia*, comes to grief and drowns in the waves. This is a notoriously bewildering elegy, with its confusing array of addressees and grave textual problems of seemingly scattered couplets and misplaced passages, prompting wholesale rearrangement of the verses. Some scholars, such as Richardson and Fedeli, defend the frequent changes in addressee by referring to Propertian precedent.[1] Others consider the confusion to be the result of the physical dislocation and separation of pages of a pre- archetypal manuscript.[2] The lack of scholarly consensus in this regard has resulted in a proliferation of different texts and an understandable reluctance to undertake literary studies of the poem.

The thematic background to the poem, the *improba navigii ratio*, is a conventional one.[3] Its *locus classicus* is Hesiod, *Works and Days* 236, where the poet praises the self-sufficiency of the simple farmer, who enjoys living off the fat of the land and has no need to risk his life on the sea. Lucretius 5.1000-6 takes up the theme in his depiction of early man, when, in those days before seafaring, the people were so in tune with the land that the sea and its dangers were irrelevant and meaningless. Vergil expounds on the same topic in *Ecl.* 4.31-2, when predicting a new Golden Age, as does Horace in his more pessimistic *Epode* 16.57-60, and Tibullus treats the theme in 1.3. More generally, the opposition between the simple and tranquil life of the farmer and the risky one of the sailor is a conventional theme in the schools of rhetoric, and appears in Hellenistic epigram.[4] The highly rhetorical nature of 3.7 has been pointed out by commentators, and Camps refers to Cicero's *De Inventione* 1.106-9

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[1] Richardson (1977) 341-2, who makes only two transpositions and indicates one lacuna, and Fedeli (1985) 240, who also limits himself to two (different) transpositions. Butler and Barber (1933) 275 preserve the order of the MSS, but question the soundness of the tradition.

[2] A comprehensive summary of all the rearrangements is provided by Heyworth (2007) 309, who states: "it is quite unthinkable that the transmitted order of couplets is that published by Propertius. To print the poem thus would be to condone acceptance of the impossible." He provides two versions of the poem.

[3] The term comes from Lucretius *DRN* 5.1004.

[4] Fedeli (1985) 259 cites examples from both the rhetorical schools (Liban. 8.349; Nicol. *Progym.*1.349, 365-6) and from epigram (*AP* 7.532.5-6, 586, 636, 650).

to show Propertius' indebtedness to the *conquestio*.[5] Robertson also reads the poem as a "tirade against greed and its effects", and argues that it lacks the essential ingredients of an epicedium (mourning, eulogy, consolation).[6]

Is this elegy a mere rhetorical exercise, or was Paetus a real person? The cognomen was a common one, but Cairns makes a case for the real identity of the young man, suggesting that he was the son of Aelius Gellius, second prefect of Egypt, and distantly related to Propertius.[7] This, he argues, would explain the censorious tone of the poem, because the criticisms levelled at Paetus are more consistent with those made by a relative rather than a stranger. He also suggests that this was why the youth was making for Alexandria, ignoring the fact that the expressed reason for the journey was *philochrematia* rather than an act of filial duty. Cairns does not seem to entertain the possibility that Paetus is a fictional character. But whatever about the propriety of the accusations of mercenary behaviour – and they do seem harsh if directed at a real person, relative or not – the macabre details of the unfortunate young man's death, according to which he is depicted as 'food for fish' (*piscibus esca*, v.8), with 'fingernails torn out by the roots' (*radicitus...ungues*, v.51) and having the ultimate horror of the whole of the Carpathian sea as his tomb (*nunc tibi pro tumulo Carpathium omne marest*, v.12) seem insensitive and heartless in a poem about a real person. It seems more likely that Paetus is a literary invention, just as the baroque description of his demise is a product of the poet's highly visual imagination, since he cannot have been an eye witness to the event. Moreover, the fact that the elegy complies with the prescription of a *conquestio* rather than an *epicedium,* and the somewhat glib tone of the final distich, in which the poet promotes his own preferable vocation as an *iners* love elegist, discourage the reader from interpreting the elegy as a sincere lament for a real individual.

The most salient feature of the elegy is its affinity with the sepulchral epigrams of Book 7 of the Palatine Anthology, both by means of precise allusion and common motifs. Hubbard noted that the opening twelve lines of the elegy could themselves be an epigram, and Orlebeke has demonstrated the unity of the opening lines in which the poet has transformed a series of related epigrammatic tropes into a "progressive sequence focusing on the fate of one youth".[8] Most recently, Hutchinson and Thomas have drawn attention to the

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[5] Camps (1966b) 83. See also Richardson (1976) 341: "it is hard to avoid concluding that we are dealing with show rhetoric."

[6] Robertson (1969) 377-386.

[7] Cairns (2006) 20-1, relying on a suggestion by Syme (1986) 308.

[8] Hubbard (1974) 84; Orlebeke (1996) 418. For a comprehensive treatment of the influence of Greek epigram on Propertian elegy, see Schulz-Vanheyden (1969).

similarities in this elegy with the *nauagika* of the New Posidippus.[9] Thomas goes a little further than Orbeleke and posits the attractive theory that Propertius is being particularly experimental in this elegy, and instead of expanding epigram into elegy as before, he here juxtaposes a series of epigrams which are all *nauagika* for Paetus. This obviates the need for transposition within the elegy, as the disjointedness is a function of the juxtaposition and serves to remind the reader of the origins of the elegiac genre. Thomas then, retaining the transmitted order of lines, sets the elegy out as a series of fourteen *nauagika*, providing a title for each one. While Thomas' suggestion is an elegant one and may well be correct, it is important however to point out that the poem as a whole does contain elements that seem more at home in elegy than epigram, such as the mythological exempla of vv.20-24 and vv.39-42, as well as the very elegiac closing distich. Nevertheless, the epigrammatic framework provides an ingenious and innovative scaffold on which to hang this elegy.

Thus, what we seem to have is an experimental rhetorical exercise on the conventional theme of the dangers of seafaring in the pursuit of wealth, using the device of juxtaposing a series of *nauagika*, while at the same time incorporating features that are elegiac rather than epigrammatic, which leave the reader in no doubt as to the overall generic identity of the poem. Such experimentation is in keeping with the poetic programme of Book 3, where the erotic theme is no longer necessarily in the foreground, and is sometimes a mere peg on which to hang the elegy. A good example of such a process is elegy 3.11, where Propertius uses the *topos* of *servitium amoris* as an excuse for a poem about Cleopatra. In 3.7, the introduction of the erotic theme in the final couplet serves to validate the poem's presence in a Book that is ostensibly a collection of love elegies, but in reality it is much more than this, as the poet grapples with the thorny problem of expanding the thematic horizons of his poetry. Whereas in 3.11 the poet was experimenting with the inclusion of a political and topical theme in his elegy, in this poem the experimentation appears to be with a form of *Kreuzung der Gattungen*, where sepulchral epigram, *nauagika*, *conquestio*, *epicedium* and elegy all meet.

Nevertheless, any reference to ships and the sea inevitably raises the metapoetic antennae of the Propertian scholar and thus one must ask if there is room in all of this for metapoetic comment on the part of the author. A point of departure for such an investigation may actually be the final couplet of the poem:

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[9] Hutchinson (2002) 6 cites two passages (xiv.4 and xiv.23-4) as providing a context for he drowning of Paetus 3.7.57-64 and states that "the whole poem is like a huge expansion of an epigram in the class *nauagika*"; Thomas (2004) 259-275.

at tu, saeve Aquilo, numquam mea vela videbis:
ante fores dominae condar oportet iners. 3.7.71-2.

DeBrohun perceptively observes that "at the end of this poem 3.7 (71-2), the poet-lover's assigned task is 'standing at the threshold', rather than a venture into the dangerous sea. These final lines present a good example of the poet's ability to evoke through the use of the *limen* both his whole genre and his values."[10] In keeping with the sentiment of the programmatic poems at the start of Book 3 there is the usual opposition between the life of the elegist and that of the Other. In this case, however, we are not dealing with the peace/love elegy – war/epic dichotomy. The amatory theme at the end of the poem is present in order to encapsulate the life choice that entails a refusal to indulge in the sort of mercenary activity that has cost Paetus his life. Paetus is no soldier, and the absence of any military aspect resists any notion that Propertius is here concerned with opposing his elegy against epic, and suggests that instead the poet is trying to expand the thematic possibilities of his elegy without crossing his generic *limen*.

The most recent metapoetic analysis of this poem has been provided by Houghton, who sidesteps its textual problems by arguing that his analysis does not depend on any "particular reconstruction of the elegy's original form" and that the "thematic consistency of Propertius' composition" is what is relevant to his purposes.[11] Like DeBrohun, he rightly postulates that "the elegy as a whole sets up an opposition between Paetus' chosen career and the values of the elegiac lifestyle."[12] However, he also advances the possibility that Paetus' experience may be read as an allegory for the conversion as a poet from elegy to epic, and its subsequent failure. He bases such a hypothesis on the fact that Propertius endows Paetus with all the qualities of an elegiac lover-poet and then launches him on an epic journey, like an Aeneas or an Odysseus, for which he does not have the requisite strength. While at first Houghton's arguments seem attractive, they ultimately amount to a speculative step too far.

Houghton's arguments run as follows. Paetus bears all the hallmarks of the elegiac lover-poet: he is extremely young (***primo*** *miser excidit aevo,* v.7; *quid* ***aetatem*** *numeras*? v.17; *miseros* ***primae*** *lanuginis annos*, v.59); if he stayed at home he would continue to be elegiacally *pauper* (v.46); like Tibullus, he has a mother who will be deprived of carrying out

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[10] DeBrohun (2003) 131n.34.
[11] Houghton (2007) 163
[12] Houghton (2007) 170.

the burial rites of her son (v.9-10 ~ Tib.1.3.5-8); he utters *mandata* (v.55), as does Propertius in 2.13.17-18 and Cynthia in 4.7.71; like any elegiac poet he utters a *querela* (*extremis...querelis*, v.55) and like Cynthia he has *longas...manus* (v.60 ~ Prop.2.2.5); the line ***duro teneras laedere*** *fune manus* (v.48) is strikingly evocative of Vergil's Gallus in *Eclogue* 10.47-9 (*Alpinas, a!* ***dura*** *nives et frigora Rheni / me sine sola vides. a, te ne frigora* ***laedant****! / a, tibi ne* ***teneras*** *glacies secet aspera plantas!*) and the dichotomy *durus/tener* represents the elegiac opposition between epic and elegy. Moreover, the designation of the whole of the Carpathian sea as Paetus' tomb (*nunc tibi pro tumulo Carpathium omne mare est*, v.12) contrasts with Propertius' own tomb which will in 1.17.8 consist of *parva...harena*, or in 2.13.32 where his remains will be contained in a *parvula testa*, and thus describes a very non-Callimachean resting place for the unfortunate young man, particularly in the light of the epilogue of the *Hymn to Apollo*, where Envy denigrates the singer who 'does not sing like the sea'. Houghton also draws further evidence for Paetus' identification as an elegiac poet from his name, as *paetus* ('blink-eyed') is used as an epithet for Venus, comparing it to Propertius' naming of the epic poet Ponticus (from the Greek πόντος) in 1.7 and 1.9, and suggests that his failure to reach his Alexandrian, and thus Callimachean, destination is a result of his desertion of elegy for epic. The phrase *terque quaterque mari* (v.6) alludes to Vergil's use of the phrase in *Aen.* 1.94, where Aeneas, himself in a nautical emergency, envies the lot of those who were killed on dry land in Troy, and which is in itself an allusion to Odysseus' similar lament in *Od.* 5.306. Thus, the argument goes, Propertius is casting Paetus in the role of "unsuccessful epic protagonist".[13]

I concede that Paetus has elegiac qualities. Indeed he seems to embody both the *amator*, with his *paupertas* and his youth, and the elegiac *puella*, with his *longas manus*; and both parties in Propertian elegy are prone to utter *querelae*, but I cannot accept that he represents an elegist who has deserted his genre for epic. There is nothing in the poem to connect Paetus with literary activity, and even the suggestion that his name represents elegiac poetry in the same way as the name Ponticus refers to epic loses validity when we remember that Propertius did not invent the name of Ponticus: Ovid mentions both him and Bassus as poets with whom he was acquainted before his exile.[14] Besides, *Paetus* was a common cognomen in Rome at the time.[15] The suggestion that the 'whole Carpathian sea' represents a non-Callimachean burial place is also misleading: Propertius seems to leave open the

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[13] Houghton (2007) 170.

[14] *Trist.* 4.10.47-8: ***Ponticus*** *hero, Bassus quoque clarus iambis / dulcia convictus membra fuere mei.*

[15] See New Pauly (2007) vol. 10, 338. Robertson (1969) 377, argues that the commonness of the cognomen and lack of evidence militates against the identification of Paetus.

possibility that Paetus' bones will be washed up on the shore somewhere, because despite what he says in v.12, he also in v.25-6 asks the water to wash up his body and the *vilis harena* to cover it.[16] What Propertius may mean is that Paetus' flesh, as food for the fish (*piscibus esca*, v.8) will be scattered throughout the Carpathian Sea, but that his bones may be washed up and provided with the all-important burial. This inadequate, but essential, sand contrasts with the more desirable *pia terra* of v.9, and indeed may be read as comparable to the *parva...harena* of 1.17.8 that Houghton cites as a Callimachean alternative to the Carpathian Sea. Houghton suggests that Paetus' failure to reach the Callimachean destination of Alexandria represents the literary failure of the elegiac poet embarking on epic. But if epic represents for Propertius non-Callimachean poetry, why would Alexandria be the chosen destination of this new would-be epic poet? In any case, Callimachus is more often associated with his birthplace, Cyrene, and Alexandria was famous for its fabulous wealth and thus the natural destination for one motivated by *pecunia.*[17] Finally, Houghton's contention that *terque quaterque* in v.6 is an allusion to the intertextual nexus of *Aen.* 1.94 ~ *Od.* 5.306 is somewhat tendentious, given that the phrase is an idiomatic way of expressing *saepe*, as evidenced by Vergil's employment of it on three other occasions, twice in the *Aeneid* in relation to Dido and Juturna, and once in the *Georgics* in relation to ploughing.[18] Horace also uses a variation of it in *Odes* 1.32.13. Thus the suggestion that Propertius' depiction of Paetus' repetitive ducking in the sea by means of this phrase is supposed to cast the young man in the role of an Aeneas or an Odysseus is a dubious one and presses too far the metapoetic possibilities of the text, particularly since the analogy ultimately fails, as neither Aeneas nor Odysseus met their end on their respective voyages.

What then might be the significance of the elegiac connotations that attach themselves to Paetus? I suggest that Paetus is symbolic of a process that Propertius begins in Book 3 and brings to fruition in Book 4, which involves adapting previously extraneous material to his elegy. Paetus is not an amatory subject: he is either a rhetorical exercise or a real individual whose story of drowning at sea in his quest for riches would heretofore have had no place in Propertian elegy. But what Propertius does in order to make him acceptable in his elegy is to 'elegiacise' him. He inscribes him into the elegiac discourse of his amatory elegy, and hence the emphasis on his youth, his *longas manus*, his uttering of *querelae*, and so on. Moreover,

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[16] The water (*aquae*) is a conjecture to replace the MSS *humo*, because of the problem of identifying the addressees of *reddite*. Fortunately, this textual problem is not particularly relevant to this discussion: the point is that Propertius' wish is that the body will be buried on land.

[17] Cf. Prop. 4.6.4. On Alexandria as a commercial destination, see Fraser (1972) 133-188.

[18] *Aen.* 4.589; 12.155; *Geo.* 2.399.

he becomes a plausible subject for Propertian elegy by means of the concluding distich, in which the poet declares that his chosen way of life is antithetical to that of Paetus. In fact, Paetus is not the only example of this process of elegiacization in the poem. In the mythological exemplum in v.248-251, Paetus is compared with Agamemnon, who is himself characterized as an elegiac lover, by virtue of the tears that he sheds for Argynnus.[19] This exemplum is also an example of another means by which Propertius anchors this material within the realms of elegy, because it recalls the relationship between Hercules and Hylas in 1.20. At various points in 3.7 there are other textual reminiscences of earlier elegies, such as the mention of the halcyons in v.61 (*a miser alcyonum scopulis affligar acutis!*), which recall Propertius' lonely address to the same birds in 1.17.2 (*nunc ego desertas alloquor alcyonas*), a poem in which Propertius is in a parallel situation of shipwreck, but for very different erotic reasons. Similarly, the mention of Orithyia in v.13 recalls two other elegies which have correspondences with 3.7. Firstly, there is 1.20.31 (*iam Pandioniae cessit genus Orithyiae*), in a poem whose protagonist bears a striking resemblance to Paetus by virtue of his youth and his watery end; and then there is 2.26B.51 (*crudelem et Borean rapta Orithyia negavit*), another poem about shipwreck, albeit in another very different erotic context. These subtle textual reminiscences serve to locate Paetus firmly within the confines of Propertian elegy, even if his presence there is an uneasy one as an interloper under false pretences.

It would be a mistake to think that every time Propertius writes about the sea he is dichotomising elegy and epic in favour of the former. But, just as Propertius' life as a love elegist expands beyond the mere writing of poetry to include a whole way of life, in which he excludes himself from the outside world, the life he rejects is also a nexus of rejected choices that goes way beyond epic poetry to include military service, political involvement, wealth, and *negotium.* I suggest that in 3.7 the sea can be seen to represent this rejected composite way of life, as Propertius demonstrates when he chooses to remain behind the *limen* of his elegy, but a *limen* that from now on will be constantly renegotiated as he searches for new subjects.

In 3.21, Propertius proposes to embark on a journey to Athens, as a cure for his heartache over the recalcitrance of Cynthia, in the hope that the length of the journey and his absence from her will bring him some relief. Such a remedy was alluded to in the opening poem of Book 1, where he appeals to his friends (*amici,* 25):

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[19] On this mythological exemplum, see Nethercut (1971) 248-51, who reads Paetus as an ironic analogue of Caesar.

ferte per extremas gentes et ferte per undas
   qua non ulla meum femina norit iter. (29-30).

In 3.21, Propertius again appeals to his friends to help him:

nunc agite, o socii, propellite in aequora navem,
   remorumque pares ducite sorte vices,
iungitque extremo felicia lintea malo:
   iam liquidum nautis aura secundat iter. (11-14).

Thus the theme of the poem is an enactment of this conventional *remedium amoris*, and as such, it is not particularly surprising that the elegist intends to brave the seas. However, in view of the reluctance that he expresses elsewhere, most notably at the end of 3.7, but also as we have seen in earlier poems, to travel on the sea, one has to wonder if and how such an intention can square with these other passages on a metapoetic level.[20] In the *recusatio* of 1.6, Propertius, in fear of the anger of his mistress, refused to accompany Tullus across the sea. Cynthia's hypothetical violent vehemence is testament to a temporarily successful phase of the amatory affair, and thus provides a good dramatic reason for the metapoetic reluctance to cross the elegiac *limen*. But that was then and this is now. Cynthia's dramatic fall from favour enables the contemplation of the sea voyage, even if such a journey may be metapoetically contradictory.

Such a contradiction may be explained, however, if we read the sea in this poem as a metaphor for the *limen* of love elegy, rather than of elegy in general. In 1.6, Propertius was rejecting an alternative to the life of the elegiac lover poet, but such a life also then excluded an engagement with the outside world, most particularly the sort embraced by the soldier and statesman Tullus. In the programmatic poems at the beginning of Book 3, we have seen how the elegist opposes elegy/love/peace to epic/war. In 3.7, we have seen that Paetus came to grief on his way to Alexandria as a result of his desire for wealth. In 3.21, there is no reference to war, epic themes, or material gain. His destination is not Alexandria, but Athens, the seat of such arts as philosophy, rhetoric and art.

If we look back to 3.5.23-46, we recall that Propertius, as a devotee of peace, lists all the subjects that he will write about when he is too old for love elegy. They are all from the realms of nature and philosophy, and, of course, not from war or epic. In 3.21, the elegist

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[20] Such as, for instance, 3.3,23-4, where Apollo directs him to stay close to the shore.

appears to be hinting that he is reaching that stage in his life and thus his proposed journey represents his intention to renounce love elegy and turn to other themes:

illic vel stadiis animum emendare Platonis
    incipiam aut hortis, docte Epicure, tuis;
persequar aut studium linguae, Demosthenis arma,
    librorumque tuos, docte Menandre, sales;
aut certe tabulae capient mea lumina pictae,
    sive ebore exactae, seu magis aere, manus. 3.21.25-30.

It must be admitted that his intended studies in Athens by no means hint at the poetry that is to come in Book 4, but does this really matter? They act as a foil for the sorts of poetry he intends to avoid: both elegiac themes of love and epic themes of war. Moreover, it is possible that the elegist had not yet worked out in his mind how he was to escape the literary constraints that he had imposed upon himself by adhering so exclusively to love elegy at the start of his career. There is, after all, a sizeable gap in time between the publications of the last two Books.[21]

The intention to renounce love elegy is confirmed a few poems later in the final poem (or poems) of the Third Book.[22] We have seen in Chapter One that Propertius avails of the Sea of Love figure to express the end of his love affair with Cynthia. But since Cynthia the woman is also Cynthia the poetry, the sea must also be metapoetic. As in 3.21, it cannot be seen to represent epic, or epic themes, since he is referring to his career as a love elegist. Propertius has traversed the sea of love in his small elegiac boat and, despite the dangers of such a journey, he has reached the safety of the harbour:

ecce coronatae portum tetigere carinae
    traiectae Syrtes, ancora iacta mihi est. (3.24. 15-16).

He is back where he belongs in the shallow water, as prescribed for him in 3.3.23-4, but the shore is a different one. Book 4 will demonstrate just how different it is. What then, is the metapoetic nature of the sea that he has crossed? I suggest that it is similar to the sea in 3.21: it is also a metaphor for the *limen* of love elegy. Thus it is not so much the sea itself, but its actual crossing that has metapoetic significance. It is the means by which he enacts the

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[21] A gap of 5-6 years, if 21 or 22 BC for Book 3, and 16 BC for Book 4 are correct. On this, see Richardson (1977) 10-11; and Goold (1999) 2.

[22] The consensus is that 3.24 and 3.25 are in fact one poem. At the very least, they form a pair.

progression from poetry about Cynthia to a more expanded form of elegy. Thus, the sea of love figure is fused with a metapoetic voyage away from love elegy. In vv.9-12, he recalls how earlier he had been shipwrecked, in lines that recall both 1.1 and 1.17:

> quod mihi non patrii poterant avertere amici,
> 　eluere aut vasto Thessala saga mari,
> hoc ego non ferro, non igne coactus, at ipsa
> 　naufragus Aegaea (vera fatebor) aqua.

The *remedia* that he referred to in 1.1, witchcraft and surgery (1.1.19-28), are not responsible for his recovery, but what does seem to have worked is the third option in 1.1: a sea voyage, although clearly on the metaphorical level alone. It is as if Propertius is continuing the drama of 3.21: his journey away from Cynthia-poetry has brought him safely ashore. Despite the fact that he was previously shipwrecked, an allusion to the situation in 1.17, it seems he has managed to climb back on board his (elegiac) boat and reach safety. The perilous sea voyage was both his love affair and his career as a love elegist, both of which are now at an end.

Lines 15-16 may also be an allusion to Vergil, *Georgics* 1.303-4, with metapoetic resonances:

> ecce **coronatae portum tetigere carinae,**
> 　traiectae Syrtes, ancora iacta mihist.　　Prop. 3.24.15-16
>
> ceu pressae cum iam **portum tetigere carinae**
> puppibus et laeti nautae imposuere **coronas**.　　Vergil *Geo.*1.303-4

Vergil is referring to the winter as a time of rest from care and celebration (*invitat genialis hiemps curasque resolvit,* v.302), and uses the metaphor of sailors garlanding their ships in celebration upon reaching the safety of the harbour. Propertius similarly has reached the winter of his love affair and has been released from its trials and tribulations. An allusion by Propertius to the opening book of this poem that marks a transition from the low to the high may be a subtle indication that Vergil's hexametric elevation is a model for his projected elegiac one.[23]

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[23] On the *Georgics* as a transitional poem, see Hardie (1971).

Book 4: Rhetorical Spaces

In Propertius' final book of poetry, there are three elegies that stand out as particularly experimental in the employment of water metapoetics, and as such, they are clear and fascinating illustrations of the programmatic concerns of the poet at this late stage in his career. The elegies in question are those of Tarpeia (4.4), Actium (4.6) and the *Bona Dea* (4.9). In each one of them, we shall see that Propertius manipulates the motif of the *locus amoenus*, creating rhetorical spaces in which to negotiate the inclusion of non-elegiac material into his elegies, and thus to achieve the 'generic enrichment' of his poetry. This is the term that Harrison applies to the process whereby "generically identifiable texts gain literary depth and texture from detailed confrontation with, and consequent inclusion of elements from, texts which appear to belong to other literary genres."[24] Harrison examines the phenomenon in Vergil and Horace, while acknowledging that it is also a feature of the Augustan poets in general, most notably Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid. He employs the metaphor of hospitality to describe the relationship between the different texts: the "host genre" incorporates elements from a "guest genre" and is thus enriched by it.[25] In the following poems, it will become clear that this process is the principal one by which Propertius succeeds in renewing and elevating his elegy. The "guest" in question is a troublesome one because, paradoxically, it is none other than his old adversary, epic.

Tarpeia (4.4)

The Tarpeia elegy, an aetiological poem to explain the origin of the name of the *Mons Tarpeius*, retells the tale of Tarpeia's betrayal of the Roman fortress on the Capitoline hill to the Sabines. The most common version of the tale, as told by Livy, recounts that Tarpeia, daughter of the commander of the Roman citadel Tarpeius, on going outside the walls to fetch water for a sacrifice, was bribed by Tatius to admit him and his soldiers into the fortress.[26] Once they were inside, they crushed her under their shields to make it look as if they had taken the place by storm, or to punish her for her treachery. He also adverts to a story that the girl had asked for "what they had on their shield-arms" – a reference to the

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[24] Harrison (2007b) 1.
[25] Harrison (2007b) 16.
[26] Livy 1.11. Other versions are preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (2.38-40) and Varro (*L.L.* 5.41).

heavy gold bracelets and fine rings that they were accustomed to wear on their left arms – but what she got instead was their shields. Another variant of the story preserved by Simylos has Tarpeia betray Rome to the Celts instead of the Sabines, but presents her motivation as one of love.[27] Propertius chooses the traditional version, but substitutes the motivation of love for greed, and follows Varro in making her a Vestal virgin.[28] Because she betrays Rome for love rather than greed, she is the ideal elegiac heroine, and her actions invite empathy as well as condemnation.

Throughout the poem, Tarpeia is associated with water, an element which clashes with her role as guardian of the Vestal flame: it is when collecting water from a spring that she sees and falls in love with Tatius (vv.19-22); she keeps finding excuses to return to this spring, claiming that she needs to wash her hair in it after adverse omens from the moon, or in order to bring lilies to the water nymphs (vv.23-26); in her monologue (vv.31-66) she compares herself to Scylla and Ariadne, both mythological characters that have connections with water; she declares that the Vestal flame is all but extinguished by her tears (vv.45-46); she directs Tatius and his men to climb the 'dewy' ridge (*rorida* v.48), which is slippery (*lubrica,* v.49), concealing underlying water (v.50), in terminology that is charged with Callimachean undertones; after this she sleeps, but instead of dreaming about Tatius, she has a nightmare in which she is a sort of Amazonian Bacchant, raving along the banks of the river Thermodon (vv.71-2). Besides the collection of water for a sacrifice, Propertius appears to have invented all the other water motifs in the poem.[29]

The transmission problems of the first sixteen lines of the elegy have been well documented, and most commentators recognise the need for emendation:

> Tarpeium nemus et Tarpeiae turpe sepulcrum
> fabor et antiqui limina capta Iouis.
> lucus erat felix hederoso conditus antro,
> multaque nativis obstrepit arbor aquis,
> Silvani ramosa domus, quo dulcis ab aestu
> fistula poturas ire iubebat ovis.

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[27] Simylos, fr. 1 (*Anthol. Lyr. Gr* .6, p.102 = E. Diehl, II, 18, p.248 –Leipzig). A full account of this version is provided by Brenk (1979) 166-74, in which the water theme is also present, because it says that the Celts did not place Tarpeia 'within the currents of the Po', but killed her. The suggestion is therefore that greed also played a part in this particular act of betrayal, because the land of the Celts, known as the 'land of rivers' was rich in gold.

[28] Varro *LL* 5.41 *hic mons ante Tarpeius dictus a virgine Vestale Tarpeia, quae ibi ab Sabinis necata armis et sepulta.*

[29] Rutledge (1964) 68-73 recognised the prominence of the water associations in the poem, and argues that their principal function is to contradict Tarpeia's role as guardian of the Vestal flame.

hunc Tatius fontem vallo praecingit acerno,
fidaque suggesta castra coronat humo.
(quid tum Roma fuit, tubicen vicina Curetis
cum quateret lento murmure saxa Iovis,
atque ubi nunc terris dicuntur iura subactis,
stabant Romano pila Sabina Foro?
murus erant montes: ubi nunc est Curia, saepta;
bellicus ex illo fonte bibebat equus).
hinc Tarpeia deae fontem libavit: at illi
urgebat medium fictilis urna caput.

The first problem is that we appear to have two groves, the *nemus* in the first line, and the *lucus* in v.3. Richardson reads the former as the original site of both Tarpeia's grave and the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, and therefore different from the latter.[30] Hutchinson, recognising the incongruity of the two words so close together, and the illogicality of the *nemus* and the *lucus* as being one and the same place, adopts Kraffert's emendation of *nemus* to *scelus*.[31] Despite the textual difficulties, some scholars accept the manuscript tradition and read the *nemus* and the *lucus* as the same grove. For Stahl, this pastoral grove is a locus for the contrast of (Julian) arms and the pastoral lover. O'Rourke translates this contrast into a metapoetic one and suggests that the scene is a locus for generic negotiation. Welch also places Tatius and Tarpeia in the same grove, which for Tatius is a "locus for warfare", while for Tarpeia it is a "locus for her love."[32] But there are other serious problems with this passage, which are neatly summarised by Heyworth: if Tatius fenced off the *fons* of v.7, how did Tarpeia have access to it? And why does his warhorse not drink from this water source inside the camp instead of the one mentioned in v.14? Furthermore, the repetition of *fonte, fontem* (vv.14,15) is both awkward and rendered unacceptable by the accompanying *ex illo*

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[30] Richardson (op.cit.) 435. See also Camps (1965) 86-87, who preserves the order of verses but offers various conjectures; and Butler and Barber (1933) 344-5, who relate previous attempts at transposition and reject them.

[31] Hutchinson (2006) 119. Camps also 87 advocates *scelus,* on the grounds that "Propertius says nothing about a *nemus* in his conclusion in lines 93-4 below, nor has any reference to a *Tarpeium nemus* been found in any other author."

[32] Stahl (1985) 282-283; O'Rourke (2008) 88; Welch (2005) 71. See also Janan (2001)70-84, who argues that the predominance of images of water and liquidity in the poem points to Propertius' dramatisation of feminine desire and that the inconsistencies noted in the passage are not the result of textual corruption but of a feminine undermining of the traditional masculine categories of binary logic. She points out that all the watery motifs represent instances of upheaval. See also P.A.Miller (2004)195-209, who posits a similar Lacanian viewpoint.

and *hinc*; and finally, the combination in the *cum* clause (v.10-12) of the subjunctive *quaterent* and *stabant* is suggestive of the need for emendation.[33]

Heyworth has recently offered a cogent solution.[34] Somewhere along the line, he suggests, verses 3-8 were omitted, and when this was rectified, they were misplaced. Such an omission, he argues, is understandable, given the similarity of verses 7 and 15, and it is also easy to see why then vv.7-8 were placed at the end of the group, so that Tatius was given an appropriate spring to fence off. Heyworth's suggested emendation is as follows:

Tarpeium nemus et Tarpeiae turpe sepulchrum 1
fabor et antiqui limina capta Iovis. 2
quid tum Roma fuit, tubicen vicina Curetis 9
cum quaterent lento murmure saxa Iovis? 10
namque ubi nunc terris dicuntur iura subactis, 11
stabant Romano pila Sabina Foro. 12
murus erant montes: ubi nunc est curia saepta, 13
bellicus ex illo fonte bibebat equus. 14
hunc Tatius fontem vallo praecingit acerno, 7
fidaque suggesta castra coronat humo. 8
lucus erat felix hederoso conditus antro, 3
multaque nativis obstrepit arbour aquis, 4
Silvani ramosa domus, quo dulcis ab aestu 5
fistula poturas ire iubebat ovis. 6
hinc Tarpeia deae fontem libavit: at illi 15
urgebat medium fictilis urna caput. 16

This rearrangement solves all of the problems outlined above: there is no longer any confusion between the groves of verses 1 and 3; Tatius has a spring in his camp from which his horse drinks; Tarpeia draws water from the separate spring of Silvanus. To solve the problem of the *cum* clause, he emends *atque* in v.11 to *namque*, thus cutting the link between the verbs.

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[33] Heyworth (2007) 447. Camps 88, recognising the conundrum of Tarpeia's access to the spring emends *fontem* to *contra* suggesting that "here *castra* is to be construed with *praecingit* as well as with *coronat* by the construction called ἀπὸ κοινοῦ". Goold (1990) accepts this emendation. O'Rourke (2008) 84 n.104 argues instead that Tarpeia must have arrived at some sort of agreement with the foe to enable her to draw water from within their camp, hence the allusion to her treachery via an evocation of the Danaids.

[34] Heyworth (2007) 447-9 provides a coherent account of the various attempts by scholars to solve the textual problems. He notes that both Postgate and Marr were correct in recognising that there are two separate springs mentioned in the passage but rejects Marr's reordering of the text.

Heyworth's solution is therefore a compelling one, and I suggest that it can also be reinforced by the apparent metapoetic consequences of such a rearrangement. What we now have are two very clear and contrasting spaces in the poem: Tatius' camp (v.9-14, 7-8), and the grove where Tarpeia draws water (v.3-6, 15-16). Thus we have two separate locations, both containing a water-source, and they are clearly close enough to each other to enable Tarpeia in her space to observe the Sabine king in his. When one is compared to the other, some interesting observations can be made:

TATIUS	TARPEIA
namque **ubi nunc** terris dicuntur iura subactis,	**lucus erat** felix hederoso conditus antro
stabant Romano **pila Sabina** Foro.	multaque **nativis** obstrepit **arbor aquis**
murus erant montes: ubi nunc est Curia saepta	Silvani ramosa domus, quo dulcis ab aestu
bellicus ex illo fonte bibebat equus	**fistula poturas ire iubebat ovis**
hunc Tatius **fontem vallo** praecingit **acerno**	**hinc** Tarpeia deae **fontem** libavit: at illi
fidaque suggesta castra coronat **humo**.	urgebat medium **fictilis** urna caput.

The first point to be noted is that Tarpeia is in a genuine *locus amoenus*, a natural pastoral setting, with all the requisite constituents: shade, trees, water, as well as the optional extra of sheep. The scene is one of peace and tranquillity, and evokes the grove of the Muses in 3.3. It is presided over by the god Silvanus, affording the place the numinous quality that was also an important feature of such places. King also notes that Silvanus was worshipped because he *primus in terram lapidem finalem posuit,* and suggests that this grove therefore marks a boundary.[35] The possibility arises therefore that Propertius is in fact marking off a generic boundary: that of love elegy. Tatius' space also contains a spring, but instead of sheep we have the epic symbol of the horse, the *equus bellicus*, availing of the refreshing water. Instead of trees, the *silva* / ὕλη that symbolises the subject matter of the *locus amoenus*, the whole place is bristling with javelins, and the only wood in the place is the maple palisade – the wood that constructed the wooden horse – that both textually and literally fences the area off (*praecingit, coronat*).[36] Hutchinson notes that v.14 "suggests the appurtenances of epic" and therefore prefers Fontein's conjecture of *alto* for *illo*, as it evokes "the mighty stream drunk from by the epic poet".[37] Both passages have clearly delineated openings and closures that correspond to one another: Tatius' camp begins with *ubi nunc* and ends with *hunc...fontem*;

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[35] King (1990) 229 n.10, citing the corpus of *agrimensores* (*Ex Libris Dolabellae,* Blume, Lachmann, and Rudorff, *Schriften der Römischen Feldmesser* [Berlin 1848] 302).

[36] On the metapoetic resonances of *silva* and ὕλη, see Hinds (1998) 11-14.

[37] Hutchinson (2006) 121.

Tarpeia's grove begins with *lucus erat,* a variation of the conventional ecphrastic introduction of a *locus amoenus*, and closes with a similar *hinc...fontem.*[38]And indeed there is more: there is a correspondence between the earth (*humo*) in v.8 which Tatius has worked up into a military rampart and the earthen urn (*fictilis*) in v.16 that Tarpeia uses to carry the water from the spring. Both words appear in the closural pentameter and emphasise the contrast between the bellicose purpose of the former space and the peaceful and sacred purpose of the latter one. The word *fictilis* is also charged with metapoetic connotations: meaning 'made of clay', 'earthen', it comes from the verb *fingere*, 'to form', 'fashion', 'make'. It recalls 3.3.29-30 *orgia Musarum et Sileni patris imago /* ***fictilis*** *et calami, Pan Tegeaee, tui,* which is part of the ecphrasis of the sacred grove of the Muses where Propertius was consecrated as a poet, and also 4.1.5, where Horos instructs Propertius ***finge*** *elegos, fallax opus.* Thus the urn that collects the spring water of elegy may be seen as a metaphor for love elegy, which is pressing down on Tarpeia's head (*urgebat*).[39] A difficult burden, perhaps, as the water therein is insufficient for her new interest in this character from martial epic?

Thus what we appear to have here are two rhetorical spaces, each symbolising poetic opposites. Tarpeia, the infatuated *puella*, is in the grove of love elegy, looking over at Tatius in his 'grove' of epic. A *locus amoenus* beside a *locus bellicus,* which masquerades as another *locus amoenus* (with the etymological emphasis on love in the word *amoenus*[40]), and fools Tarpeia who regards this scene through besotted elegiac eyes. Indeed, she observes Tatius undergoing his military exercises on the sandy terrain:

> vidit **harenosis** Tatium **proludere** campis 4.4.19

This description of love at first sight can be seen metapoetically to underline Tatius' epic associations, as *proludere*, the common term for military practice, conceals the poetic term *ludere*, famously used by Catullus in 50.2 in relation to poetic composition, and *harenosis* evokes the Callimachean silt-ridden Euphrates.

Tarpeia's grove is not only the locus of her infatuation with Tatius: it is also the locus of her first betrayal of her sacred duties as guardian of the Vestal flame. From now on she

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[38] On this, see Hinds (2002) 126-7 and Hinds (1987) 36-8. See also above p.172 n. 59.

[39] The burden on Tarpeia's head can be compared to Cornelia's declaration in 4.1.27-8, where she requests for herself the punishment of the Danaids, in the event that she is found to have been untruthful: *si fallo, poena sororum / infelix umeros* ***urgeat urna*** *meos.* Janan (2001) 71 sees this as a cross reference: we are meant to think of the Danaids in 4.4.16, as they are representatives of "flawed sexuality, failed as maidens and failed as wives". On the Danaids in Augustan poetry, see Harrison (1998) 230-237.

[40] Servius, on *Aen.*6.638, connected the word with *amor* (*'amoena' autem quae solum amorem praestant*).

will be increasingly associated with water, the opposite element to the one she should be guarding. When she first catches sight of Tatius, she is amazed and drops the urn:

> obstipuit regis facie et regalibus armis,
> interque **oblitas** excidit urna **manus** 4.4.21-2

This action is symbolic on more than one level. Tarpeia is abandoning the Vestal spirit; as a girl in an elegiac poem, her proper milieu (i.e. love elegy) is being forgotten as the lure of the epic world has become mesmerising, causing her literally to forget the urn between her hands (*oblitas...manus,* v.22), and we must recall the elegiac importance of *manus* in previous poems.[41] In this locus of elegiac inspiration, the spilled waters of love elegy are replaced by the view of Tatius strutting along the larger epic waters of the adjacent camp. The inspiration is coming from outside the *locus amoenus*, but visible from within. It is an inversion of the mythical encounter by Tiresias of Athene bathing in a similar grove. Tiresias was on the outside looking in, whereas Tarpeia is on the inside looking out; and yet she is also on the outside of Tatius' 'grove', looking in on him. Both of these places anticipate the Ovidian tendency to present the *locus amoenus* as a place where there are both "invitations to view" and as a place of latent sexual violence or danger.[42]

Tarpeia finds new excuses to return regularly to this scene of her infatuation:

> saepe illa immeritae causata est omina lunae,
> et sibi tingendas dixit in amne **comas**:
> saepe tulit **blandis** argentea lilia Nymphis,
> Romula ne faciem laederet hasta Tati. 4.4.23-26.

Tarpeia's hair-washing falsifies the ritual. It may be significant for her identity as the representative of love elegy that her hair is mentioned here, as Cynthia's hair is a regular source of the elegist's admiration in his earlier poems.[43] Tarpeia's action however is not one

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[41] See, for example, 2.1.1-10; 2.2.5; 1.11.12.

[42] Hinds (2002) 130-140.

[43] See for example, 2.2.5; 2.3.11; 2.1.7-8; and 3.10.14. Regarding this last example, there is a strong case to be made for a metapoetic reading of the whole of that elegy, in which the Muses remind the poet that it is Cynthia's birthday and he therefore asks that the day may be cloudless and peaceful in terms that are also suggestive of a *locus amoenus*; in fact Propertius appears to be wishing to turn the whole world into a *locus amoenus* just for this one day. Then follows vv.12-13, a distich that is highly charged with metapoetic possibilities: *at primum* ***pura*** *somnum discute* ***lympha***, */ et nitidas* ***presso pollice finge*** *comas.* Not only will Cynthia wash away her sleep with pure Callimachean water, but she will arrange (cf. 4.1.5 ***finge*** *elegos*) her tresses with an artisan's thumb. There follows the anticipation of a night of sweet *agrupnia*, consisting of singing, dancing and lovemaking. The elegist will be up all night composing his Callimachean love elegy.

of purification because it is tainted by *mauvaise foi*. Similarly contaminated are her gifts of silver lilies for the Nymphs, termed here as *blandis*, an epithet favoured by Propertius for his love elegy.[44] These gifts are essentially bribes for them to protect Tatius' face from the spear of Romulus, her king, whose very walls she has been commissioned to protect. Tarpeia's concern for Tatius strikes an elegiac note, but such elegiac concern is literally misplaced: she, as the representative of love elegy, is involving herself with a man who is not only an alien in the 'real' world, but also an alien figure in the epic-free world of elegy. Further evidence of her brush with this alien and epic world is provided in the following distich:

dumque subit primo Capitolia nubila fumo,
rettulit **hirsutis** bracchia secta rubis,
et sua Tarpeia residens ita **flevit** ab arce
vulnera, vicino non patienda Iovi; 4.4.27-30.

When Tarpeia returns to the citadel in the evening after her sacrilegious behaviour in her grove, she bears the scars of her encounter with the rough brambles. Hutchinson comments that the word *hirsutus* "evokes elsewhere in the book the primitive, the virile, the epic (1.61, 9.49, 10.20)".[45] In particular, it is associated with Ennius in 4.1.61 and Hercules in 4.9.49.[46] Tarpeia then weeps over these wounds, which Jupiter notices and deplores. These elegiac tears anticipate the long *querela* that is to follow (vv.31-66).

Tarpeia has clearly been blinded by love:

"**ignes** castrorum et Tatiae praetoria turmae
et formosa **oculis** arma Sabina **meis**,
o utinam ad vestros sedeam **captiva** Penatis,
dum **captiva** mei conspicer esse Tati!
Romani montes, et montibus addita Roma,
et valeat probro Vesta pudenda meo:
ille equus, ille meos in castra reponet **amores**,
cui Tatius dextras collocat ipse iubas! 4.4.31-38.

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[44] 1.8.40; 22.3.16; 2.19.4, 4.1.37.

[45] Hutchinson (2006) 124.

[46] O'Rourke (2008) 86-7, on the other hand, sees this as emblematic of a clash between elegy and pastoral and that in the poem both the military and elegiac *furores* are incompatible with the pastoral *otium* that shuns such insanity.

Instead of the elegiac *puella* being won over by *ignes* as love poems, she is attracted by the *ignes* of Tatius' camp. It is not only contradictory for an elegiac character to find military arms beautiful, but it is also paradoxical for anyone to find the Sabines glamorous. In elegy they usually suggest austerity, such as in 2.32.47-8, where Tatius and the *duri Sabini* of yesteryear are compared with contemporary excess and permissiveness in Rome. The *ignes* also evoke the Vestal flame, the flame of passion, funeral torches and the night sky, but it is their most prosaic form that attracts Tarpeia; they are as beautiful to her as are the military arms of the enemy. The mention of *meis...oculis* recalls Propertius' first encounter with Cynthia when she captivated him with her eyes, rendering him a victim of *servitium amoris* (1.1.1) and this is reinforced by the repetition of *captiva.* Not only is Tarpeia also a victim of *servitium amoris*, but she even wishes to become a real slave of Tatius, as a prisoner of war.[47] Tatius is referred to here as *amores.* The incongruity of the application of such a word that so often designates love elegy to such a hostile character from the world of war demonstrates Tarpeia's misguided desertion of her usual generic milieu and the inclusion of the horse in the image further emphasises the epic connections. The disapprobation that she anticipates from Vesta also serves to dichotomise the life she should be leading and the one she wishes to lead instead.

Tarpeia elicits two mythological paradigms of victims of erotic desire who resorted to betrayal, in the full knowledge of her own terrible exemplarity, and both of them have watery associations:

> quid mirum in patrios Scyllam saevisse capillos,
> candidaque in saevos inguina versa canis?
> prodita quid mirum fraterni cornua monstri,
> cum patuit lecto stamine torta via?
> quantum ego sum **Ausoniis** crimen factura **puellis**,
> improba virgineo lecta ministra foco! 4.4.39-44.

The Scylla is actually a conflation of two Scyllas, following the example set by Vergil in *Ecl.* 6.74-7. One Scylla betrayed her father Nisus and her city for love by cutting a lock of hair on which Nisus' life and the city Megara depended; the other, because she was loved by

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[47] Janan (2001) 82 points out that there are three possible translations of v.34: "would that I, a captive, may see the face of my Tatius"; "would that I might be seen to be the captive of my Tatius"; "would that I might see the captive face of my Tatius" and argues that the multiplicity of possible meanings is a reflection of "feminine" syntax. *Pace* Janan, the first seems the most likely, since it is the beginning of a process whereby Tarpeia rises to the conception of marriage.

Poseidon, was transmogrified by Amphitrite's magic herbs into a monster with dogs protruding from her lower half, who seized and devoured mariners that sailed near her cave. The first Scylla is the one that is relevant to Tarpeia's treachery, but the conflation with the other one was perhaps irresistible, given the thematic importance of water in the poem. The second example is Ariadne, who betrayed her family and her half-brother the Minotaur by providing Theseus with the guiding thread, only to be abandoned on Naxos and left to watch her lover sailing away. Ostensibly, the *Ausoniis ...puellis* are other Roman girls, but again the word *puella* evokes other associations: the elegiac *puella* and the Muses. As the representative of love elegy in the poem, she can be seen to be betraying all three types of *puella.*

Rutledge points out that vv.45-50 form the very centre of the poem, preceded and succeeded by 44 lines apiece:[48]

Pallados **exstinctos si quis mirabitur ignis,**
  ignoscat: lacrimis spargitur ara meis.
cras, ut rumor ait, tota **potabitur** urbe,:
  tu cape spinosi **rorida** terga iugi.
lubrica tota via est et perfida: quippe tacentis
  fallaci celat limite semper **aquas** 4.4.45-50.

As Rutledge has shown, the hexameter that begins this passage ends with *ignis*, and the closing pentameter ends with the opposite element of *aquas*, and water terminology abounds in the intervening lines.[49] Tarpeia's tears threaten to extinguish the Vestal flame, highlighting the clash between her duty to Rome and her love for Tatius. Her tears also recall love elegy and heroines in love. The watery theme continues: the following day is the Parilia, the first anniversary of the walls of the city (which ironically are fated to be breached during their own celebration), when the citizens will be drinking and celebrating.[50] Traditionally, of course, such festivities are the setting for komastic behaviour, and the *paraclausithyron*, a perennial feature of love elegy. This time, however, the *exclusus amator* (or, more properly, *amatus*) does not seek ingress for reasons of love, but for reasons of war. The conventional

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[48] Rutledge (1964) 70.

[49] Rutledge rightly interprets water as symbolic of Tarpeia's betrayal of the Vestal flame: "Throughout the elegy Tarpeia is associated with moisture or water, elements that contradict her proper concern with Vesta's worship." He interprets *tu cape* in v.48 as Tarpeia urging *herself* to mount the slippery ridge, a departure from the general view that she is addressing Tatius, at least in her imagination. (See Camps 1965) 91.

[50] The MS has *pugnabitur* in v.47, and Fedeli accepts Housman's emendation to *pigrabitur.* I prefer Palmer's emendation *potabitur*, agreeing with Hutchinson (2006) 127 that *pigrabitur*, meaning 'there will be laziness' would not be likely subject matter for rumour.

elegiac motif has been perverted by the inclusion of epic themes. Tatius is usurping the elegiac world. Tarpeia's instructions to Tatius involve taking a path that is dangerous because it is slippery, concealing as it does hidden waters beneath. The metapoetic implications at this central part of the poem are hard to resist, especially since there is no further mention of this path and its dangers, and the men harmlessly enter the walls. Why would Propertius include such an apparently otiose detail in an otherwise compressed account of a military incursion? I suggest that the slippery path represents the danger inherent in the inclusion of martial themes in elegy: the generic boundaries are at risk of collapse. The term *rorida*, meaning "wet with dew" brings to mind the Callimachean dew on which the cicada-poet feeds in the *Aetia* Prologue, and the path (*limite*) similarly recalls that poet's unrutted one in the same passage. Moreover, the word has connotations of a boundary. By crossing this boundary, there is a risk of falling foul of the larger waters of epic and of elegy losing its generic identity. *Fallaci* also recalls the *fallax opus* that is elegy, so termed by the admonishing Horos in 4.1.135.

In the succeeding verses Tarpeia's delusion continues. She imagines that her marriage to Tatius might also facilitate a truce between the two sides, as she vainly seeks to accommodate the world of the military into her elegiac one:

credite, **vestra meus molliet arma torus** 4.4.62.

The terminology is redolent of elegy: *torus*, the (marriage) bed, will be the means by which the armies will be mollified (*molliet*). Again there is a distortion of elegiac ideology here, *militia amoris* is replaced by real *militia,* but ostensibly in the name of love.

Night falls, and in the closing lines of her soliloquy Tarpeia prays that Tatius may appear to her in her dreams:

experiar somnum, de te mihi somnia **quaeram**:
  fac venias **oculis umbra** benigna **meis!** 4.4.65-6.

The pentameter which closes the monologue echoes the opening pentameter (v.32) and consolidates the generic status of the *querela*. It is also interesting to note that this entire (female) monologue is enclosed within a male narrative, so that the structure of the poem also underlines the external alien pressures that are being imposed on the elegiac voice.[51]

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[51] On this see Stahl (1985) 279-304, who observes that "Tarpeia's monologue is the only time a burning human voice of unrequited love is heard in a way comparable to Propertius' own." See also Warden (1978) 184 who

Tarpeia's wish is expressed in words that resemble a prayer to a ghost. The *umbra* that she wishes to encounter however will not materialise, because it is not real, and the word anticipates her own deathly *umbra* that will be the consequence of her misguided actions. *Quaeram*, so often a technical term for the composition of poetry, refers to her deluded attempt to incorporate an antithetical element into her elegiac world.[52] In order for her to believe that Tatius can be a part of this world, she has to change his status to that of elegiac lover, unlikely though it is, and her belief that he can return her love and will marry her is symptomatic of this generic delusion.

Vesta paradoxically takes the role of Cupid and fans the flames of passion in Tarpeia's heart, and they in turn engender watery dreams:[53]

> nam Vesta, Iliacae felix tutela favillae,
> culpam alit et plures condit in ossa faces.
> illa ruit , qualis celerem prope Thermodonta
> Strymonis abscisso pectus aperta sinu. 4.4.69-72.

Instead of dreaming about Tatius, she dreams that she is a Strymonian Amazon, rushing along the banks of the Thermodon, with her torn garment exposing one breast. This strange conflation of Amazon with Thracian Maenad has been well noted, in particular by Warden.[54] Propertius has endowed the usually man-hating Amazon with Bacchantic attributes that betray a deranged and erotically distraught mind. The geographic illogicality of the Strymon and the Thermodon being linked despite the fact that they are over 600 miles apart has been explained by Warden in reference to Vergil, who implicitly compared Dido to the Amazonian warrior queen Penthesilea in Book 1 of the *Aeneid*, and then to a Maenad in Book 4.[55] Warden proposes that the reader is invited first to think of both Amazon and Maenad, and then to think of Dido. If this is the case, then Tarpeia's association with a character from epic intensifies the generic interplay in the poem: our elegiac heroine is behaving like an epic one,

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points out that vv.63-66 amount to a creative imitation of Dido's story (cf. *Aen.*4.81 *suadentque cadentia sidera somnos* ~ Prop. 4.4.64 *ipsaque in Oceanum sidera lapsa cadunt*).

[52] On *quaerere* as a technical term, see Fedeli (1981) 230: "the verb *quaerere*, usually understood as synonymous with *excogitare*, appears to be used technically to designate the process of research which leads to poetic creation." See also Macleod (1973) 304.

[53] Vesta's unlikely role as Cupid has encouraged some commentators (e.g. Heyworth) to emend her to Venus, but it seems more in keeping with the Propertian penchant for irony that the very flame that Tarpeia is supposed to be protecting is converted into the flame of passion and used against her as punishment for her transgression. Moreover, Vesta is a Sabine goddess (as pointed out by O'Rourke (2008) 124), and it is therefore in her interests to encourage Tarpeia's infatuation.

[54] Warden (1978) 177-187.

[55] *Aen.* 1.490ff and 4.68ff.

but one who behaved elegiacally in the epic *Aeneid.* The introduction of two rivers immediately after the depiction of Vesta's fanning of the flames of passion is a poignant illustration of the generic conflict within the poem, throughout which water is both the means by which Propertius negotiates Tarpeia's transformation from dutiful Vestal virgin to traitress and incorporates the underlying metageneric play. Hutchinson notes that the spondaic ending in *Thermodonta* connotes epic, especially Apollonius (2.370, 805, 970).[56] Tarpeia's dream is a manifestation of the truth of the situation: she does not dream about Tatius as her elegiac lover, because the fulfilment of such a dream is (generically) unattainable; instead she dreams about herself as an 'elegiacised' epic heroine. The crazy mixed-up geography and the contradictory combination of Amazon and Maenad are the product of her illogical, deluded state.

Drunkenness prevails in the festivities that take place on the following day. The dishes are 'wet' with succulent good things:

> cum pagana **madent** fercula divitiis 4.4.76.

There is a pause in the action of the poem, a bibulous interlude which provides the opportunity for the irruption of Tatius and his men and for elegiac Tarpeia to pursue her misconceived attempt to assimilate epic into her elegiac world. There follows a predictably compressed account of the action: Tarpeia seals the bargain, facilitates the Sabines' entry, and then demands a date for the wedding. Her climactic death is breathtakingly abrupt, both emphasising the event as well as complying with elegiac and Callimachean prescription:

> at Tatius (neque enim sceleri dedit hostis honorem)
> "nube" ait "et regni **scande** cubile mei!"
> dixit et ingestis comitum super obruit armis. 4.4.89-91.

The ironic *scande* spat out by Tatius mocks Tarpeia for her attempt at generic ascent. The *arma* that are heaped on her are a poignant illustration of how she becomes overwhelmed by epic events. Nevertheless, Tarpeia's failure to assimilate epic into her elegiac world ironically does facilitate a generic ascent of sorts. Her death reveals the ultimate incompatibility of love and war, as so often expressed by the elegist, but this very demonstration of the fact, resulting in Tarpeia's inevitable death, engenders a new type of Propertian elegy: that of aetiological

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[56] Hutchinson (2006) 132.

elegy. Tarpeia does therefore succeed in a type of ascent, though not the one that she wanted. She has ascended to the higher level of aetiological elegy, and the fact that the rock is forever associated with her name demonstrates that there is a place for this type of poetry in the elegiac repertoire, and it provides a new means of literary fame and immortality for the poet.[57] The final line is ambiguous and confusing:

> o vigil, iniustae praemia sortis habes. 4.4.94.

Whose injustice? The term *vigil* evokes the *agrupnia* of poetic composition and seems here to apply to Tarpeia, whose reward is the hill named after her, and thus her (literary) fame is sealed.

To sum up, I suggest that in 4.4, water is the central point of reference for a generic engagement between love elegy, epic and aetiological elegy. Tarpeia may be said to represent a late version of love elegy insofar as she is at one remove from the first three books, in which Propertius himself uttered the erotic *querelae*, showing how his elegy has moved on from the intensely 'subjective' kind to a more objective type of elegy which has been enriched and whose status is elevated as a result of its engagement with epic. Tarpeia's death as a result of her 'epic' encounter transforms her from being a character of love elegy to one from aetiological elegy. She rises like a phoenix out of the ashes of her former existence and re-enters the literary world with her new elegiac identity. Her misadventure thus provides a sort of allegory for the generic ascent of Propertian elegy. Not only is her story an *aetion* for the Tarpeian rock, but it can also be read as one for Propertian aetiological elegy.

Actium (4.6)

Elegy 4.6, on the Battle of Actium, enjoys the central position in Book 4. The function of the poem is to provide an *aetion* for the Temple of Palatine Apollo. Scholarship is by no means universal in its interpretation of this poem: there are those who accept it at face value as a sincere encomium of Augustus and the regime;[58] as a reluctant capitulation to the

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[57] Wyke (2002) 93-9 argues that Tarpeia is representative of Propertius' ambition to rival in Book 4 Vergil's Roman epic, and that to enter the discourse of his book she becomes an elegiac woman, placed at the centre of an elegiac world, with warfare on its periphery. Thus she is close to the mark in recognising that elegy and epic occupy contrasting physical locations in the poem.

[58] Grimal (1953) 5-53; Arkins (1989) 246-51; Cairns (1984) 129-68; Fedeli (1988) 92.

Zeitgeist;[59] as parody;[60] as a bitter commentary on the political situation;[61] or even, in the world of poetics, as a thoroughly bad poem.[62] Certainly, on a thematic level, it seems to contradict Propertius' earlier pronouncements about the slender limitations of his poetry, and even if we can accept that his new poetic programme embodied an elevation of his poetic style, it is still difficult to square this ostensible endorsement of war with his denunciation of it in the programmatic poems at the beginning of the third Book.

Regardless of any political reservations Propertius may or may not have had regarding the events of Actium, I suggest that he avails himself of the opportunities afforded by the seascape to provide a metanarrative which reveals his artistic reservations about undertaking such a theme in his poetry. We have seen in 4.4 how Propertius, in a manipulation of the motif of the *locus amoenus*, juxtaposes two opposing rhetorical spaces to highlight the difficulties of assimilating epic themes into elegy. Something similar may be seen to be happening in 4.6, in which Propertius juxtaposes no less than three different rhetorical spaces: the elegiac grove at the beginning; the scene of battle on the sea in the middle; and a banquet scene at the end. I shall take each one in turn.

Scene I: *Locus Amoenus* (the grove of elegy): (1-14).

sacra facit **vates**: sint ora faventia sacris,
    et cadat ante meos icta iuvenca focos.
serta **Philiteis** certet Romana **corymbis**,
    et **Cyrenaeas** urna ministret **aquas**.
costum **molle** date et **blandi** mihi turis honores, 5
    terque focum circa laneus orbis eat.
spargite me **lymphis**, carmenque **recentibus aris**
    tibia Mygdoniis libet eburna cadis.
ite procul fraudes, alio sint aere noxae:
    pura novum vati laurea **mollit iter**. 10
Musa, Palatini referemus Apollinis aedem:
    res est, **Calliope**, digna favore tuo.
Caesaris in nomen ducuntur carmina: Caesar
    dum canitur, quaeso, Iuppiter ipse vaces! 14

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[59] Stahl (1985) 250-255
[60] Johnson (1973) 151-80; Sullivan (1976) 145-7; Janan (2001) 102-4.
[61] Connor (1978) 1-10; Gurval (1995) 249-78.
[62] Williams (1968) 51-7.

In this passage the poet adopts a sacerdotal pose similar to that of Horace, but more particularly reminiscent of that of Callimachus in his *Hymn to Apollo*: both poets assume the role of priest of Apollo; both banish the irreverent from the altar.[63] Propertius uses the term *vates* (v.1) in this sense only twice in his poetry: here and in 2.10.19, a poem which Warden views as the starting point for 4.6, and to whose arguments I shall return in the discussion on the third rhetorical space in the poem.[64] This introduction to the poem is strikingly redolent of 3.1 and 3.3. As we have seen, in 3.1.1-2 Propertius requests entry into the grove of Callimachus and Philetas. In 4.6.3-4 he again refers to these two poets, more specifically to the Philitean garlands and Cyrenean (Callimachean) waters, suggesting that this time Propertius, as an initiated poet, is inside the grove and not requesting entry.[65] In 3.3.51-52, at his moment of poetic consecration, he is anointed by Calliope with Philitean water. But now, in 4.6, it seems that the poet seeks a sort of renewal of his consecration, because of the unprecedented nature of this new poem: Propertius asks to be sprinkled once again with the waters of inspiration (*lymphis*), for this poem that comes from new altars (*recentibus aris*), sure in the knowledge that it will meet with the approval of Calliope. Thus the *aquas* and the *lymphae* both correspond to the waters of the grove of elegy, that *locus amoenus* to which Propertius was previously granted access and with whose water he was anointed in 3.3. Moreover, his song will bear the prescribed credentials of the Callimachean elegiac aesthetic: he asks for nard that is *molle* and incense that is *blandum*; the poetic path on which he is about to embark is pure and untrodden (*novum...iter*). Pillinger points out that Propertius is emphasising the special character of his poem: what Horace had done in lyrics, and Vergil in hexameters, he is doing in elegiacs.[66]

The aetiological function of the poem is expressed in v.11, and the panegyrical one in v.13. However, the intention to sing about the Palatine temple of Apollo does not square exactly with the promise made in 4.1.69: *canem et cognomina* ***prisca*** *locorum.* The temple is not old, but brand new. The Muse Calliope will approve of the former, while Jupiter will approve of the latter. Is there a subtle message here, to the effect that his aetiological efforts bear the sanction of the Muses, whereas his encomium of Caesar may not? Taken together, at any rate, these opening lines set the generic tenor of the poem: ostensibly it is to be an elegiac mythical hymn, with both an aetiological and encomiastic function – fulfilling (to a degree)

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[63] A comparison between Propertius 4.6 and Callimachus' Hymn to Apollo is supplied (with bibliography) by Heyworth (1994) 59-62. He also points out that a major difference between the two poems is that Propertius concentrates solely on Actium, whereas Callimachus' poem covers a variety of topics.

[64] Warden (1977) 19-21.

[65] I accept Scaliger's conjecture of *serta* for *cera.* On this, see Butler and Barber (1933) 354.

[66] Pillinger (1969) 192.

the promise of 4.1.67-70 – while at the same time adhering to the stylistic requirements of his masters Callimachus and Philetas. We are invited to think back to the opening programmatic poems of Book 3 as well as the first poem of Book 4.

Scene II: *Locus Bellicus*: (15-68).

Ekphrasis (15-26)

est Phoebi fugiens Athamana ad **litora** portus,
qua sinus Ioniae murmura condit **aquae,**
Actia Iuleae **pelagus** monumenta carinae,
nautarum votis non **operosa** via.
huc mundi coiere manus: stetit aequore **moles**
pinea, nec remis aequa favebat **avis**.
altera classis erat Teucro damnata Quirino,
pilaque feminea turpiter **apta manu**:
hinc Augusta ratis plenis Iovis omine velis,
signaque iam Patriae vincere docta suae.
tandem aciem geminos **Nereus** lunarat in arcus,
armorum et **radiis** picta tremebat **aqua**,

In contrast to Vergil, whose account opens with the battle underway (*Aen.* 8.704-6), Propertius' account begins by dwelling on the site in the calm before the storm of action. DeBrohun points out that the bay of Actium resembles a *locus amoenus.*[67] O'Rourke also, recognising the "ecphrastic markers" *est...portus* as a variation of the *est...locus* configuration, makes the same observation, and also that it is thus a likely scene for generic negotiation.[68] One could, however, go so far as to say that this is the scene for the clashing of generic discourses, rather than their negotiation. The land-based version is of course conventionally amenable to a subtle play on generic differences and similarities, but it is nevertheless fitting that the marine equivalent is the theatre for a more violent and precarious confrontation of generic antitheses. Like Tatius' camp in 4.4, this *locus amoenus* is in reality a *locus bellicus*. However, in this poem it is not a case of one party being on the outside and looking in (as in the case of Tarpeia), but of both parties being arrayed opposite one another, as we shall see. Heyworth sees vv.17-18 as problematic, because he deems *pelagus*, which

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[67] DeBrohun (2003) 216.

[68] O'Rourke (2008) 90:"As in 4.4, a *locus amoenus* can be seen to provide the stage for generic negotiations." On the *est...locus* configuration, see Hinds (2002) 126.

stands in apposition to *portus*, as unacceptable on the grounds that it is a word that refers to the open sea.[69] But if Propertius is indeed intent on creating a space that is full of epic connotations and thus antithetical to elegy, the received terminology for this particular stretch of water may well be the correct one, and the surprise that it generates on the part of the reader may be designed to provoke recognition of the metapoetic *ludus* therein.

As with a conventional *locus amoenus*, there is an inherent sense of imminent danger: the peaceful scene is about to be interrupted by a cataclysmic event. Moreover, on closer examination we can see that it embodies a curious inversion of a peaceful grove with a spring. Obviously, there are no trees here, providing shade, and no flowers, but the murmurs of the Ionian water are redolent of the sounds made by the trees in the Tarpeian version. Instead of a terrestrial scene containing a small body of water, we have an aquatic one, containing a *moles pinea*, a huge mass of pine. These are not trees, however, but ships. There may also be some wordplay in *nec remis aequa favebat* ***avis***: the final word of this line, while ostensibly meaning 'fortune' may also advert to the missing avian ingredient of the regular *locus amoenus*. The water shimmers, not with the rays of the sun, but with the reflections (*radiis*) of the armour.[70] There is even a divine presence, in the form of the god Nereus, who is provided with the role of stage manager. Debrohun points out that the two sides arrayed against each other represent *amor* versus *Roma*.[71] As a locus of generic confrontation this seems to be true. For the purposes of this elegy, Propertius' Cleopatra, enslaver of her lover Antony, has much in common with the elegiac mistress and therefore constitutes a perfect metaphor for the 'feminine' genre of love elegy in opposition to the 'masculine' one of epic. As such, she is not scraping the shore with one oar, but is out of her generic depth and handling ill-suited weapons of mass-destruction (***pilaque*** *feminea turpiter* ***apta manu***). An elegiac mistress' hands are objects of admiration, with metapoetic connotations of poetic composition, not instruments of war.[72] On the other side is the flagship of Augustus, with its full sails of epic billowing in the breeze. Unlike Tarpeia, then, who observes Tatius in his martial space from her peaceful (elegiac) grove, Cleopatra seems to be out of her elegiac environment and trespassing in epic territory. Her confrontation with Augustus mirrors a generic confrontation, the outcome of which is inevitable. The contrast of Augustus'

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[69] Heyworth (2007) 458-9. He postulates that what is missing is a finite verb, and offers *celebrant*: "Roman (or 'Julian' vessels throng the memorials of Actium in celebration". Arguing also that *nautarum votis non operosa via* ('a route not hard for prayers of sailors') is a strange phrase, he suggests either *operata* or *onerata* , and *nunc* in place of *non* ('the route is now burdened with the prayers of sailors').

[70] One is thus reminded of Tatius' '*locus amoenus*' which was bristling with javelins.

[71] DeBrohun (2003) 211.

[72] See above, p.217 n. 41.

plenis...velis with Cleopatra's weapons invites implicit comparison with Propertius' protest in 3.9.4: ***non** sunt **apta** meae **grandia vela rati**.* In 4.6, it is not the elegiac mistress who is *docta*, but the *signa*, which have been taught how to conquer. This ironic inversion of an elegiac attribute is a regular technique of the earlier poems, where epic epithets were regularly applied to elegiac discourse and vice versa, most notably in 1.7 and 2.1.[73] In comparison with the Vergilian version of this battle, where the scene is crowded with gods, Propertius has pared the two sides down to the minimum: Cleopatra (without any mention of Antony) versus Augustus (with divine help). While the exclusion of Antony from the scene appeals to the official version of the Battle of Actium as a clash of Roman might and rectitude with Eastern decadence, rather than the civil war that it really was, it also serves to polarise the generic clash of epic and elegiac themes.[74] Hutchinson points out that in vv. 25-30, Propertius provides more detail about the shape of the battle-lines than Vergil, but "removes us from human agency: the agent is the sea (the sea-god Nereus in metonymy)".[75] Such emphasis on the power of the sea further enhances the status of the scene as the theatre for generic negotiation.

The Epiphany (27-36)

cum Phoebus linquens stantem se vindice Delon
    (nam tulit iratos mobilis un[d]a Notos)
astitit Augusti puppim super, et nova flamma
    luxit in obliquam ter sinuata facem. 30
non ille attulerat crinis in colla solutos
    aut testudineae carmen inerme lyrae,
sed quali aspexit Pelopeum Agamemnona vultu,
    egessitque avidis Dorica castra rogis,
aut qualis flexos solvit Pythona per orbis 35
    serpentem, imbelles quem timuere lyrae.

Apollo is heralded into the scene in a way that is comparable to his epiphany in the programmatic 3.3.13: ***cum** me Castalia **speculans** ex **arbore Phoebus.*** In that poem, the god was looking over from his position in a tree; in 4.6 he settles on another piece of wood, only

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[73] e.g.:1.7.6 *duram...dominam;* 2.1.14 *tum vero longas condimus Iliadas.*

[74] On the sanitisation of the Battle of Actium, see Gurval (1995) 189-90, 195-6, 262-3, 277; Mader (1989) 143-4.

[75] Hutchinson (2006) 159.

this time it is the prow of Augustus' ship.[76] Poignantly, in 3.3 Apollo remains on his (neutral) Castalian terrain while observing Propertius on Helicon and directing him to the lower source of elegiac water. In 4.6 the god, in a blatant act of favouritism, leaves his abode on Delos and enters the scene. But this is a different Apollo: Propertius makes it very clear that it is Apollo the warrior god, rather than his more peaceful *alter ego* that has arrived at Augustus' side. It thus may be significant that Propertius has Apollo remove himself from his island of Delos, where no armies were permitted to set foot, and where it was officially forbidden to die.[77] Moreover, Slings has posited the attractive theory that Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* is implicitly an allegory for his poetics, and that the island itself is a metaphor for his poetry.[78] Thus the god may be seen to have temporarily left his Callimachean and peaceful surroundings to join Augustus in this non-Callimachean theatre of war. The poetic Apollo, described in vv. 31-2, corresponds, as noted by commentators, to the statue that stood outside the temple.[79] There was another statue of the god inside the temple, but by all accounts he was also Apollo *Citharoedus.* Welch has highlighted the fact that there is a discrepancy between the Actian Apollo described in vv. 33-36 and the god portrayed in the temple that is supposed to be a monument to that event, and argues that this reveals a deliberate intention on the part of Propertius to register his disapproval of the way in which Augustus used Apollo in his urban programme.[80] Discussion has raged as to the relevance of the two similes that describe the Actian version of the god. Mader argues that they are in fact "fully integrated and functional within Propertius' account of the battle", and he identifies thematic links that serve to emphasise the clash that is about to occur.[81] Pointedly, there is an imbalance in the description of Apollo: a mere two lines are devoted to the absent version, the one who is the poetic patron of Propertian elegy, as compared to four lines to the warrior

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[76] Some commentators on v.29 – Postgate, Butler and Barber, Fedeli, Hutchinson, Goold – interpret Apollo as actually appearing above the ship. Others, such as Richardson and J.F. Miller (2004) 79 place him firmly on the deck.

[77] Mineur (1984) 223.

[78] Slings (2004) 279-297. His main arguments are: the island is described as ἀραιή, which is another word for λεπτή; that it is washed by foam (ἄχνη), the finest part of the water; that, as a small island of divine origin, it is analogous to the small size of divinely inspired poetry; it is a small island that leads agroup of very big islands, emphasising the superiority of his small poems over large ones; it is encircled by other islands (the Cyclades), all of which resembles choruses dancing around an *aulos* player, implying that Callimachean poetry (Delos) plays the tune and sets the standards for all other poetry.

[79] On this see Welch (2005) 79-111.

[80] Welch (2005) 106.

[81] Mader (1990) 325-34. Responding to criticisms of the similes by Johnson (1973)163 ("top-heavy") and Connor (1978) 8 ("long-winded and far from crisply immediate") he argues that the first simile referring to the god's actions at Troy emphasises his role as avenger of hubristic impiety, and that the slaying of the Python in the second simile in particular enhances the status of the Battle of Actium as a gigantomachic clash between chaos and order.

version. Propertius is keen to emphasise the difference, inviting one to wonder if what is to follow is indeed a reluctant concession to the establishment. Is Propertius abdicating a certain amount of responsibility for such a poem as 4.6? After all, the same poet declared in 3.1.7: *a valeat, Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis!* The poetic version in vv.31-2 resembles the description given by Horace in *C.* 3.4.61-2 (*qui rore puro Castalia lavit / crines solutos*). The word *lyrae* (v.32), coming at the end of the first description of Apollo, is repeated at the end of the second (v.36), only this time it refers to the Muses, who are *imbelles*, and fearful of the Python that Apollo killed before establishing his altar at Delphi. This line may also be an allusion to Horace's *C.* 1.6.9-10 (*dum pudor /* ***imbellisque lyrae*** *Musa potens vetat / laudes egregii Caesaris et tuas / culpa deterere ingenii*), a *recusatio*, which may thus be further evidence of dubious commitment to this poetic enterprise. Mader points out that the Muses serve as a foil to Python, "thus hinting at the same kind of antithesis of chaos-order that pervades Horace".[82] They also emphasise the bipolarity of Apollo, and therefore draw attention to the generic antithesis that such bipolarity facilitates.

The Speech (37-54)

mox **ait** "o Longa mundi servator ab Alba,
Auguste, Hectoreis cognite maior auis,
vince mari: iam terra tua est: tibi militat arcus
et favet ex umeris hoc onus omne meis. 40
solve metu patriam, quae nunc te vindice freta
imposuit prorae publica vota tuae.
quam nisi defendes, murorum Romulus augur
ire Palatinas non bene vidit avis.
et nimium remis audent! pro turpe Latinis 45
principe te fluctus regia vela pati!
nec te, quod classis centenis remiget alis,
terreat (**invito labitur illa mari),**
quodque uehunt prorae Centaurica saxa minantis,
(tigna cava et pictos experiere metus). 50
frangit et attollit **vires** in milite **causa**;
quae nisi iusta subest, excutit arma **pudor**.
tempus adest, committe ratis! ego temporis auctor
ducam laurigera Iulia rostra manu."

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[82] Mader (1990) 331.

The word *ait* begins the speech, just as it does in 3.3.14, spoken by Apollo in his other guise, while leaning on his lyre. Appropriately, the speech comes at the very centre of the poem, and contains some possible generic inferences: *vince mari* (v.39) underlines the unevenness of the clash; *imposuit prorae publica vota tuae* (v.42), occurring at the very centre of the poem may contain a suggestion that the boat of Propertius' elegy is taking on too much, as a result of pressure either from outside or within. *et nimium remis audent* (v.45) is evocative of 3.3.22-24 and may imply that Cleopatra, as representative of elegiac discourse, has left her domain near the shore. Her hubristic behaviour will result in disaster, both in the 'real' world and in the poetic one, and this is reinforced by ***invito** labitur illa mari* (v.48), which also compares with 4.1.74: *poscis ab **invita** verba pigenda **lyra***, where Horos claims that Propertius is going against the wishes of Apollo in composing such lofty elegy as he proposes to do. Apollo's declaration in 4.6.51-2 about the justness of a soldier's cause (*frangit et attollit **vires** in milite **causa**, / quae nisi iusta subest, excutit arma **pudor)*** is also possibly charged with metapoetic and political meaning. In 2.10, 3.3 and 3.9, Propertius speaks of his own deficient *vires* for writing about the very theme that he is now treating, so what has changed? The answer may lie in the word *causa*, the Latin word for αἴτιον. This is the means by which he attempts to admit such epic discourse into his elegy. But if this *causa* is not just, he will fail. It may be no coincidence that the word *pudor* also appears in Horace's *C.* 1.6.9-10 (*dum **pudor** / imbellisque lyrae Musa potens vetat / laudes egregii Caesaris et tuas / culpa deterere ingenii*), to which I have already referred above in relation to the *imbelles lyrae.* It seems that there may well be a certain amount of ambivalence in this project to sing of Actium; Propertius may not be so sure whether this clash will result in an acceptable aetiological elegy, or a failure. Apollo's assurance to Augustus that he will ensure success in his military venture is not necessarily mirrored by a parallel assurance to Propertius that his poem will succeed, because this is not Propertius' Apollo, and he is not addressing the poet. The disjunction leaves space for irony. The poet's voice is effaced, and replaced by that of the establishment. This alien version of Apollo has become the *auctor* (v.53) of the poem, and Propertius can therefore disown a certain amount of responsibility.

Apollo's Actions, the Battle and its Aftermath (55-68)

dixerat, et pharetrae pondus consumit in arcus: 55
proxima post arcus Caesaris hasta fuit.
vincit Roma fide Phoebi: dat femina poenas:

sceptra per Ionias fracta vehuntur aquas.
at pater Idalio miratur Caesar ab astro:
"**sum deus**; est nostri sanguinis ista fides." 60
prosequitur cantu Triton, omnesque marinae
plauserunt circa libera signa deae.
illa petit Nilum **cumba** male nixa fugaci,
hoc unum, iusso non moritura die.
di melius! quantus mulier foret una triumphus, 65
ductus erat per quas ante Iugurtha uias!
Actius hinc traxit Phoebus monumenta, quod eius
una decem vicit missa sagitta ratis.

The phrase *dixerat et* closes out the god's speech in exactly the same way as it does in 3.3.25 (*dixerat, et plectro...*), again inviting the reader to compare and contrast the two speeches, beginning with the pointed difference between the peaceful *plectrum* of 3.3 and the bellicose *pharetra* of 4.6. As befits Callimachean elegy, the narrative of the entire battle is compressed into a mere four lines (vv. 55-8). There is no mention of Antony, and Cleopatra is not named, although the identity of the *femina* is obvious. The laconic summary in v.57 – *vincit Roma fide Phoebe: dat femina poenas* – conveys the victory of *Roma* over *amor*, the latter represented by *femina*. Cleopatra's defeat, like Tarpeia's death, can be seen to illustrate the replacement of love elegy with aetiological elegy. Her weapons (*sceptra*) lie broken on the Ionian *aquae*, waters which have proved too dangerous for her, as predicted in 3.3.23. This non-Propertian Apollo has ensured a famous victory and it prompts a second epiphany, that of the now divine Julius Caesar, who claims that this victory is proof that Augustus is of his blood. The declaration *sum deus* (v.60) prompted Richardson to comment: "It is hard to read this line without some amusement, but it must be remembered the more sophisticated Romans generally viewed the deification with a certain amount of amusement."[83] P.A. Miller also remarks: "It is impossible to read this couplet without a chuckle. The irony of Julius Caesar being confirmed in his godhood by the actions of his nephew is impossible to miss."[84] I suggest that the inherent irony in the couplet is confirmed by a metapoetic reading of the subsequent couplet, in which Propertius depicts Triton sounding his conch (presumably) in celebration at the end of the battle, and all of the marine goddesses applauding around the

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[83] Richardson (1976) 452. Hutchinson (2006) 165 detects "witty paradox" in these words: he does not say 'you are my son', but rather "affirms his own deity, as if it had been uncertain even to him until Augustus proved it." Fedeli accepts the emendation *tu deus.*

[84] Miller (2004) 207. He provides an excellent account of the efforts of scholars who read the poem as a sincere encomium of Augustus to deal with the apparent irony in the couplet, ranging from emendation to ascribing it to typical of court poetry.

standards. In this inverted *locus amoenus,* Triton can be seen to correspond to a divinity such as Pan or Silvanus (as in 4.4.5), and the sea nymphs to their terrestrial counterparts. As antithetical 'Muses', they predictably align themselves with the martial activity that takes place within and is sacred to this '*locus amoenus*'. For the purposes of this elegy, they represent the Muses of martial and thus epic themes. They are therefore hostile to Cleopatra, our sole representative of the themes of love elegy, who flees in her small elegiac *cumba* (recalling that of 3.3.22), in an attempt to reach the safety of the shore where the Nile enters the sea. Her audacity in attempting the open sea has resulted in failure, as warned by the other Apollo in 3.3.

Scene III: *Locus Vinosus* (69-86).

bella satis cecini: **citharam iam poscit Apollo**
  victor et ad placidos exuit arma choros. 70
candida nunc **molli** subeant convivia luco;
  blanditiaeque fluant per mea colla rosae,
vinaque fundantur prelis elisa Falernis,
  terque lavet nostras spica Cilissa comas.
ingenium potis irritet Musa poetis: 75
  Bacche, soles Phoebo fertilis esse tuo.
ille paludosos memoret servire Sycambros,
  Cepheam **hic** Meroen fuscaque regna canat,
hic referat sero confessum foedere Parthum:
  "reddat signa Remi, mox dabit ipse sua: 80
sive **aliquid** pharetris Augustus parcet Eois,
  differat in pueros ista tropaea suos.
gaude, Crasse, nigras si quid sapis inter **harenas**:
  ire per **Euphraten** ad tua busta licet."
sic noctem patera, sic ducam carmine, donec 85
  iniciat radios in mea vina dies.

In this epilogue to the narrative, Propertius announces that his war theme is finished and that Apollo has removed his armour and asked for the return of his lyre. But in reverting to the *citharoedus* version of himself, he is still a different one to the Apollo who appeared in 3.3. Here instead we have Apollo *Victor*, and he is presiding over a banquet in his honour. The scenario is more Horatian than Propertian, although the leafy grove in which the dancing is to take place is described as elegiacally *mollis* (*molli*, v.71). In fact, there is quite an amount of ring compositional repetition uniting the prologue with the epilogue, as revealed with painstaking accuracy by Cairns.[85] Warden also has identified verbal echoes between the opening lines of the poem and this passage, and shows that the poet has in a subtle fashion converted the ritual scene of the beginning into a banquet one at the end: the Callimachean water in v.7 is now water to wash the hair of the revellers; the Philitean garlands have become roses on their necks; the song that poured like a libation from Mygdonian jars has now been replaced with wine from Falernian vats, rendering a scene that is suggestive of a sympotic/Horatian context.[86] Despite the fact that so far in this poem Propertius has followed quite closely the Callimachean model of the *Hymn to Apollo*, it comes as somewhat of a surprise to see Propertius calling on wine as an aid to poetic composition. Heyworth draws attention to this contradiction.[87] He also challenges Knox's contention that Callimachus' equation with water-drinking did not come until later, in an epigram by Antipater (writing in the later Augustan/Tiberian era).[88] Heyworth argues that the manner in which Propertius links Callimachus (and Philetas) with water-drinking in 3.11.1-6 and 3.3.52, as well as 4.6.4, implies that the association was in his time a conventional one, and he also points to fr. 178 Pf., in which Callimachus rejects the deep drinking of wine, and fr. 544 Pf. (τοῦ μεθυπλῆγος φροίμιον ’Αρχιλόχου), in which he defines other poets in relation to their drunkenness. Moreover, he shows that the opposition between the two sources of poetic inspiration goes back at least as far as Pytine of Cratinus; that one of Meleager's epigrammatists referred to it, inferring that it was available to Propertius; that it appears as a motif in Horace *Ep.* 1.19.1ff, a passage which links drunken composition specifically with epic (Homer and Ennius). Heyworth also points out that the mention of the Euphrates in 4.6.85 is ring-compositional insofar as it recalls the Callimachean water of 4.6.4. In the epilogue to the *Hymn to Apollo*, Callimachus compares the water of the filthy Euphrates with the undefiled stream from a pure spring. By adverting to Callimachus' epilogue in his own epilogue, one would expect a similar aesthetic sentiment. But, as Heyworth has pointed out, the intervening lines produce nothing of the sort. Heyworth therefore questions the tone of the passage: "Should we see it as a polemical correction of the poet's earlier aesthetic? Hardly: this is a book where he has described himself as Callimachus Romanus (4.1.64) and

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[85] Cairns (1984) 134-6.
[86] Warden (1977) 19-21.
[87] Heyworth (1994) 62-67.
[88] *A.P.* 11.20. Knox (1985) 107-119.

the poem is one of his most thorough imitations of his Greek master."[89] I would add that the presence of Bacchus in this scene also adds to its anti-Callimachean tone. Propertius appears to have associated that god with the 'thundering' Pindaric style, as evidenced by 3.17.39-40:

> haec ego non humili referam memoranda cothurno,
> qualis **Pindarico** spiritus ore **tonat**:

In that poem, Propertius, in an apparent abandonment of his slender themes, lists off those grand ones from the higher reaches of Pindaric song that he will tackle, if only the god will grant him some sleep. The sincerity of such a promise is undercut by the fact that the poet is once again vainly trying to escape the painful shackles of his *servitium* by means of a wine-fuelled sleep.[90]

Heyworth therefore justly sees the tone of the passage as ironic. I concur and further suggest that the irony is increased by the fact that Propertius succeeds in actually effacing himself from the action at the scene of the celebration. In vv.77-84, the poet lists off the themes that will be sung at the banquet, but by means of *ille*, *hic*, and *hic* he manages to assign these tasks to others.[91] Warden argues that these lines bear "a curious resemblance to the six-line 'song' to Augustus set within 2.10 (vv.11-16), but that the context has been appropriately updated", and he postulates that Propertius is here varying the conventions of the *recusatio*: in 2.10 he rejected outright the inclusion of such themes in his poetry; in 4.6, by placing the words in the mouths of others, he betrays a "conditional or wary acceptance" of them.[92] In my view, Propertius is deliberately refraining from comment as to their acceptability, and when the third poetic speaker announces in v.84 that *ire per Euphraten ad tua busta licet*, the implication is perhaps that it is permissible for that poet to traverse such non-Callimachean territory (which is also poignantly described as being amongst *nigras...harenas* in the previous line), but as for Propertius, he is quite happy to spend the

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[89] Heyworth (1994) 66-7. On Callimachus' rejection of heavy drinking, see also Hunter and Fantuzzi (2002) 79 and 448-9.

[90] *Pace* Cairns (2006) 364-70 who rejects the notion that this poem is parodic. See also Miller (1991) 77-86 who states: "Propertius' pledge of a sonorous Pindaric offering is, in real terms, obviously a disingenuous fantasy, humorous bombast that adds to the already comically extravagant manner of the suffering love elegist." (p.79). It may also be significant that Dionysus is largely absent from Callimachean poetry, possibly because the god was associated with the breaking down of social and cultural barriers and his worship was open to all. This would not have appealed to the author of *Epigram* 28. On this, see Hunter (2006) 42-44 and 72.

[91] Recalling the ***multi***, *Roma, tuas laudes annlibus addent* of 3.1.15.

[92] Warden (1977) 20. "The Sygambri and the Ethiopians replace India and Arabia as those on the fringe of the Roman world who are about to succumb to her power; the Parthians follow, with a rather fuller treatment to suit the new circumstances; the conditional clause that accounts for whatever is left recurs (*si qua extremis tellus se abstrahit oris* (2.10.17) and *sive aliquid pharetris Augustus parcet Eois* (4.6.81)."

night amongst such song in a passive capacity, until daylight brings it all to an end. Thus, artistically at least, Propertius appears to have grave reservations about recording the events of Actium in his elegy. Whether it was also a political objection, I will leave others to discuss, but it does seem that the poet continued to view this theme as both anti-Callimachean and antithetical to his elegy, and is unconvinced as to its suitability as a theme for his new aetiological programme.

One could in fact say that the poem consists of three different permutations of the rhetorical space of the *locus amoenus*. Firstly, there is that of the Callimachean grove at the start, in which Propertius, in the guise of Apolline priest, asks to be sprinkled with the water of inspiration for the sacred task that awaits him. In this particular scene are all the accoutrements of a sacrificial rite, but at the same time there is the requisite Callimachean pure water and a reference to the untrodden path that he is about to take. We are invited to recognise that the poet has placed himself back in the sacred Callimachean / Philitean grove of 3.3. Secondly, we have the scene of the Battle of Actium, which is a sort of inverse *locus amoenus*, in that instead of a terrestrial one with a spring we have a marine one with a wooden mass at its centre: that of the opposing warships. Thus fresh water is replaced by sea water, and the dimensions of earth and water are reversed. It is therefore unsurprising that the martial action in this space is the direct opposite to what takes place in the conventional terrestrial grove of elegiac inspiration. Finally, the third space in the poem is at first sight a return to the grove of the prologue, but something has changed: instead of pure spring water we have wine. Instead of Propertius the Callimachean poet-priest directing the action, we have other poets bibulously celebrating the martial victories of Rome, while our poet, just as in 3.4.21-2, chooses to take a back seat and observe the proceedings.

Thus the Callimachean pure water in the prologue and the bibulous banquet in the epilogue frame the central sea narrative, in which the actual battle takes place. There is a disjunction between the opening and closing frames because of the fact that Propertius does not return to his guise as poet-priest after he announces *bella satis cecini* in v.69. It seems as if the theatre of action – the sea – has wrought a change in the elegy: as a result of the military engagement depicted in the intervening lines, no matter how elegiac its treatment may have been, the resulting poem has been washed of some of its essential Callimachean identity. It has been tainted by the sea-water of epic, and the drinking scene that follows could almost be seen as an effort to drown his sorrows after such an artistic compromise. Propertius has yielded to pressure, either internal or external (or both) by composing the sort of poem that he may have promised in 2.10, and deferentially given it pride of place at the centre of his book. Nevertheless, there is a strong sense of unease emanating from the poem which leads one to suspect a lack of commitment to the undertaking. There is, however, always the possibility that the very ambivalence that one detects in the poem is merely another instance of Propertius *ludibundus* delighting in keeping the reader guessing as to the true nature of his *fallax opus*.

Hercules and the founding of the *Ara Maxima* (4.9).

Anderson's seminal analysis of this poem, in which he demonstrates that Propertius portrays Hercules as an *exclusus amator* in a situation that equates with that of the elegiac lover, outside the door of his beloved *puella*, has heavily influenced all subsequent scholarly treatments of the poem.[93] Pillinger went on to argue that the *exclusus amator* motif is just one element within a larger context of humour and irony in the poem and Cairns has since demonstrated how Propertius succeeds in expanding the generic dimensions of this elegy by his exploitation of an accumulation of sub-genres, such as the *komos,* the *locus amoenus* and *Theoxenia*, the motifs of the divine *adventus*, and the slaying of monsters.[94] In the poem, we have two contrasting landscapes: the still untamed area of the Velabrum round the Palatine, and the *locus amoenus* that encloses the shrine of the *Bona Dea.* Propertius is emphatic about the primitive and undeveloped nature of the former, as he sets the scene in the opening six lines:

> **Amphitryoniades** qua tempestate iuvencos
> egerat a stabulis, o Erythea, tuis,
> venit ad inuictos pecorosa Palatia montis,
> et statuit fessos fessus et ipse boues,
> **qua Velabra suo stagnabant flumine quaque**
> **nauta per urbanas velificabat aquas.** 4.9.1-6.

Amphitrioniades is an exaggerated term and possibly invented by Catullus, but used by Vergil for Hercules.[95] As the first word it is strikingly emphatic and heralds an epic theme.

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[93] Anderson (1964) 1-12.

[94] Pillinger (1969) 182-189; Cairns (1992) 65-95. A useful review of scholarship to date on the poem is provided by Welch (2005) 112. See also Harrison (2004) 117-131, who argues for a link between Hercules and Augustus in the poem.

[95] The more usual patronymic is *Alcides*, which does not fill the first half of the line like this one.

The six lines are one period, another feature of elevated epic. *pecorosa Palatia* conceals what Richardson terms "an aetiological nugget", as the origin of the name *Palatia* is said to be from *balare*, 'to bleat'.[96] Moreover, its insertion inside the appositional *invictos...montis* is a highly mannered feature of neoteric poetry, as pointed out by Pillinger.[97] The very place where 'tired' Hercules and his equally 'tired' cattle stop is the Velabrum, an area of the Tiber flood-plain, popularly believed in Propertius' day to have been originally under water, as Propertius implies in vv.5-6, while at the same time etymologising *Velabra* with the verb *velificabat.*[98] Tibullus describes the prehistorical submerged Velabrum as a peaceful and charming shallow stretch of water across which a *puella* would often row her small skiff to rendezvous with her lover, and bordering on the Palatine area which he depicts in terms of a *locus amoenus.*[99] One is reminded in fact of the small Lucrine lake of Propertius 1.11.9-10 where the elegist would have Cynthia safe from the clutches of his rivals. This idyllic elegiac scene, however, is no such thing for Propertius. He 'corrects' the Tibullan description by portraying a river in spate, the Roman equivalent of the Callimachean Euphrates.[100] This compares with the Hercules of 1.20, who comes ashore from the epic sea, and when Hylas wanders off (*processerat ultra*, v.23) in search of spring water and is snatched by the nymphs, Hercules thrashes about the pastoral landscape in his fruitless search for his *eromenos*. In 4.9, instead of emerging from a Homeric marine epic source, he is associated with 'Callimachean' epic water. He finds himself in wild uncultivated territory, which is pastoral by virtue of the fact that it predates the city of Rome, but far from idyllic.

There follows in vv.7-20 a very compressed version of the Cacus episode. Cacus is here endowed, like Geryon, with three heads. This was not the case in Vergil's account, with which this poem engages.[101] But is seems that Propertius is deliberately conflating the two

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[96] Varro, *LL.* 5.53. It also appears in Festus 552 L.

[97] Pillinger (1969) 184.

[98] Propertius' etymology 'corrects' that of Varro : *Velabrum a vehendo; velaturum facere etiam nunc dicuntur qui id mercede faciunt.* (*L.L.* v.44).

[99] Tibullus 2.5.33-4 *at qua Velabri regio patet, ire solebat / exiguus pulsa per vada linter aqua.*

[100] O'Rourke (2008) 46 points out that the Tiber is implicitly an epic river in the *Aeneid*: in 6.87 the Sibyl refers to it as blood-red from wars in that poem's Iliadic hexad, at the beginning of which it is *multa flavus harena* (7.31), like the Callimachean Euphrates (πολλᾲ / λύματα γής, *Hymn* 2.108-9.). It may also be significant that Hinds (1987b, 19) draws attention to the fact that Ovid chooses Achelous, a swollen and debris-laden river, to narrate the story of Erysichthon (*Met.* 8.547-884), a tale that appears in Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter*. Thus, by cleverly imitating Callimachus in a style that was condemned by that poet, Ovid is accentuating Callimachean poetics.

[101] *Aen.* 8. 184-301. See Warden (1982) 228-242, who argues that Vergil's version of the story is the starting point for Propertius, whose aim is "not to imitate but to challenge; to show what his sophisticated elegiac mode can do with the material of epic. There is a quality of exuberance, of display and self-confidence, a joyful impudence and a delight in his own creativity." (p.229). For a thorough analysis of Propertius' engagement with Vergil in this poem, see O'Rourke (2008) 39-50; 90-94.

Herculean episodes by rendering Cacus as a composite character, which accords very well with the elegiac pattern of reduction of epic themes. Warden has pointed out how much Propertius has abbreviated the narrative details of the episode, while at the same time he diminishes Hercules' heroism by omitting an attribution of the hero's agency to the bludgeoning of the monster, who merely *iacuit pulsus* (v.15) by the club. Much irony is contained in the specification of the club as an "Arcadian branch" (*Maenalio...ramo*, v. 15): the incongruity of a branch from a tree in pastoral Arcadia being used as a weapon to bash out brutally Cacus' brains would not be lost on the reader. Thus, Hercules is situated in this pastoral setting, with pastoral accoutrements, but his behaviour is too 'epic' for his surroundings. The words that he speaks to his retrieved cattle (***ite**, boves, Herculis **ite** boves,* vv. 16-17) alludes to Vergil's farewell words at the end of his book of *Eclogues* (10.77: ***ite** domum saturae, venit Hesperus, **ite** capellae*), but Hercules is an unlikely bucolic hero, and the false *aetion* that is applied to the *Forum Boarium* (*arvaque mugitu sancite Bouaria longo*, v.19) is perhaps testament to the incongruity of his pose.[102] DeBrohun rightly argues that Propertius needs to reduce Hercules' stature in order to fit him into his elegy, and Warden has shown how Propertius sets about adapting epic material for elegy, by either removing the epic qualities from the storyline, or by changing the characters therein.[103] At this stage in the poem, Propertius has reduced Hercules to a parodic version of a pastoral character, as a prelude to what is to follow.

In vv. 21-30, we encounter the second of the two landscapes in the poem:

> **dixerat, et** sicco torquet sitis ora palato,
> **terraque non nullas feta ministrat aquas.**
> sed procul inclusas audit ridere **puellas,**
> **lucus ubi umbroso fecerat orbe nemus**,
> femineae loca clausa deae fontisque piandos 25
> impune et nullis sacra retecta viris.
> **devia puniceae velabant limina uittae,**
> putris odorato luxerat igne casa,
> **populus** et longis ornabat frondibus aedem,
> multaque cantantis umbra tegebat avis. 30

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[102] Butler and Barber (1933) 372 inform us that Varro (*L.L.* 146) tells us that it was originally the cattle-market of Rome, and lay between the Velabrum and the Tiber.
[103] DeBrohun (2003) 203-4; Warden (1982) 235.

The falsity of the pastoral pose is somewhat exposed by the epic formula *dixerat, et* (v.21), which is often a standard one for when a god speaks, as evidenced by Apollo in both 3.3. 25 and 4.6.55. What follows has been construed by commentators as problematic: Hercules is assailed by a prodigious thirst, which his watery surroundings seem to be unable to satisfy: *terraque non nullas feta ministrant aquas* (v.22). The contradiction inherent in the fact that the earth is teeming with water and yet the hero proceeds to the enclosed spring has been answered with the emendation in the vulgate text of *nullas* to *ullas*, although Richardson and others advocate the retention of the transmitted text, on the grounds that it is preposterous to assume that this particular area of Rome was deprived of water, and that Hercules merely preferred to proceed to the spring because he was attracted by the sound of laughter from the enclosed *puellae.*[104] The transmitted *nullas* may carry metapoetic significance insofar as Propertius has Hercules deliberately eschew the copious waters that are external to the shrine, because he is about to assume his next guise as *exclusus amator*, and therefore seeks the pure spring water of the elegiac grove, thus implying that there is a poetic difference between those outside and inside. This grove has all the hallmarks of the genuine *locus amoenus*, and thus the reader is confronted with another instantiation of generic engagement. It has been noted by Warden that the actual shrine is an elegiacised version of the Vergilian cave of Cacus.[105] Thus what for the epic poet was a place of fear and violence becomes for the elegist a place of beauty and laughter, containing all the requisite constituents of the *locus amoenus*: water, shade, trees and birds. Moreover, it has Callimachean overtones; it is off the beaten track (*devia*, v.27), and the water consists of *fontes piandos* (v.25). At the same time the entrance resembles the door of a *paraclausithyron*, festooned with *puniceae...vittae* (v.27), redolent of the garlands that the *amatores* are accustomed to hang, and whose colour matches that of the beaks of the doves in the grove of 3.3 (*tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu*, 3.3.32). The *puellae* who are laughing within resemble more closely elegiac *puellae* than the more sombre and grave practitioners of the Bona Dea shrine, and their very plurality suggests that they may also resemble the Muses who populate that seminal elegiac grove of 3.3.[106] The tree is a poplar, which is also the tree of Hercules, foreshadowing the imminent transfer of the

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[104] Butler and Barber (1933) 372 suggest that the water was trapped underground. On this line, and the attempts to solve the interpretive problems, see Heyworth (2007) 486-7, who opts for *ullas*, on the grounds that he says Propertius never uses *non nullas* ("while the earth though fertile provides no water").

[105] Warden (1982) 236: Propertius is drawing on two Vergilian passages (*Aen*. 8.193-197 and 233-235). Both locations are shaded and secluded; Propertius' *puniceus* in reference to the purple fillets that festoon the doorway is regularly used to depict blood and bruised flesh, while his *putris* suggests the rotting of that flesh. The poplar tree features in *Aen*. 8 .276f.

[106] Anderson (1964) 6-7 points out that the devotees of the *Bona Dea* shrine were matrons and Vestal Virgins.

grove's ownership.[107] However, the poplar is also the tree in Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter*, a poem which may also be emblematic of that poet's new poetry.[108] In Callimachus' Hymn, Erysichthon intends to plunder the grove and use the poplar tree to build his banquet hall. Such a sacrilegious act makes him an enemy of the new poetics, symbolised by Demeter and her priestesses, whose modest lifestyle is a model for the Callimachean poet: soberness, hard work and nightly vigils. Murray has shown how Callimachus exploits the metaphor of ὕλη as poetic material in this poem, and thus the poplar is a metaphor for the subject matter of his poetry.[109] We have already seen how Propertius himself explicitly exploits the same metaphor in the Hylas elegy (1.20) and thus it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that in 4.9 Propertius is deliberately conflating the Herculean and Callimachean associations of the tree: Hercules, as a character from epic, is about to be assimilated into Callimachean elegiac discourse.

So begins this hero's attempt to enter the elegiac world:

huc ruit in siccam congesta pulvere barbam, 31
et iacit ante fores verba **minora deo**:
"vos precor, o luci[s] sacro quae **luditis** antro,
pandite defessis hospita fana viris.
fontis egens erro circaque sonantia lymphis; 35
et cava succepto flumine palma sat est.
audistisne aliquem, tergo qui sustulit orbem?
ille ego sum: Alciden terra recepta vocat.
quis facta Herculeae non audit fortia clavae
et numquam ad vastas irrita tela feras, 40
atque uni Stygias homini luxisse tenebras?
[accipit haec fesso vix mihi terra patet.]
angulus hic mundi nunc me mea fata trahentem 65
accipit: haec fesso vix mihi terra patet. 66
quodsi Iunoni sacrum faceretis amarae, 43
non clausisset aquas ipsa noverca suas. 44
sin aliquem vultusque meus saetaeque leonis 45
terrent et Libyco sole perusta coma,
idem ego Sidonia feci servilia palla
officia et Lydo pensa diurna colo,
mollis et hirsutum cepit mihi fascia pectus,

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[107] See Butler and Barber (1933) 372: "Sacred to Hercules and so of good omen for the success of his search."
[108] See above, p.76 n.53.
[109] Murray (2004) 212-6.

et **manibus duris** apta puella fui." 50
talibus Alcides; at talibus alma sacerdos
puniceo canas stamine vincta comas:
"parce oculis, hospes, lucoque abscede verendo;
cede agedum et tuta limina linque fuga.
interdicta viris metuenda lege piatur 55
quae se summota vindicat ara casa.
magno Tiresias aspexit Pallada uates,
fortia dum posita **Gorgone** membra lavat.
di tibi dent alios fontis: haec lympha puellis
avia secreti limitis unda fluit." 60

Hercules rushes up to the entrance to the shrine, with his dry beard all matted with dust, and addresses the priestess within in words that are suitably *minora deo* (v.31), as pointed out by DeBrohun.[110] She argues that here "the hero undergoes his first reduction, from god (or at least demigod) to elegiac *amator*." I would argue that in fact this is Hercules' second "reduction", as he has already tried (and failed) as a bucolic character. Moreover, I shall endeavour to show that this second one also fails, but the hero does finally succeed in reducing his stature to a level below that of epic, but above those of bucolic hexameter and love elegy. The shaggy appearance of the hero reveals his epic characteristics: his beard suggests that he is *hirsutus,* as Ennius is described in 1.1.61 (*Ennius hirsuta cingat sua dicta corona*) and the dirt that clogs it is suggestive of the silt that surrounds him, as well as that which clogs the Callimachean Euphrates. Hercules' allusion to the playful activity of the enclosed *puellae* (*luditis*, v.33) further enhances their potential status as Muses, particularly since the verb also has poetic connotations, having been used by Catullus (50.2 and 5) to denote poetic composition. Moreover, their guardianship by the priestess resembles that of a *lena* guarding the elegiac *puella*.

Hercules insists that all he needs is a mere cupful of water, the paucity of which seems insufficient for the needs of such a character, but which resonates with the Callimachean prescription for slender poetry. Furthermore, he refers to the water as *lympha*, (*lymphis*, v.35), a word that is suggestive of the habitation of deities such as nymphs or Muses, and thus implying the poetic significance of such water. The remainder of the hero's speech consists of his attempt to persuade those within to admit him, and he avails of the standard methods of the *exclusus amator*: he firstly uses *fortia verba*, detailing his heroic

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[110] DeBrohun (2003) 203.

exploits; when these do not succeed, he further tries to reduce his heroic stature by claiming that he could in fact be an elegiac *puella*, since he once dressed up as a woman and wore a bra.[111] Much has been written about this cross-dressing admission, mostly by scholars with a feminist agenda, who tend to interpret it as an exposition of the Roman male psyche, but the fact is that it was in those times a fairly commonplace practice for men to dress as women in ritual performance.[112] Thus there is nothing too remarkable in Hercules' admission, except for the comic tableau that it presents of this enormous brute trying to pass himself off as a woman by enveloping his great hairy chest with this the most female of garments. Moreover, there is clear evidence of generic play here: his chest is epically *hirsutus* (v.49), but the bra is *mollis* (v.49), and he performed the female task of spinning with *duris manibus* (v.50), a contradiction in elegiac terms, given the importance of a *puella*'s hands in love elegy. Thus his effort to 'elegiacize' himself as a character in love elegy is every bit as implausible as his previous attempt to 'bucolicise' himself.

It seems that the priestess recognises this fact, and her speech to Hercules further enhances the likelihood that this grove is a poetic one, for in warning him to stay away she reminds the hero of the story of Tiresias, who was blinded as a result of seeing Athene bathing in the waters of her grove, which were none other than the waters of the Hippocrene. The story therefore evokes Callimachus' *Hymn*, the Bath of Pallas, and more Callimachean undertones occur in the final distich of her speech (vv.59-60). The *alios fontis* that she wishes Hercules to access instead are those waters around him that he has chosen to reject in his attempt to enter the grove of elegy. DeBrohun rightly compares the waters within and without the grove with the two sets of Hippocrene waters in 3.3: the higher one, with its *magni fontes* (3.3.5 *magnis...fontibus*) of epic corresponds with the *alios fontis* of 4.6.59 and the spring in the grove with the one where Propertius is anointed by Calliope.[113] The word *limes* (*limitis*, v.60), with its liminal connotations, emphasises the generic transgression of Hercules' request, and evokes the *fallaci...limite* of 4.4.50, another possible metapoetic instantiation of such a transgression.

Typically for an elegiac hero, Hercules brooks no opposition, and since persuasion has failed, bursts in anyway:

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[111] On Hercules' speech in this regard, see DeBrohun (2003) 203-7.

[112] So Lindheim (1998) 43-66 who argues that the there is a tension in the poem emanating from two competeing discourses about gender identity. See also Janan (2001) 142-5. For cross-dressing as a feature of ritual practice, see Cairns (1992) 89.

[113] DeBrohun (2003) 208.

sic anus: ille umeris postis concussit opacos, 61
nec tulit iratam ianua clausa sitim.
at postquam exhausto iam flumine vicerat aestum,
ponit vix siccis tristia iura labris: 64
Maxima quae gregibus devota est Ara repertis, 67
ara per has" inquit "maxima facta manus,
haec nullis umquam pateat veneranda puellis,
Herculis aeternum nec sit inulta sitis." 70

He satisfies his gargantuan thirst, not with the small cupful of water as he promised, but by draining the entire spring. The water supply is therefore sufficient, but only just. Hercules' thirst, as it turns out, was too great for love elegy, and he therefore has failed in his attempt to become a character from that type of poetry. But it is still elegiac water, and the action of bursting into the grove has facilitated the aetiology of the *Ara Maxima*, because henceforth it will exclude women as a punishment to them for his exclusion. Thus the large draught of water that he imbibes is an aetiological draught. The banning of the women from his altar reflects the eclipse of erotic elegy in favour the poet's new Roman aetiological programme. Poems 4.7 and 4.8 demonstrate that there is still room in his repertoire for erotic elegy, but the expulsion of the girls is a manifestation of the demise of their supremacy in his poetry as in Book 4 his poems are more masculine. Even though Cynthia appears to have the upper hand in 4.8, the story is recounted with a certain amount of amused detachment, and her power is seriously undercut by her appearance in the preceding poem as already dead.

The closing lines of the elegy echo the solemnity of the opening, but this time they are in the language of a Roman prayer, in which Propertius asks Hercules to dwell graciously in his book:

hunc, quoniam manibus purgatum sanxerat orbem, 73
sic Sanctum Tatiae composuere Cures. 74
sancte pater salve, cui iam favet aspera Iuno: 71
Sancte, velis libro dexter **inesse** meo. 72

McParland questions this appeal to Hercules, since he is not a patron of literature, and argues that the entire poem is a demonstration of the rejection of the role of *exclusus amator*, in other words, love elegy, and that Propertius is rejecting Cynthia as literary patron and identifies himself with Hercules.[114] I would argue that Cynthia has long been replaced by the Muses at the beginning of Book 3, and that he is in fact inviting Hercules, in his new guise as a character from aetiological elegy, to exist in (*inesse*, v. 74) his poetry book. To be more precise, he is inviting him to appear in his aetiological elegy in his capacity as founder of the *Ara Maxima.* In diminishing Hercules' stature as an epic hero, he succeeds in making him an aetiological one for his elegy, thereby elevating the stature of his elegiac poetry.

To sum up, 4.9 may be interpreted as being about the 'elegiacisation' of epic material in a classic case of the 'generic enrichment' of Propertian elegy, so that its status is elevated from lowly love elegy to the higher and more Callimachean aetiological variety. In fact, this process described by Harrison is neatly dramatised within his metaphor of hospitality in the prophetic words of the priestess at 4.9.53-4:

> parce oculis, **hospes**, lucoque abscede verendo'
> cede agedum et tuta **limina** linque fuga.

It is precisely the failure of this 'guest from epic' to heed the priestess's instructions that causes the *limen* to be broken down and facilitate his entry into the grove of elegy. Hercules has thus undergone a gradual transformation as a character from epic, initially in a downward (and unsuccessful) trajectory to one of pastoral poetry, then across to love elegy, before he moves somewhat upwards again and settles as a character from aetiological elegy. DeBrohun argues that Hercules' breaking down of the entrance of the grove represents "a contradiction of Callimachean poetics" and that therefore the hero "may represent the poet's book very well, including the problems inherent in its program."[115] I would suggest instead however that in fact Hercules' actions in breaking down the entrance are (just about) justified in poetic terms: he transgresses the *limen* of love elegy by draining the spring, but this grove of elegiac inspiration, whose themes have heretofore been mainly erotic and emphatically *tenues*, is nevertheless amenable to accommodating a higher form of elegy within its boundaries, even if it means that its entrance must undergo a certain amount of (violent) expansion and its spring must yield all of its supply. The grove of elegy remains essentially intact, but it undergoes a transformation in the sense that it has been expanded from its former narrow erotic dimensions to admit of a certain amount of epic material, but only after it has been

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[114] McParland (1970) 349-355. Her view is challenged by Warden, who demonstrates that Hercules is satirised throughout the poem, and argues instead that the motive for the poem is one of *aemulatio* with Vergilian epic.
[115] DeBrohun (2003) 208-9.

modified to suit Propertius' aetiological programme. Thus I would further suggest that the elegy, besides being an aetiological one for the *Ara Maxima*, is also a dramatisation of the very process of elevation from its former erotic format, much in the same way as the Tarpeia elegy is. Both can be regarded as *aetia* of Propertian aetiological elegy, a form of elegy that has come into being from the plundering and modification of material from epic, and the expansion of the scope of elegy. By allowing Hercules to avail of all of the elegiac water in the grove, Propertius fulfils his promise of 4.1.59-60: *sed tamen exiguo quodcumque e pectore rivi / fluxerit, hoc patriae serviet omne meae.*

CONCLUSIONS

Alessandro Barchiesi states that Roman poets "tend to stage programmatic respect to a traditional genre, precisely to be able to dramatize their work as deviation or genre-bending."[1] For Propertius, this "programmatic respect" is explicitly staged at the start of his career; indeed, this can be said to encapsulate his programmatic strategy in Books 1 and 2, before the deviations that are heralded in the introductory poems of Book 3, and embraced fully in Book 4. The jury is of course out on how fully formed were the essential characteristics of Latin love elegy when Propertius embarked on Book 1. It seems likely that what began in Catullus was taken up by Gallus and that this immediate predecessor was responsible for endowing Latin love elegy with most of the characteristics that appear in Propertius and Tibullus. But whether or not this was the case, or whether Propertius can take the credit for much of the creation of this genre, what emerges from my investigation is that, in Book 1 in particular, and to a lesser extent in Book 2, the poet sets out to define what Hinds terms as the essential 'default setting' of his elegy.[2] According to this, *servitium amoris* is systematically pervasive, as is suffering and frustration, punctuated by all too brief episodes of satisfaction. The only voice that speaks is that of the poet-lover, who excludes himself from the outside world to such an extent that his only engagement with it is as a reluctant *praeceptor amoris*: his bitter experience is what renders him as a great poet, to be imitated by fellow sufferers. This elegiac code is transmitted within the Callimachean aesthetic of the slender, the small, and the original, and as such it is defined in opposition to epic, whose own 'default setting' entails subject matter that is harsh (*durus*), martial and socially engaged in comparison to that of elegy which is soft (*mollis*), whose erotic struggles are often expressed by means of the metaphor of *militia amoris*, and whose exclusion from society is represented by the *exclusus amator*. As we have seen, despite the fact that there is little evidence of a Callimachean objection to epic *per se*, Propertius tendentiously 'misreads' the Callimachean manifesto and endows that genre with the objectionable attributes of the over-sized Euphrates and the boundlessness of the sea. Such a negative application is facilitated by epic's historic association with the sea and Homer.

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[1] Barchiesi (2001) 156.

[2] Hinds (2000) 222.

Such is the picture presented of elegy in the first half of Propertius' poetic career, and the metapoetic water metaphors reflect the simplicity of the contrasts that exist in such an oppositional exposition of his craft: fresh water plays a lesser role than its salty counterpart: it appears in 1.11 in the form of the small Callimachean Lucrine lake, where the poet would prefer to situate Cynthia, rather on the crowded and polluted shores of Baiae; In 1.14 it plays a role in exposing the poverty of Tullus' material wealth in the face of the poet's own poetic genius; it also features in 1.20, as the pure Callimachean and elegiac spring to which Hylas goes, after coming ashore from the epic sea. Here it is situated in a *locus amoenus*, and although there are complex associations with the linear tradition of elegy and of poetry in general, the manipulation of this literary space is rudimentary and conventional in comparison with what is to come in his later work. The sea, in harmony with its non-metapoetic symbolic application as an agent of separation from Cynthia, represents the generic *limen*, over which elegy must not cross, and most often connotes epic. In 1.8, Cynthia threatens to travel across this sea with another in the first 'hexametric' half of the poem, only to be persuaded to confine herself to the elegiac shore in the second 'pentametric' half, and thus this metaliterary drama also serves to reflect the metre of the elegiac couplet, as well as the nature of poetry that suits it: flights of 'epic' fancy are constrained and curbed by the pentameter line. In 1.6 the sea once again has the potential to separate the lovers, and we have seen that 1.17 can be read as an enactment of this very eventuality, where the poet presents himself as out of his generic depth.

In Book 2, we encounter the first indications that the generic orthodoxy that the poet has been at such pains to define and promote threatens to suffocate his creative talents. In 2.10, he hints that at some time in the future he will move on from poetry centred on Cynthia, and her impending eclipse is adumbrated in both the dream of 2.26A and the joint voyage of 2.26B. But there is another concern at play in Book 2: in 27/26 BC or thereabouts, Propertius was admitted to Maecenas' literary circle. Fulsome praise is accorded to Maecenas in the prologue to this second book, and in its epilogue (2.34) Propertius addresses firstly one Lynceus, whose identity has been the subject of much discussion, but believed by many to be the epic and tragic poet L. Varius Rufus, before turning unambiguously to Vergil, incorporating a summary of that poet's career and hailing the forthcoming *Aeneid* as a superior poem to the *Iliad*.[3] This is followed by a catalogue of four poets who composed elegiac verse, to the end of which he attaches his own name:

> haec quoque perfecto ludebat Iasone Varro,
> Varro Leucadiae maxima flamma suae;
> haec quoque lascivi cantarunt scripta Catulli,
> Lesbia quis ipsa notior est Helena;
> haec etiam docti confessa est pagina Calvi,
> cum caneret miserae funera Quintiliae,
> et modo formosa quam multa Lycoride Gallus
> mortuus inferna vulnera lavit aqua!
> Cynthia quin etiam versu laudata Properti,
> hos inter si me ponere fama volet. (2.34.85-94)

In this final passage of the poem, Propertius devises a literary genealogy, thereby creating for himself the principal elegiac role in Maecenas' circle, corresponding to Vergil's (and Varius'?) principal epic one. The genealogy is, however, somewhat suspect, if we compare it to Ovid's canon of Roman elegists (Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid), because Varro, Catullus and Calvus did not compose exclusively erotic elegy, nor was such poetry their main claim to fame.[4] One scholar has suggested that Propertius' list was intended to dilute the presence of the recently deceased and disgraced Gallus.[5] Perhaps so, but I would suggest that Propertius' main concern here is to provide for himself a credible elegiac lineage, which in reality was somewhat lacking, since Gallus appears to have been his only true predecessor of Latin love elegy.

Thus, by the beginning of Book 3 Propertius seems poised on two fronts to begin to distance himself from his somewhat limiting pose as elegiac lover-poet in such bondage to his mistress that he must exclude himself from society: those of possible artistic exhaustion and an awareness of his responsibilities and his aspirations as a member of Maecenas' literary circle. We have seen the shadowy presence of Horace (himself incidentally no admirer, it seems, of Propertius)[6] behind the first five poems of the third book, and Propertius' continued

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[3] See Cairns (2006) 295-319 for a discussion of the possible identity of Lynceus and for a history of previous scholarship on the subject.

[4] Ovid *Trist.* 4.10.51-4. Ovid's lines imply that Tibullus chronologically precedes Propertius, but there is broad consensus that the reverse is the case. On this, see Maltby (2002) 39-40. *Contra*, see Knox (2005) 204-216.

[5] Cairns (2006) 315-6.

[6] On Horace's relationship with Propertius there is the suggestion that the elegist was the target of Horace's barbed comment in *Epistles* 2.2.99-100, where an anonymous poet is prepared to award him the title of Alcaeus in return for himself being given the name of Callimachus. Besides this, Propertius is conspicuous by his

preoccupation with opposing elegy to epic in these poems reveals a poet who is ready to relinquish his erstwhile humble stance as abject lover and composer of humble poetry in favour of joining this brotherhood of Muse-inspired and anointed poets. Here, and in the epilogue to Book 2, we see for the first time the poet's ambition to elevate both himself and his poetry to the level of canonic status, as the principal Elegist to match the Lyric Horace and the Epic Vergil. The name of Callimachus opens the first poem of Book 3, and this is also his first explicit appearance in the oeuvre, even if his presence has been clear since the beginning. From now on, however, Propertius seems prepared to follow more closely in that poet's footsteps, a journey which he begins by requesting entry into his elegiac grove where he meets the Muses and is anointed by them. The Callimachean pure water that he formerly drew from the lower reaches of Helicon, under the tutelage of Cupid and his solitary Muse in the form of Cynthia, has now been transformed into the superior and more distilled consecrated water of this Callimachean and Philitean inspirational *locus amoenus,* a setting which, in various shapes and forms, will prove to be a crucial rhetorical theatre for future metaliterary play.

Along with the more explicit adoption of Callimachus as a poetic model for Propertian elegy there emerges a corresponding metapoetic emphasis on spring water at the expense of the sea. From now on, the elegiac grove, a *locus amoenus* with its Callimachean spring water, becomes a special signifier for his poetic enterprise. He brings to the fore his role as *praeceptor amoris* and Cynthia is eclipsed by omission from the programmatic poems and by the fact that she is only mentioned by name 3 times in Book 3, in comparison with 29 appearances in Book 1 and 22 in Book 2. The rare appearances of her name in this book are also indicative of her corresponding decline in importance in Propertius' poetry: in 3.21.9 she is the cause of a new declaration of intent to attempt the formerly ineffective *remedium amoris* of a sea voyage. This time, however, the poet envisages a possible successful outcome. In 3.24.3 and 3.25.6, her name appears in relation to the final *renuntiatio amoris.* On the other occasions when he mentions his girl, it is never absolutely clear that it is Cynthia to whom he refers, and, indeed, he looks forward to a new erotic adventure in 3.20. He remains a love elegist, but the terms of his role are different because he appears to be placing himself more at the disposal of other lovers and poets, and less at that of his mistress. Moreover, his promotion of himself as *praeceptor amoris* can be interpreted as part of his

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absence from mention in Horace's poetry, in comparison to Vergil and others, including Tibullus, who was not even a member of Maecenas' circle.

strategy to elevate his status to principal elegist as he engages in a more agonistic relationship with the other members of Maecenas' circle.

Where the sea is mentioned in the programmatic poems at the start of Book 3, its literary associations with epic become more complex, and the sea voyage becomes part of a whole semantic nexus that conveys the antithesis to Propertian elegy. In opposing these two extremes, 3.4 and 3.5 are set against each other, and Caesar's proposed trip across the sea is part of the baggage of the epic lifestyle that the elegist eschews, choosing instead to remain ashore as a passive spectator. In 3.9, the association becomes more explicit, with Maecenas' real or imagined request for epic poetry being expressed in nautical terms. In contrast with the earlier elegies, however, the emphasis is now on postponement, rather than rejection, of more elevated poetry. In other poems of Book 3, however, the sea features much in the way that it did in Books 1 and 2. In 3.7 we have Paetus drowning, and I have argued that Propertius is here engaged in expanding the possibilities of elegy by taking a figure from outside the genre and elegiacising him. Instead of opposing love and war, he opposes the desire for wealth with the simple life, and this is the elegiac peg on which he hangs his experiment. The sea here is only metapoetic in the liminal sense that travelling across it represents a desertion of elegiac principles, and thus it is Paetus who makes the ill-fated journey, and not the poet. This liminal value of the sea again applies in 3.21, as the means by which the poet envisages a successful escape from Cynthia-poetry, and in the final poem of Book 3, he re-deploys the old sea of love metaphor of the love affair as a particularly fraught sea voyage to signal the end of Cynthia's domination in his work.

The adoption of Callimachus as role model becomes even more pronounced in Book 4, where Propertius explicitly presents himself as the Roman Callimachus. The adoption of such a sobriquet entails more than that poet's doctrines regarding the slender style, however. From this stage in his career, Propertius also looks to that poet's aetiological poetry as a model for his own. But there is a difficulty. How can a poet who has invested so much artistic time and energy into crystallizing the essential characteristics, the 'default setting' of his genre, accommodate such a revolutionary change in his poetry, without violating it? Horos' timely reminder in 4.1.135-6, an echo of Apollo's direction in 3.3, reveals that Propertius was aware of the difficulty:

> at tu finge elegos, fallax opus (haec tua castra!)
> scribat ut exemplo cetera turba tuo.

Horos' reference to Propertius' poetry as *castra* reveals the vestigial presence of the elegiac topos of *militia amoris*, and the *turba* to whom he must set an example recalls the reverent throng of poets envisaged by Propertius at his graveside in 1.7.23-4, the *scriptorium...turba* of 3.1.12, as well as Apollo's and Calliope's directions to the poet in 3.3. This investigation of Book 4 through the lens of metapoetic water imagery has revealed how Propertius deals with the problem by actually exploiting the tension created by a clash between aetiological and erotic elegy, which he complicates by continuing his engagement with epic. Generic confrontations pervade the poems, and the essential characteristics of Propertian elegy, so visible in the earlier books, persist in Book 4, but in an occluded form. The engagement with themes outside the former realm of love elegy is what infuses his poetry with a new dynamism and effects its transformation. The ambiguity in 4.1 and the mixed messages therein represent the working formula for the whole book, in which Propertius succeeds in retaining the essential characteristics of his old elegy, while bending them out of shape to fit into his new one. Gone is the poet-lover stance. The poetic voice is on the outside looking in. Only in 4.7 and 4.8 does he return to his old role, and even here, he is a decidedly detached elegiac lover. In its place is a *praeceptor* of aetiological and Roman themes, but themes which nevertheless have a fair amount of erotic content. This time, however, it is other people's erotic fixations that preoccupy him; Tarpeia's infatuation for Tatius; Antony and Cleopatra; Hercules' gatecrashing of the *Bona Dea* girls' party; Arethusa's love for her absent husband; Cornelia's love of her grieving husband from the grave. Feminine passion, so often seen as subversive of the essential maleness of epic, but intrinsic to elegy, becomes paradoxically subversive to its own genre by facilitating the intrusion of epic and aetiological themes into its semantic universe. These themes, however, do not merely undergo a Procrustean reduction to fit the smaller genre: the adjustment is on both sides as Propertius' elegy also expands to accommodate them. Thus love elegy elevates itself to a form of Roman aetiological elegy that nevertheless retains its essential erotic associations.

This new level of sophistication in Propertius' poetic programme is reflected in his metapoetic exploitation of water. It is the water of the generically liminal *locus amoenus* that takes precedence over any other, and even the sea only makes its appearance as an imitator of such a setting (in 4.6), in order to facilitate the clash between epic and elegiac themes. The pure Callimachean water of slender poetry is an implicit presence, as is Propertius' assumed role as an anointed member of a select brotherhood of superior poets. Such is the rhetorical space in which he engages in generic tussles with other forms of poetry and emerges as an equal contender.

As the Roman Callimachus, Propertius is no mere imitator of his predecessor. His elegy is not merely a Latin version of aetiological poetry inspired by the Muses, but a synthesis of old and new, an innovative fusion of erotic and Roman aetiological themes. Callimachus himself might well have approved.

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