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A New Voice in Roman Elegy: The Poeta of Propertius 2.1

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gehoben und somit der Abschluß des Aristodemos-Gesprächs in sie eingegangen ist. Auch hier sehen wir wieder ein weitaus bewußteres Vorgehen, als es Gignons Kommentar vermuten läßt.

Insgesamt wird durch unseren Befund Theilers Urteil über die Verfahrensweise Xenophons im Hinblick auf den Abschluß des Aristodemos-Gesprächs bestätigt¹⁷).

Würzburg

K.-H. Stanzel

17) Theiler (oben Anm. 3) 51: „Die Eigentätigkeit des Xenophon dürfen wir nicht zu gering anschlagen, der nur allgemein einem Muster folgen, dann aber in Formulierung und Zusätzen (selbstverständlich auch Streichungen) selbständig sein konnte.“

A NEW VOICE IN ROMAN ELEGY: THE *POETA* OF PROPERTIUS 2.1

The introductory elegies of Propertius' first two books reveal quite different speakers: in 1.1 an abject *amator* whose emotional torture develops throughout the *Monobiblos*; but in 2.1 a confident and proud *poeta*. Book 2 includes several pieces in which Propertius writes less about his involvement with Cynthia after the fashion of Book 1, and more about his involvement with the poetic process, a critical juncture in the history of Roman Elegy. For the speaker of the *Monobiblos*, poetry merely serves his love; beyond its implicit function as a vehicle for *querelae*, its utility in winning the *dura puella* is the sole "literary" subject explicitly treated in the first book, in 1.7 and 1.9. But beginning with 2.1, Propertius frequently discusses poetics with a sophisticated air absent earlier in his work, offering a new voice whose apparent private and public concerns supplant those of his earlier distinctive *persona*, the *miser amator*. The impression of a mature esthetic sensibility replaces the image of youthful frenzied suffering.

This new *persona*, a *poeta* who discusses not so much the lover's condition as the artist's craft, steps forward in the collection's introduction, presumably written last; elegies 2.10, 2.11,

2.13, and 2.34 all feature this voice and thus appear, in the book's sequence, to develop it further from the programmatic 2.1¹). Where Book 1 had depicted Propertius obsessively and almost exclusively as *amans*, Book 2 begins to examine Propertius *scribens*. The *personae* of poet and lover thus are far more separated in Book 2 than in Book 1, and the *amator* and his *dura puella* increasingly portray variations on stereotypes which lack the compelling emotional realism of the *Monobiblos*²). In this paper I wish to demonstrate, for understanding 2.1 and perhaps the entire book, the importance of recognizing this new and original *persona*. My discussion assumes two large thematic divisions of the poem, lines 1–46 and 47–78. The first is treated in four sections, devoted to: (1) the opening couplets of 2.1 and 1.1, (2) *causas mille novas* of 2.1.5–16, (3) *bellaque resque Caesaris* of 2.1.17–38, and (4) an invocation of Callimachus, 2.1.39–46. For the second part, I concentrate first on Cynthia and the speaker's love, and then on the poem's end where a new speaker, Maecenas, takes from the first part Propertius' first explicit declaration of Callimachean poetics

1) I assume the original unity of Book 2. Some discussions have revived Lachmann's theory that Propertius originally wrote 5 books, two of which were combined in the ms. tradition to form the second book. Cf. C. Lachmann, *Sextus Aurelius Propertius Carmina* (Berlin 1816; New York 1973) xxi–xxiii, and ad loc.; H. E. Butler and E. A. Barber, *The Elegies of Propertius* (Oxford 1933; Reprint Hildesheim 1969) xxvii–xxxv; and P. J. Enk, *Sex. Propertii elegiarum Liber I (Monobiblos)*, 2 vols, (Leiden, 1946) 19–29. B. A. Heiden, *Book-Division Within Propertius Book II*, *QUCC* 40 (1982) 151–156, evaluates the arguments for and against Lachmann. Cf. also B. L. Ullman, *The Book Division of Propertius*, *CP* 4 (1909) 45–71; O. Skutsch, *The Second Book of Propertius*, *HSCP* 79 (1975) 229–233; J. King, *Propertius 2.1–12: His Callimachean Second Libellus*, *WüJbb NF* 6b (1980) 61–84; E. Menes, *The External Evidence for the Division of Propertius, Book 2*, *CP* 78 (1983) 137–143. For Propertian scholarship: H. Harrauer, *A Bibliography to Propertius, Bibliography to the Augustan Poetry*, vol. 2 (Hildesheim 1973); W. R. Nethercut, *Twelve Years of Propertian Scholarship: 1960–1972*, *CW* 69 (1975–1976) 1–33, 225–257, 289–309; *Recent Scholarship on Propertius*, *ANRW* 30.3 (1983) 1813–1857; P. Fedeli and P. Pinotti, *Bibliografia Properziana (1946–1983)*, *Atti Accademia Properziana del Subasio Serie 6*, n. 9 (Assisi 1985).

2) Only in the second book, as if now conscious of depicting a role, does he call himself *amator*: at (2.3.16) with a humorous aside to the reader, *non sum de nihilo blandus amator ego*, and at 2.20.35 where, accused of infidelity, he represents himself as a most unconventional lover: *solus amator / nec cito desisto nec temere incipio*. *Poeta* is 4 times applied to Propertius, including the introductions of Books 2 and 3 (1.7.21,24; 2.1.12; 2.26b.24; 3.1.19). The ambiguous *vates* appears more frequently: 5 times in Book 2, 6 in Book 4, absent from Books 1 and 3. For *vates* see J. K. Newman, *The Concept of Vates in Augustan Poetry*, *Collection Latomus* 89 (Brussels 1967).

and implicitly adapts this esthetic to the imagery and language of elegy (2.1.39–78).

A. Poeta (2.1.1–46)

1. *The opening couplets: miserum me (1.1) vs. ingenium nobis (2.1).* Elegies 1.1 and 2.1 show how differently Propertius regarded his own poetry by the time he had assembled his second collection³). In the first couplets of these two elegies, even the minutiae of syntax and meter suggest different poetic stances. Saying nothing explicit about inspiration or poetic intentions, 1.1 does not address the creative distance between being in love and writing poetry about love, except for implicitly evoking Apollo in “Cynthia,” after Catullus’ suggestion of Greek Lyric in “Lesbia,” and perhaps preceding Tibullus’ Apollonian “Delia.” 1.1 confesses forced humiliation. Throughout this first poem, and throughout his first book, with significant exceptions only at the book’s close (1.20–1.22) Propertius, obsessed with Cynthia’s remarkable power, poses as *miser amator*:

*Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.
tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus
et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus,
donec me docuit castas odisse puellas
improbis, et nullo vivere consilio. (1.1.1–6)⁴*

Cynthia’s name opens 1.1 with emphatic honor: *prima* further enhances her position. The poet enters his own poem weakly, only after conflict at the strong caesura stresses Cynthia’s eyes (*suis*). At first a mere adjective, *miserum*, he lacks the importance given Cynthia by her name’s position and her own emphatic reflexive. She is the line’s subject, the poetry’s main topic; he, its anonymous

3) G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Latin Poetry* (Oxford 1968) 480 ff., posits a simultaneous publication of Books 1–3, as with Horace *Carmina* 1–3. For opposing views: J. A. Barsby, *The Composition and Publication of the First Three Books of Propertius*, *Greece & Rome* 21 (1974) 128–137; and O. Skutsch, *The Second Book of Propertius*, *HSCP* 79 (1975) 229–233. Cf. also J. Michelfeit, *Das augusteische Gedichtbuch*, *RhM* 112 (1969) 311–347.

4) The text is E. A. Barber, *Sexti Properti Carmina* (Oxford 1960). Other editions cited by last name, and ad loc.: W. A. Camps, *Propertius: Elegies Book 2* (Cambridge 1967); P. J. Enk, *Sex. Propertii elegiarum Liber secundus*, 2 vols. (Leiden 1962); and L. R. Richardson Jr., *Propertius. Elegies I–IV*, *The American Philological Association Series of Classical Texts* (Oklahoma 1976).

object⁵). His being and identity serve his condition: *me* loses its stress to *miserum*. The rhythm (DDDS) emphasizes his entrapment, a heavy spondee among the darting glances of Cynthia's four dactyls. The reader notes her complete metrical, syntactical, and thematic dominance of the line: her strength, his pitiful weakness; her lightness, his oppression.

In the second couplet the first two violent verbs *deicit* (3) and *pressit* (4) impose the more refined third, *docuit* (5). Along with *prima* (1), *docuit* suggests initiation: after Amor's torture comes his teaching, itself a kind of torture. In his *furor* (7) the speaker suffers *adversos deos* (8). Thus before offering a catalogue of mythological *exempla* (1.1–16) he has made a startling confession: in this wretched *furor* he lives impervious to cure (1.1.7–8). The poem ends pathetically, with no explicit statements about poetry. Its themes are Cynthia's amazing dominance, and Amor's inexorable power. Unable to speak freely, the speaker rejects his listeners and their futile aid (1.125 ff.).

2.1 opens with a different tone and another *persona*, emphatically presented as a prolific and famous poet rather than a pitiful lover:

*Quaeritis, unde mihi totiens scribantur amores,
unde meus veniat mollis in ora liber.
non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo,
ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit.* (2.1.1–4)

With the elegy's first word the speaker draws into the poem a literary audience, and Propertius begins his second collection with a couplet addressing first his inspiration and second his considerable reputation. In this *recusatio* addressed to Maecenas (2.1.17), himself a poet and patron of poets, the speaker shrinks from the grand and the official to examine minutely *unde mihi totiens scribantur amores* (2.1.5–16)⁶. His anonymous mistress he treats as an abstraction while discussing Callimachean poetics. After two distichs he turns to a catalogue of his girl's attributes, as 1.1 had turned from opening theme to catalogue (1.1.9–16), but concentrating on what the famous *poeta* does, rather than what the *miser amator* suffers.

5) Even in the book's signature epigram, 1.22, he omits his own name.

6) For a full treatment of the Roman *recusatio* cf. W. Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, Hermes Einzelschriften 16 (Wiesbaden 1960).

However dissimilar in their intentions, 2.1.1 and 1.1.1 are nonetheless similar DDDS hexameters⁷):

Cynthia prima suis / miserum me cepit ocellis (1.1.1)

Quaeritis, unde mihi / totiens scribantur amores (2.1.1)

Both begin with emphatic three-syllable words, followed by a pair of two-syllable words with stressed last syllable (in conflict) before a hephthemimeral caesura. Both resume after the caesura with a word whose stress has shifted to its final syllable (*miserum*, *totiens*). But while in the soliloquy 1.1 the speaker reveals his remarkable plight to an audience, and later rejects them, 2.1 assumes a dialogue: the audience approaches the speaker to ask about his remarkable poems⁸).

The rhythm of 2.1.1 also shows the change. In 1.1.1, enclitic *me*, attached to *miserum* as the second element in the fourth foot, has no stress; the speaker presents himself as the weakened direct object of *Cynthia prima ... cepit*. But in 2.1.1 *mihi* gains emphasis by its position at the strong caesura; the passive verb makes the creation of *amores*, not the personality of the speaker, the poem's real subject. The conflict which in 1.1.1 highlights *miserum* and makes the speaker pathetic, likewise emphasizes *totiens* in 2.1.1, but to the opposite effect, suggesting his confident work in the elegiac tradition. *Ocellis*, the dramatic last word of 1.1.1, signifies Cynthia's beauty and control, as *lumina* in 1.1.3 attests; parallel to this is the last word of 2.1.1, *amores*, which are controlled entirely by the poet.

7) The pattern in 4.7% of Propertius' hexameters; cf. M. Platnauer, *Latin Elegiac Verse* (Cambridge 1951) 36. Yet the initial pentameters reveal completely different patterns. 1.1.2, *contactum nullis ante cupidinibus*, shows SS, the least frequent in Propertius, 16.4% (Platnauer, 37). The first half of the line, with its slow spondees, its *u* and *i* sounds which look back to line 1, its *c*'s and *t*'s, sets up the description of the oppressed lover in 1.1.3–6. 2.1.2, *unde meus veniat mollis in ora liber*, has DD, a much more frequent (24.1%) arrangement (Platnauer, 37). N. Greenberg, *Metrics of the Elegiac Couplet*, *CW* 80 (1987) 240–241, refines Platnauer's data: "hexameters beginning with a dactyl tend to be accompanied by pentameters beginning with a dactyl, and so also for spondees." His figures: Dxxx–Dx, 38.6%; Dxxx–Sx, 18.2%, for Propertius, "normally the most spondaic." Thus the first pentameter of Book 2 is not meant to be as striking to the reader as the first pentameter of Book 1. The relaxed tone repeats and redefines the first line: one more indirect question, as opposed to a frenzied declaration of torture.

8) For the poet's audience as critics, cf. N. Wiggers, *Reconsideration of Propertius 2.1*, *CJ* 72 (1977) 334–335. Likewise, J. H. Kühn, *Die Prooimion-Elegie des zweiten Properz-Buches*, *Hermes* 89 (1961) 88–89.

Although in 2.1 the speaker identifies his love entirely with his poetry, he does not, as in the *Monobiblos*, identify his poetry entirely with his love. It quickly becomes evident that the opening question concerns the writing of *amores*, rather than the representation of *amor*. The first verb of Book 2, *quaeritis*, immediately calls up the second, *scribantur* (1), the verb most completely associated with the poet (*mihi totiens*), and with love poetry (*amores*) as the speaker sees it. This second verb, the virtual programmatic subject of Book 2, is both paraphrased and developed by the book's third verb and its subject, *veniat . . . liber* (2). The list of terms for composition resumes with the fourth and fifth verbs of the book, *cantat* (3) and *facit* (4). First-person pronouns and adjectives, *mihi* (1), *meus* (2), *mihi* (3), and *nobis* (4), appear in the two opening distichs twice as frequently as in 1.1. The muse and the god so conspicuously absent at the beginning of Book 1 are conspicuously dismissed at the beginning of Book 2⁹). Also in contrast with 1.1, Cynthia is somewhat depersonalized (*ipsa puella*); the reader will read four more poems before her name appears, in 2.5, which in fact treats the *fama* gained by poet and mistress with the popularity of the *Monobiblos*¹⁰). The word order of 2.1.4, *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*, serves to emphasize the poet himself and *ingenium*, rather than the *puella*, as the elegy's focus. *Quaeritis* suggests that the collection itself will answer a long process of deliberation: 2.1 repeatedly considers different aspects and sources of *ingenium*. 1.1 does not examine poetic inspiration: it merely discusses Cynthia. Thus at its outset Book 2 takes a more witty and self-consciously artistic view, one which shifts much of the attention, and much of the artistic praise, from *puella* to *poeta*.

9) 2.1.4, *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*, the thematic declaration for Book 2, is a DS pentameter, most frequent by far in Propertius (43%), Tibullus (58.6%) and Ovid (52.4%) (Platnauer, 37). For a couplet the pattern of 3/4 is his second most common, 29.2% (Greenberg, 240). The poet chooses his most unremarkable pattern for a pentameter to express this notion about his *ingenium*; his meter, at least, suggests that this is not meant to appear extraordinary. H. P. Stahl, *Propertius: "Love" and "War": Individual and State Under Augustus*, (Berkeley 1985) 163, notes the deliberate low tone in 1–16, which "leave nothing to be desired in silliness and lack of dignity." The contrast between hexameter (3) and pentameter (4) also makes this clear.

10) Cynthia is named in 14 of the first 20 poems (8a and 8b separate) of Book 1, but in only 6 of the first 20 poems of Book 2 (13a and 13b joined).

2. *ipsa puella* (2.1.5–16). After the thematic opening of 2.1.1–4, Propertius turns to a catalogue¹¹), the *causas mille ... novas* whence ostensibly spring *mihi ... totiens amores* (1):

*sive illam Cois fulgentem incedere nosco*¹²
hac totum e Coa veste volumen erit.
seu vidi ad frontem sparsos errare capillos,
gaudet laudatis ire superba comis;
sive lyrae carmen digitis percussit eburnis,
miramur, facilis ut premat arte manus;
seu cum poscentis somnum declinat ocellos,
invenio causas mille poeta novas ... (2.1.5–12)

Wiggers (335) notes that Cynthia “is idealized and one-dimensional, celebrated primarily as the catalyst for poetry, and as such she assumes a symbolic value that transcends her personal worth.” The list elevates frivolous things; the anaphora of *sive* and *seu* creates a long sentence of twelve lines on costume, toilette, vanity, and the self-conscious artistry of both poet and mistress. Not content merely with the beauty of trivia (2.5–14), the speaker insists upon the overwhelming esthetic importance of trivia; by the end of this litany (15–16), anything at all which Cynthia does or says merits poetry. Stahl (269) rightly asks “what can be more silly and indignant to a serious, male Roman mind ... [than a] girl’s doings and chatterings?” But King (63 n.7) notes that the list has serious literary suggestions: “Propertius’ *aitia* will explain the workings of his mistress’ manners and mores, not existing ritual customs outside the poem.” What the poet sees becomes poetry; he acknowledges no external help, neither god nor muse, in the poetic process here. But beauty, as he first notes it, is explicitly and implicitly literary; in her Coan dress, Cynthia is a walking book. The couplet recalls the sequence 1.1–2: the speaker’s situation (1.1) followed by his criticism of beauty’s artful elaboration (1.2):

11) 2.1.3–42 show many epic features. Both P. Boyancé, *Propertius*, in: *L’influence grecque sur la poésie latine de Catulle à Ovid*, ed. P. Boyancé (Geneva 1953); and B. Verstraete, *Propertius’ Use of Myth in Book Two*, in: *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History II*, ed. C. Deroux, Collection Latomus 168 (Brussels 1980) 263, note the *Iliad*’s importance to Propertius. But even his non-heroic material alludes to epic. J. King, *Wüjbb NF 6b* (1980) 63 n. 7 finds in 2.1.5–16 an epic list and rhythm in the hexameters’ “extraordinarily large percentage” of spondees to “suggest ... the grave importance of epic poetry.”

12) Archibald Allen, *Hermes* 113 (1985) 381f., persuasively suggests *nosco*; Enk adopts *vidi*; OCT reads †*cogist*.

*quid invat ornato procedere, vita, capillo
 et tenuis Coa veste movere sinus,
 aut quid Orontea crinis perfundere murra,
 teque peregrinis vendere muneribus,
 naturaeque decus mercato perdere cultu,
 nec sinere in propriis membra nitere bonis?
 crede mihi, non ulla tuae est medicina figurae:
 nudus Amor formae non amat artificem.* (1.2.1–8)

A similar relationship appears in 2.1: analysis of his poetic situation (2.1.1–4) followed by a paean to Cynthia's beauty (2.1.5–16). Yet the artifice condemned in 1.2 excites him in 2.1. In *Coa veste* (1.2.2 and 2.1.6) and *Cois* (2.1.5), he suggests Philetas of Cos, praised by Callimachus himself¹³). The famously delicate Coan silk seems appropriate not only as fashion for such a young woman, but also as metaphor for Callimachean poetry: shimmering material of lovely finish, obtained only at considerable expense, presenting beneath its intricate folds a lovely fantasy¹⁴). Cynthia in Coan silk becomes the Cynthia of "Coan" verse. A sophisticated and demanding allusion, and a poetic illusion: the reader is pleased, misled, and perhaps pleased in being misled, by the Coan sheen with which the poet infolds her.

Although the speaker insists *hac totum e Coa veste volumen erit* (2.1.6), the Coan portrait of Cynthia which emerges from Book 2 seldom resembles this. Her beauty proves an inadequate basis for the continuing efforts of Propertius' poetry, which from this point onward will increasingly import satire, epic, *aitia*, and even political *encomia*. Cynthia herself seldom follows the apparent program suggested by these praises; there will be no book dedicated to her beauty. Beauty does not arouse love, and love, in its turn, poetry; Propertius makes clear from the beginning of 2.1 that he now examines the poetic process not through a lover's

13) R. Pfeiffer, Callimachus vol. I: Fragmenta (Oxford 1949) fr. 1.10. According to W. Kuchenmüller, Philetas Coi Reliquiae (Diss. Berlin 1928) 32 f., and A. W. Bulloch, Tibullus and the Alexandrians, Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society 199 (1973) 84, the Romans knew Philetas only from encyclopaediae; according to G. Knaack, Zu den Aitien des Kallimachos, Hermes 23 (1888) 136 Anm. 1, and C. W. Müller, Erysichthon. Der Mythos als narrative Metapher im Demeterhymnos des Kallimachos (Stuttgart 1987) 93, they owed their knowledge of the Coan poet to their reading of Callimachus.

14) Cf. Horace Serm. 1.2.101 f., *Cois tibi paene videre est/ut nudam*, and Martial 8.68.7, *femineum lucet sic per bombycina corpus*.

eyes, but through a poet's: *invenio causas mille poeta novas* (2.1.12). *Amores* (2.1.1) stands as a technical term for elegy; *amor* does not appear again until 2.1.47, after the poet has examined two different poetic programs, *ipsa puella* (5–16) and *bellaque resque Caesaris* (17–38), and after revealing his Callimachean model (2.1.39–42). In 2.1 *amor* defines his work, an alternative to poetic philistinism.

3. *Bellaque resque Caesaris* (2.1.17–38). The straining grandiloquence leading to this manifesto, 2.1.17–38, offers what Stahl (164) calls “the sharpest contrast to its ludicrous antecedent.” The sort of poetry now appears for which an appeal to the rejected Calliope or Apollo would be appropriate. In the eight distichs 2.1.19–34, Propertius three times uses *canerem* (19, 28, 31), once *memorarem* (25), and once *impositam* (20), a continually teasing and abortive beginning to an epic, *Battles of Titans* perhaps, which runs in its pompous “chronological” sequence, from *Theogony* to *The Triumph of Augustus*:

*quod mihi si tantum, Maecenas, fata dedissent,
ut possem heroas ducere in arma manus,
non ego Titanas canerem, non Ossan Olympo
impositam, ut caeli Pelion esset iter,* 20
*nec veteres Thebas, nec Pergama nomen Homeri,
Xerxis et imperio bina coisse vada,
regnave prima Remi aut animos Carthaginis altae,
Cimbrorumque minas et bene facta Mari:
bellaque resque tui memorarem Caesaris, et tu* 25
*Caesare sub magno cura secunda fores.
nam quotiens Mutinam aut civilia busta Philippos
aut canerem Siculae classica bella fugae,
eversosque focos antiquae gentis Etruscae,
et Ptolemaeei litora capta Phari,* 30
*aut canerem Aegyptum et Nilum, cum attractus in urbem
septem captivis debilis ibat aquis,
aut regum auratis circumdata colla catenis,
Actiaque in Sacra currere rostra Via . . .* (2.1.17–34)

Stahl (165) notes that “all the victories Octavian would like to hear about are mentioned,” although much of the civil war of the 40’s and early 30’s seems better left uncelebrated. The actual subject of

these inchoate epics is vague, and Augustus' role in them equivocal¹⁵).

Devoted to "serious" epic and *encomia*, this second and longer catalogue leads to the approximate midpoint of the elegy, thus virtually filling it so far with lists of poetic topics. While the clichés of 43–46 which closely follow the *bellaque resque* ... *Caesaris* (25) help undermine whatever grandeur exists in that *encomium*, the lowly generalization *quidquid fecit sive est quodcumque locuta* (15), gains in dignity in being considered with such epic material. Furthermore, the focus is less on Caesar than Maecenas, ending with a strange climax to the rejected, but nevertheless offered, *encomium*:

*te mea Musa illis semper contexeret armis,
et sumpta et posita pace fidele caput:
Theseus infernis, superis testatur Achilles,
hic Ixioniden, ille Menoetiaden.* (2.1.35–38)¹⁶)

4. *Callimachus* (2.1.39–46). That Propertius chooses to emphasize the *persona* of the *poeta*, and not the *amator*, is both thematic and strategic. The *poeta* shows himself to be, in fact, a much more formidable figure than the *amator*; and in the poems after 2.1 the reader must realize that behind the speaker of 2.1–16 there awaits the *poeta* of 2.17–46. Praise of the mistress will have behind it a *poeta* considering poetics more than eroticism; praise of Augustus will have behind it a predilection for glorifying trivia. Elegiac poetry at this stage of Propertius' career seems like a coiled spring: despite the appearance of withdrawal, frivolity, and a per-

15) Indebted as I am to Stahl, I frequently disagree. He returns to a biographical criticism and avoids (340, n. 49) "the 'problem of poet and *persona*' (or whatever formula appears adequate for distinguishing between poetical *ego* and the poet's 'real life')"; I regard the *personae* a major accomplishment of Book 2. For Stahl the "threat of political interference in [Propertius'] life is again complemented by the instability of affection he experiences on the human level. Thus Book 2 suggests a precarious continuity in the poet's condition" (152). But were separate *personae* recognized for *poeta* and *amator*, Propertius would gain a weapon in his political opposition: the *poeta* need not overcome the low social standing which, even by his own pathetic admission, encumbers the *amator*. Stahl assumes constant pressure from Maecenas, inconsistently emphasizing Caesar's power and position as "Emperor" while calling him (164) "Octavian" in his discussion of 2.1, probably one of the collection's latest. I think he misreads Maecenas' role as overwhelmingly political and social, especially given the conventions of the *recusatio* (cf. n. 6 above). Stahl assumes an astounding degree of repression by Augustus, insistence by Maecenas, and compliance by these writers.

16) Cf. Stahl, 165.

versely narrow focus, it threatens at any time to unwind into something stinging and timely¹⁷).

Just as the *nomen Homeri* (21) rests upon poetic myth, its reality comes second to its poetic myth. As *Caesaris...nomen* (42) recalls *Pergama, nomen Homeri* (21), Propertius treats the *nomen Caesaris* likewise as a poetic myth, which, after making Maecenas and Augustus mythic heroes like Theseus *et al.*, he indelicately shows to be artistic fiction:

*nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.* (2.1.41–42)

Earlier the poet employs this grand verb when he makes love to Cynthia:

*seu nuda erepto mecum luctatur amictu,
tum vero longas condimus Iliadas.* (2.1.13–14)

In a Callimachean bed, their lovemaking incongruously produces many an *Iliad*. When the speaker has finished poetic catalogues for Cynthia and Augustus, he finally associates his poetry with his lovemaking; the *angusto pectore* of Callimachus (40) recurs in the poet's slender bed:

*nos contra angusto versantes proelia lecto:
qua pote quisque, in ea conterat arte diem.* (2.1.45–46)

After redefining epic (14) and withdrawing from its official or conventional expectations (16–38), the *poeta* finds it necessary to dismiss epic for stylistic and generic reasons (39–42). As he had found in Cynthia a fit Callimachean subject (5–16), so he here dismisses Caesar:

*sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.* (2.1.39–42)

Conscious of the fictive possibilities of *laudes*, the speaker compares a flawed epic and encomiastic catalogue with a flawed litany of Cynthia's attributes. Propertius suggests resemblances between them: that for both kinds of poetry, art prevails over truth, and the speaker cares more for his art than for his girl's beauty or the deeds

17) Stahl (167) says that the book "is dedicated to Maecenas personally and exclusively to a degree the recipient had apparently not asked for."

of Caesar. The artistry of Cynthia's portrait, and not its truth, thus supplies the first subject which he discusses in Book 2. His grander designs for elegy arise from this rather sterile soil: *maxima de nihilo nascitur historia* (16)¹⁸.

In contrast with the boldness of 39–42, two gnomic distichs in the form of a "priamel" close and summarize the poem's first major movement, comprising the *ingenium* discussion (1–16) and the *recusatio* (17–42):

*navita de ventis, de tauris narrat arator,
enumerat miles vulnera, pastor ovis;
nos contra angusto versantes proelia lecto;
qua pote quisque, in ea conterat arte diem.* (2.1.43–46)

These serve as a bridge to the second part, which seems at first to concern the *amator*. Only the Callimachean echo (*angusto...lecto*) and witty coinage (*versantes proelia*) stands out from this conventional *apologia*. *Proelia* (45) alludes to the bedbound *Iliads* thrashed out at the beginning of the elegy (13–14), and appears to promise a treatment of erotic love.

B. *Laus in amore* (2.1.47–78)

1. *Cynthia*. In place of the poetic concerns we have discussed in the first half, the poem's second half seems at first to offer amatory matters. But the same artistic considerations suppress any real discussion of love, and Cynthia the woman remains absent. Her description has emphasized art¹⁹; even her clothing, as we have supposed, alludes to Philetas. Rather than name her, the poet continually makes oblique references: *ipsa puella* (4); *amore meo* (48); *illa* (49); *dura puella* (78). Theme and concept for eleven lines (5–16), she is replaced by a much longer *recusatio* (17–46). But she returns to the poem not so much as the expected playmate, but rather as something of a literary critic:

*laus in amore mori: laus altera, si datur uno
posse frui: fruar o solus amore meo!*

18) Stahl (167) notes "The allusion is on the one hand to the growing *Aeneid*, on the other to the prologue of Callimachus' *Aitia* ... Maecenas himself, by desiring an epic, comes dangerously close to being a grumbling Telchis."

19) Cf. Wiggers, 335: "*eburnus* in 9 adds further to the artificiality ... Cynthia generates art, but she is suspiciously like a work of art herself."

*si memini, solet illa levis culpae puellas
et totam ex Helena non probat Iliada.* (2.1.47–50)

Earlier, the descriptive eroticism of the *Monobiblos* gives way to witty metaphor, and the poem's most overtly sexual line had led not to explicit pleasure, but to poetry: *seu nuda erepto mecum luctatur amictu, / tum vero longas condimus Iliadas* (13–14)²⁰. Here, when the *puella* returns to 2.1, love again gives way to poetry – and to the same poem. Cynthia first appears, in the first part, as the speaker's inspiration, (*ingenium*, 4); here, in the second, as an amusing critic (49–50). These appearances embrace both ends of the poetic process; they also frame the speaker's artistic declaration, comprising his *ingenium* (3–38), and his poetics (39–46). As the first part treats her beauty in artistic and literary terms, the second likewise subordinates her temperament and morality to a literary function.

Laus in amore mori (47) attempts to take the proverbial tone of the preceding 43–4, and therefore seems unremarkably gnomic. Yet in a Roman context the phrase is outlandish. To die proud of erotic love would be astonishing in Rome; Propertius himself does not aim so high 1.1. Erotic love degrades the speaker of the *Monobiblos*, and that earlier degradation lies behind this new boast in 2.1. In such a way to claim *laus*, especially in rejecting it as nearly any other Roman would conceive it (17 ff.), seems even more astonishing. But the speaker surpasses even these notions: *laus altera*, by no means inferior to the previous, would be the exclusive reciprocity which the speaker as yet cannot claim, as the conditional and subjunctive of 47/48 – not to mention the entire *Monobiblos* – suggest. At least the first *laus* offered the slim advantage of an ultimate sacrifice, like *laus pro patria mori*; this second version aims much lower. Cynthia's remembered habit of censuring *levis puellas*, and hence her disapproval of Helen and Homer, sidesteps whether she herself is *levis*, and thus undeserving of this astounding proclamation. Propertius' redefinition of *laus* appears, therefore, even more apparently trivial: Cynthia's quirky reading of the greatest epic vouches for her erotic character, and thus serves to justify the unorthodox *laus* which the speaker claims. A more frivolous reason to die could not have tempted any other Roman; a

20) Cf. Wiggers, 336: "His tone is playful (note the pun on *ilia* in *Iliadas*), but beneath the levity lies the realization that he must convince his readers that elegy is a worthy substitute for more serious work. The idea of epic surfaces here as a joke, but soon comes to dominate the aesthetic assumptions of the poem."

more frivolous evaluation of the entire *Iliad* (50) could not have occurred to any other critic. The speaker then can hardly expect the reader to take seriously the witty suffering of this *amator*.

The five distichs introduced by this new view of *laus* (47–56) lead quickly and humorously through the lover's suffering to his expected demise. Proof and illustration of the speaker's logic are skewed: her fidelity, so crucial to this grand reappraisal of *laus*, she "proves" by what she believes about Homer, not by how she acts; his pain he corroborates with mythological *dolores*, not with how he lives. For all the vivid enumeration in both sections of the poem, the evidence of real love is vague:

*una meos quoniam praedata est femina sensus,
ex hac ducentur funera nostra domo.* (2.1.55–56)

The *amator*'s suffering instead adds to the poem another catalogue, mythological examples of pain and remedy, which also recalls 1.1. But the two elegies use the same elements differently: stressing his own suffering, Propertius brings to the details of his torture in 1.1 the confirmation of myth; but in 2.1, though raiding the handbooks of myth, he makes little effort to reflect this back onto his own actual situation. In 1.1, the speaker emphasizes his corrosive anguish, which leads inevitably to his death. Avoiding in 2.1 the detailed pathology of love, and leaving his death vague, the speaker by his *exempla* nevertheless reaches the more relevant point of this poem, his suggestive grave and its unexpected mourner.

2. *Maecenas*. When the speaker comes to his death, the expected goal of all the poetry following *laus in amore mori* (47), we see that love actually has played little part in his demise, and his death appears in a new light, a poetic testament and memorial. Like his bed earlier, his tombstone is Callimachean, his concerns poetic rather than amatory:

*quandocumque igitur vitam mea fata reposcent,
et breve in exiguo marmore nomen ero,
Maecenas, nostrae spes invidiosa iuventae,
et vitae et morti gloria iusta meae,
si te forte meo ducet via proxima busto,
esseda caelatis siste Britanna iugis,
talique illacrimans mutae iace verba favillae:
'Huic misero fatum dura puella fuit.'* (2.1.71–78)

2.1.72 is the poem's third significant use of *nomen*. The first equates Homer's inspiration and reputation, *Pergama, nomen Homeri* (21); the second, the appropriate style (41) and subject (42) of Propertius' poetry:

*nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.* (2.1.41–42)

In the final usage *nomen* becomes a suggestive term in the Calimachean program, *et breve in exiguo marmore nomen ero* (72), part of the *recusatio* which begins, and ends, with Maecenas and the speaker's *fata*. The speaker first refuses great and heroic topics:

*quod mihi si tantum, Maecenas, fata dedissent,
ut possem heroas ducere in arma manus...* (2.1.17–18)

But when *fata* (and Maecenas) return to the poem, both are changed. The first use of *fatum* (17) makes it a near-synonym for *ingenium*. Its second use (71) makes it the conventional end of the *miser amator* though expressed in suggestive poetic terms (72). But the third (78) comes from Maecenas himself at the poem's end, the third time in the poem when a voice besides the poet's intrudes and, as in the previous two (1–2, readers; 49–50, Cynthia), one which joins the critical debate. All the speakers in this poem comment on love by discussing poetry. Maecenas serves to link the Cynthia catalogue (5–16) and the *recusatio* (17–38) when introduced to the poem (17). Although thus honored as dedicatee, the speaker regards him at first as an adversary, associated with the epic and militaristic world. But by the poem's conclusion Maecenas has undergone a conversion and become an elegiac spokesman, to employ its terminology and weep in sympathy for its devotee.

His observation answers both the "whence" and "why" of *unde...scribantur amores*. After the poetic testament of 72, Augustus' faithful minister is now associated with Propertius' reputation and calling (*et vitae et morti gloria iusta meae*, 74). Pausing at the *poeta's* small tombstone²¹, the showy Maecenas drives an ostentatious chariot, the gaudy *essedum* of conquered Gauls and Britons, a glaring contrast in taste and reversal of generic hierarchy: the pretentiousness of epic pays ironic homage to elegiac

21) Note in the chiasmic 72 the witty fussiness which draws out *breve...nomen* over most of the line. His inscription spurns the hexameter; it will fit neatly in a pentameter.

delicacy. His sad pronouncement ending this introductory poem evaluates the dead elegist in elegiac terms: *huic misero fatum dura puella fuit*.

Just as the poem's first distich had looked back to the *Mono-biblos*, the closing verdict recalls both this poem's beginning, *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit* (2.1.4), and that of 1.1, *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis*. Besides *solus* (48), *misero* is the only adjective which Propertius applies to himself in 2.1, intensified by the demonstrative *huic*²²). At the beginning of 2.1, the speaker offers *ipsa puella* (4) as an answer to the indirect question which opens the book. *Dura puella* (78) at the very close of the poem assumes this question posed to Maecenas, standing at the poet's grave and now his apologist. But *dura* reminds the reader of poetics the speaker regards heroic poetry concerning Augustus as *duro versu* (41), unsuited to the Callimachean goal set at the beginning, a *mollis in ora liber* (2)²³).

Maecenas' observation *huic misero fatum dura puella fuit* recalls the poet's own declaration at the beginning, *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit* (4); the context makes *fatum* again a virtual synonym for *ingenium*. Propertius thus closely associates *fatum* and *ingenium* at two critical places in 2.1: in the *recusatio* his *fata* (17) keeps him from epic, which has granted its glory (*nomen*, 21) to Homer; after his death, his *fata* (71), his own *nomen* (72) must lack glory. But just as Propertius at the outset draws the reader to consider the elegist's artistry, Maecenas likewise becomes a student of that process. As he eulogizes the poet, he weeps for the *personae* of the prototypical elegiac situation (78). His statement, a virtual epitaph, consists of a single elegiac pentameter: the poet still refuses Maecenas the loftier hexameter. Other graveside judgements and epitaphs will follow in Book 2²⁴).

22) The only noun Propertius applies to himself in 2.1 is *poeta* (12). Thus noun and adjective stand for the two appropriate *personae*.

23) *Meus . . . mollis in ora liber* suggests both delicacy and grandeur, refined talent and its wide appreciation: polished verses elegant to read (*mollis in ora*) and the book everyone's reading and talking about (*in ora*).

24) Three poems in Book 2 concern the graves of *poeta* (2.1), *puella* (2.11) and *amator* (2.13); the first two end in judgments given or refused by passers-by. These reverse the conventional illusion of inscriptions: instead of the stone addressing the traveller, the traveller addresses the stone. Cf. R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs* (Urbana 1962) 230. Another convention, the inscription's request for the *viator* to judge the dead (Lattimore, 233), influences Propertius' language in 2.1 and 2.11. – J. P. Boucher, *Études sur Properce* (Paris 1965) 411, lists from Propertius six such "false epigrams," a topos which the poet develops most fully in his second book: 2.1.78; 2.5.28; 2.11.6; 2.13.35–36; 2.14.37–38;

With pointed irony the elegist makes his dedicatee switch sides. *Meo ... busto* (75) recalls *civilia busta* (27), a disturbing element of the *bellaque resque Caesaris*. The opening question *quaeritis* addresses Maecenas and Augustus as well as a more disinterested audience. The *poeta's* response: first, the nature of his *ingenium* (2.1.1–16, the Cynthia catalogue, a backward look at the *Monobiblos*); and, second, moral reasons (2.1.17–38, *bellaque resque Caesaris*) and stylistic ones (2.1.39–46, precedent and dictates of Callimachus). Finally he places the poem's recipient, the book's honoree, before his "Callimachean" grave. In Maecenas, Roman pride and power (*nostrae spes invidiosa iuventae*) as well as epic and encomiastic poetry (*esseda caelatis siste Britannia iugis*) halt before the slender elegiac stele.

The tearful eulogy from Augustus' own powerful minister, who in his homage brings a foreign warrior's chariot to the lover's tomb, whose political associations (25) and alleged artistic concerns (17 ff.) the poet earlier rejects, reaffirms the earlier claim of the poet, *laus in amore mori* (47), and by his presence and rank grants to the *poeta* glory. But the glory is not in dying for erotic love, but having finished a life writing *amores*. Propertius now depicts Maecenas, who seems to want epic (17–42), as an appreciative reader of elegy, the Callimachean poetry of 2.1.72, *et breve in exiguo marmore nomen ero*. As Maecenas examines this artful production, he makes, in the proper generic terms (*misero, dura puella*), the very association which Propertius had himself suggested in *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit* in 2.1.4. But these amatory terms are part of a literary debate, not the representation of emotion. Even Maecenas affirms at the end that *bellaque resque Caesaris* are not the *poeta's* *ingenium*. Not without considerable irony, especially if, as Stahl thinks, Maecenas appears at first as one of the new Telchines, his tribute at the poem's close offers the unexpected response of a reader newly moved, an answer both to the question raised at the poem's beginning, and to the *recusatio* offered by the speaker. Thus even the many pieces remaining in Book 2 which seem to treat *amor* become part of the literary symposium introduced in 2.1.1. In them, Propertius' reader cannot consider the speaker, even when posing as a lover, to be merely the *miser amator* of the *Monobiblos*.

In his second book Propertius chooses to represent his art –

4.3.72; 4.7.85–86. To these should be added two others, the judgement of the *iuvenes*, 1.7.24, and 2.28.44, *scribam ego 'Per magnum est salva puella Iovem'*.

and not his soul – as fit subject for debate, inviting his readers, even from the highest councils of Roman power, to become his literary critics, just as in his previous book he had invited them to be his social critics. Well before he proclaims himself *Romanus Callimachus* in Book 3, he adds to the elegiac repertoire, among new considerations of the *amator*, the newer figure of the *poeta*, who will dominate some of the most important pieces of Book 2²⁵).

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PLUTARCH AND HERODOTUS – THE BEETLE IN THE ROSE

In surveying the sources of Plutarch's education and learning, K. Ziegler observed that Plutarch was quite familiar with Herodotus' *History*, and quoted it more often in his *Moralia* than in his *Vitae*¹). Certainly Plutarch's knowledge of and interest in the *History* is well illustrated by *De Herodoti malignitate* (Mor. 854D – 874 C), a treatise sometimes denied authenticity because of its very negative assessment of Herodotus, and the belief that Plutarch was a kind and good-natured thinker incapable of such an hostile critique. The current consensus, however, is that *De Herodoti malignitate* is genuine²), and like Plutarch's other polemical works, e.g.

1) See K. Ziegler, *Plutarchos von Chaironeia*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart 1964) 286 = RE s.v. *Plutarchos*, XXI (1951) 923–24. Plutarch does not refer to Herodotus' work by title though at *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 1093B he mentions 'Ἡροδότου τὰ Ἑλληνικά which probably means something like Herodotus' "history of Greek affairs." The extant manuscripts of Herodotus' work all begin with the phrase 'Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνησέος ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε which serves much the same function as a modern title, and which Plutarch cites at *De exilio* 604F.

2) See G. Lachenaud's recent discussion of the treatise's authenticity in *Plutarque Oeuvres Morales*, XII, ed. M. Cuvigny and G. Lachenaud (Paris 1981) 114–117.