

## PROPERTIUS 2.1-12: HIS CALLIMACHEAN SECOND LIBELLUS

### Introduction

In 2. 13. 25-26 Propertius says that when he dies he wants to be buried with three books:

sat mea sat magna est, si tres sint pompa libelli,  
quos ego Persephonaе maxima dona feram

In 1816 Lachmann took *tres* literally to mean finished books or at least work in progress and proposed that Book 2 of the transmitted four-book corpus was not one book but two.<sup>1</sup> Lachmann further postulated that 2. 10, a poem in which Propertius announces his intention of writing Augustan epic, was only appropriate as a prologue poem for a new work and presumed that it was the first poem of the third book. For some years Lachmann's theory was accepted and the poems of the corpus numbered according to five books until scholars began to question taking the number *tres* literally. In 1880, the traditional division into four books returned to the editions of Baehrens and Palmer. Lachmann's theory was generally repudiated.

In an important recent article, however, Otto Skutsch has marshalled cogent arguments to support Lachmann's division of Book 2 into two *libelli*.<sup>2</sup> He also accepts 2. 10 as the introductory poem of the third book. My purpose in this paper is to supplement the argument for two books but to suggest alternatively that 2. 13

<sup>1</sup> K. Lachmann, *Sextus Aurelius Propertius Carmina*, Berlin, 1816 (repr. Hildesheim, New York, 1973) xxi-xxii, who thought it was absurd for Propertius to say *tres libelli* in the second book for no reason. He supposed that a large number of poems had dropped out of the corpus in the early part of the present Book 2 and that when the „second” and „third” books were combined, 2. 13, with the reference to *tres libelli*, ended up in Book 2.

<sup>2</sup> O. Skutsch, „The Second Book of Propertius”, HSCP 79, 1975, 229-233. Convenient summaries with specific details of the case for and against *duo libelli* in Book 2 are to be found in the commentaries of Butler and Barber, Lachmann, and Postgate, in the article by Skutsch, and in the discussions by T. Birt, *Das antike Buchwesen*, Berlin, 1882, 413 ff.; cf. RhM 38, 1883, 197 ff., RhM 64, 1909, 393 ff.; B.L. Ullman, „The Book Division of Propertius”, CP 4, 1909, 45-51. The interpretation of *tres libelli* in 2. 13. 25 must be addressed by proponents of each side. The most important ancient evidence is the citation of Prop. 3. 21. 14 by Nonius as *in libro III* (249 L on *secundare*), suggesting that Book 2 was a unity in the 4th c. But Birt showed that the *Monobiblos* was published separately and that the original *collection* of Propertius' poetry contained our Books 2-4, thus making Nonius' citation III for 3. 21 correct according to Lachmann's theory. This observation is also substantiated by the evidence of grammarians and the metrist Caesius Bassus (see Birt, Ullman). Propertius' remark in 2. 24. 1-2,

'tu loqueris, cum sis iam noto fabula libro  
et tua sit toto Cynthia lecta foro.'

a reference only to the *Monobiblos* and not to a second *libellus*, can be explained if the third *libellus* (2. 13-34) were published very soon after the second. The *Monobiblos* would be the only previously published book available long enough to become popular.

A. Woolley, BICS 14, 1967, 83, note 5, expanded by Skutsch (note 2) 233, has suggested plausibly that if the *Monobiblos* was prefixed to the rest of the corpus at a late stage of the transmission, the first book of the corpus could no longer be called *liber primus*; instead it was called *liber secundus* and consolidated with the original second book, the two together becoming *liber secundus*.

itself, the poem in which the *tres libelli* are referred to, is a more appropriate prologue for the new book than 2. 10. I will show that the thematic unity of 2. 1-12, the second *libellus*, can be demonstrated both on the grounds of the continuity of the narrative, a linear progression, and a modified architectonic arrangement of groups or pairs of related poems, a variation on the structure of Book 1 already elucidated by Skutsch and others.<sup>3</sup>

I. 2. 1-12: *The rota amoris in poetry and love: laus in amore mori/mors inhonesta*: In the *Cynthia Monobiblos* Propertius introduces the theme of the dominance of his mistrees over his life (*Cynthia ... me cepit*, 1. 1.1), the appropriateness of elegy as the medium of poetry intended to please the beloved (1. 7-9), the occasional successes of the lover (e.g. 1. 8 A, B) which are offset by the hardships imposed by the beloved (e.g. 1. 11. 12; 16-18), and the lover's unsuccessful efforts to impose his own „rules” over the relationship (e.g. 1. 2, 11, 15). A dramatic climax occurs in 1. 15-18 when the poet, faced with the inability of enforcing his own concept of fidelity on Cynthia (1. 15), „leaves” (1. 17) and then, „shipwrecked” (1. 17) and alone in the „wilderness” (1. 18), he realizes the life-and-death importance of his love relationship (1. 19) and personal relationships generally (1. 20-22), a point made graphically by the juxtaposition of poems of separation, 1. 20 (the mythological tale of the loss of Hylas to the epic hero Hercules), 1. 21, and 1. 22 (the loss of loved ones in the Italian Civil War). Very careful structure marks the presentation of this material (see note 3 above) which is left open-ended in 1. 19. 25-26 with the strongly emotional appeal to Cynthia to love before it is too late.

In 2. 1 Propertius' program for his second book is clearly different.<sup>4</sup> The poetry is inspired still by the *ipsa puella* (4). The appeal of Book 1 has been a

<sup>3</sup> The architectonic arrangement of 1. 1-19 has been discussed by O. Skutsch, „The structure of the Propertian *Monobiblos*”, CP 58, 1963, 238-239; B. Otis, „Propertius' Single Book”, HSCP 70, 1965, 1-44; E. Courtney, „The Structure of Propertius Book 1 and Some Textual Consequences”, Phoenix 22, 1968, 250-258; J. King, „Propertius' Programmatic Poetry and the Unity of the *Monobiblos*”, CJ 71, 1975-76, 108-124; King also discusses the continuous narrative seen in the book.

The structure of Book 2 and individual poems within it was for long considered nearly hopeless (see e.g. P.W. Damon and W.C. Helmbold, „The Structure of Propertius Book 2”, CPCP 14 [1952] 215-254; M. Ites, *De Propertii Elegiis inter se conexas*, Göttingen, 1908, laid the groundwork for seeing order in this chaos by considering the repetition of themes in succeeding poems. Recently, J. Michelheit, „Das augusteische Gedichtbuch”, RhM 112, 1969, 356, noted in a general way a pattern of linear progression; H. Juhnke, „Zum Aufbau des zweiten und dritten Buches des Propertius”, Hermes 99, 1971, 91-113, combines the linear and architectonic approach, but he is considering an undivided book. W.R. Nethercutt, CW 69, 1975-1976, 226, observes that the pairing of elegies is the most obvious structural feature of Book 2. Cf. also Juhnke op. cit. 95.

<sup>4</sup> I have used the following texts, commentaries, and critical notes on Book 2 which will henceforth be cited by author's last name: D.R. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana* (Cambridge, 1956); H.E. Butler and E.A. Barber, *The Elegies of Propertius*, Oxford, 1933; W.A. Camps, *Propertius Elegies Book II*, Cambridge, 1967; P.J. Enk, *Sex. Propertii Elegiarum Liber Secundus*, Leiden, 1962; K. Lachmann (s. oben Anm. 1); F.A. Paley, *Sex. Aurelii Propertii Carmina*<sup>2</sup>, London, 1872; J.P. Postgate, *Select Elegies of Propertius*<sup>2</sup>, London 1897; L. Richardson, Jr., *Propertius Elegies I-IV*, Norman, Okla., 1977; M. Rothstein, *Propertius Sextus Elegien I*<sup>2</sup>, Berlin, 1920 (repr. Dublin/Zürich, 1966); M. Schuster, *Sex. Propertii Elegiarum Libri IV*, Leipzig,

success. The emphasis on *unde ... scribantur amores* (1), further defined as *mollis ... liber* (2), along with the address to readers generally, *quaeritis* (1), shows, however, that poetry per se is of greater importance now than the individualized mistress, *Cynthia*, of 1. 1. 1, who is not actually named in Book 2 until 2. 5.

This poetry is *mollis* (2) as opposed to *durus*.<sup>5</sup> It is inspired by the *ipsa puella* (4), not by great feats of past or present wars as is epic poetry (17-38). Callimachean in orientation (39-46) rather than Homeric (21), Propertius aims to present an elegiac alternative to epic. From the beginning, he shows both his Callimachean heritage and his originality in order to prove that elegy on love is just as valuable as time-honored epic.<sup>6</sup> The *ipsa puella* is a Muse-, Apollo-substitute (3). Her every word and deed (5-16) will be the „epic” subject-matter (*tum vero longas condimus Iliadas*, 14) of latter-day *Aitia* (*causas mille ... novas*, 12).<sup>7</sup> Propertius, like Callimachus, cannot „thunder forth” from his *angusto pectore*; rather, he writes of his battles in the *angusto ... lecto* (45): to each his own (46).<sup>8</sup>

1958). In addition to the standard editions the following articles and discussions are useful on 2. 1: J.H. Kühn, „Die Proömion-Elegie des zweiten Properz-Buches”, *Hermes* 89, 1961, 84-105, emphasizes Propertius’ heroic role in justifying love as a way of life; N. Wiggers, „Reconsideration of Propertius II. 1”, *CJ* 72, 1977, 334-341, discusses the elegiac = epic equation; W. Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, Wiesbaden, 1960, 13-43, emphasizes the Callimachean aspects of the poetry.

<sup>5</sup> The dichotomy between the elegiac *mollis* and epic *durus* is summarized by A. Guillemin; „La poésie lyrique vue par les latins”, *LEC* 8, 1939, 347, and illustrated in 2. 1. 41, *neq mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu*.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Kühn (oben Anm. 4) 92 ff. I believe that the reference to Callimachus by name in 2. 1. 40, along with other allusions to Callimachean poetic terminology (e.g. *angusto pectore* [40]) and usage to be explained later amounts to a poetic commitment which goes beyond simply a sharing of anti-epic sympathies (as J.-P. Boucher, *Études sur Properce*, Paris, 1965, 166-167). Propertius’ original touch, it is now generally agreed after F. Jacoby, „Zur Entstehung der römischen Elegie”, *RhM* 60, 1905, 38-105 = *Kleine philologische Schriften* (Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin: Schriften der Sektion für Altertumswissenschaft 21, Berlin, 1961) 2. 65-121 and A.A. Day, *The Origins of Latin Love-Elegy*, Oxford, 1938, is the application of Callimachean style, poetic technique, form, and some *topoi* to personal love-elegy. Useful general discussions of Callimachean influence on Propertius include: Boucher, op. cit., 161-204; P. Boyancé, „Properce”, *L’ influence grecque sur la poésie latine de Catulle à Ovide*, Vandoeuvres-Genève, 1953, 169-220; W. Clausen, „Callimachus and Latin Poetry”, *GRBS* 5, 1964, 181-196; S. Commager, *A Prolegomenon to Propertius, Cincinnati*, 1974; I.M. Lonie, „Propertius and the Alexandrians”, *AUMLA* 11, 1959, 17-34; W. Wimmel (oben Anm. 4); G. Giangrande, „Los Topicos Helenisticos en la Elegia Latina”, *Emerita* 42, 1974, 1-36.

<sup>7</sup> In 2. 1. 5-16, the listing of the mistress’ attractions, the style of the passage with the repetitions of *sive* (5) ... *seu* (7) ... *sive* (9) ... *seu* (11) ... *seu* (13) ... *seu* (15) ... *sive* (15) and the large number of spondees in the hexameter lines (5 hexameter lines, 5, 7, 11, 13, 15 are spondaic in the first four feet, an extraordinarily large percentage) suggest the epic catalogue and the grave importance of epic poetry. Propertius’ use of *causas* (12) to evoke Callimachus’ use of the term (an association which seems evident from his open acknowledgement of Callimachus in 40 and the dichotomy, *aitia* vs. epic, in that poet’s own work) marks a Propertian innovation: Propertius’ *aitia* will explain the workings of his mistress’ manners and mores, not existing ritual customs outside the poem.

<sup>8</sup> For the significance of *angusto lecto* see Commager (oben Anm. 6) 7-8; cf. *Ait.* fr. 1. 27-28; for *Iovis ... tumultus* (39) cf. *Ait.* fr. 1. 1-15; „to each his own” (46) evokes *Epigr.* 1. 12. 16. We may add that Callimachus plays the role of priest-poet of Apollo in *Hymn* 2. Propertius serves the *ipsa puella* in this capacity, setting her up as a veritable goddess. (Her pseudonym

More boldly, in lines 47-48, Propertius invokes *laus*, a motive in high repute among Romans (and the equivalent of Greek epic *τιμή*) to prove that his commitment for life to a program of love and love-poetry is indeed justified:

laus in amore mori: laus altera, si datur uno  
posse frui: fruar o solus amore meo!<sup>9</sup>

We may note that Callimachus also took pride in his professional achievement, the turing of „small” poetry into a major genre.<sup>10</sup> Propertius’ claim to recognition, however, is based upon the pretense that such a commitment involves for the lover excruciating trials and torments.<sup>11</sup> Mythological *exempla* from epic and tragedy show that the committed lover suffers the same *dura* as epic heroes (51-54), except that they are everlasting and inescapable (59-70). The lover earns his *laus* through pain and never-ending suffering.

In the end (71-78) the epitaph read at the poet’s grave by Maecenas, addressed earlier as the representative of traditional concepts of *gloria* (74; cf. 17-38), proves that Propertius will indeed have devoted his entire life to a *dura puella*, a woman, it is implied, who imposes epic endurance on her lover.<sup>12</sup> He has achieved a *nomen*, albeit *breve in exiguo marmore* (72), evoking the *angusto pectore* of 40 and suggesting that he has been a Callimachean to the very end.

Cynthia evokes both Apollo and Diana, subjects of Callimachean hymns; see R. Helm, RE 23, 1957, 761; E.N. O’Neil, CP 53, 1958, 1-8). Thus the poetry itself serves as a kind of aetiological-hymn: lines 5-16 evoke the mistress’ attributes, deeds, lines 39-70 tell the reasons why Propertius writes love poetry and why love is so much trouble, lines 71-78, the personal involvement of the poet (cf. H. 2. 32-36, 58-64, 105-113 for examples of the above).

<sup>9</sup> Kühn (oben Anm. 4) 93 notes the opposition here of the principle *honestum est pro patria mori*! For Propertius’ lack of interest in political life see J.P. Sullivan, „The Politics of Elegy” in Propertius, Cambridge, London, New York, Melbourne, 1976, 54-75, M. Hubbard, Propertius, New York, 1975, 98-115; B. Otis, „Horace and the Elegists”, TAPA 76, 1945, 177-190, comments (183) on the lowly place of amatory elegy in the hierarchy of genres, Horace’s objection to the diversion of energy from more exalted and patriotic genres and themes. Propertius is clear about his preferences in both life-style and poetry.

<sup>10</sup> See G. Giangrande, „Callimaque et sa Poésie”, AC 43, 1974, 309-315, for Callimachus’ pride in his poetic achievement as seen in Epigr. 21 Pf. = A. P. 7. 525, Epigr. 28 Pf. = A. P. 12. 43, and the *Aitia* prologue.

<sup>11</sup> Hubbard (oben Anm. 9) 101-102 discusses the shocking nature of *laus in amore mori*; in Roman tradition *laus* belongs to a soldier or statesman; Propertius transfers this honor to the „soldier of love” (cf. 2. 13. 36); a woman would win *laus* in love by remaining an *univira* (cf. *laudatio Turiae*: CHL 6. 1527, 31570 = ILS 8393( R.J. Baker, „*Laus in amore mori*: Love and Death in Propertius”, Latomus 29, 1970, 670-698, discusses the phrase in more „personal” terms and emphasizes that Propertius thinks here of death as coming at the end of a lifetime devoted to the faithful service of love (674), that love involves the preservation of a bond of *fides* with the beloved which will be intact at the time of death. Baker points out that a chief theme of Propertius’ poetry are the positive and negative aspects of *fides* which are associated with death and the poet’s hopes for togetherness (679). I would add that the thrust of 2. 1 is the application to poetry of this principle. Baker remarks in 2. 13 (680) that Propertius’ books of poetry are the visible manifestations of his *fides*. Thus his poetry and life are unified, or as Propertius implies (2. 1. 40, 45) the *angustus lectus* embodies the *angustum pectus*.

<sup>12</sup> This use of epic and tragic mythological *exempla*, so extensive in a poem which emphasizes its advocacy of Callimachean poetics, suggests a Propertian variation of the Callimachean *variatio* of Homer (cf. R. Pfeiffer, JHS 75, 1955, 71-73 = *Ausgewählte Schriften*, Mu-

What is important here is the emphasis on the interrelationship between poetic style (epic, elegy) and life-style (love, traditional paths of glory) and the inherent contrast between opposing ways of life (and writing poetry) in a framework where *laus*, a traditional value, tests their relative measure. For love (and love-poetry) this *laus* must be achieved on traditional terms, the endurance of excruciating „epic” *dura*. The primary lesson of Book 1 was to show the importance of love. In Book 2, *laus* is the added ingredient as the poet aims for success and honor in poetry and love. Implied but not actually stated is the point that this *laus* will be achieved through the Callimachean love-elegy composed by the enduring lover about the *dura* he has first by choice and later by necessity experienced in the love of the *dura puella*.<sup>13</sup>

In the sequence of poems which follow a clear-cut narrative development can be traced.<sup>14</sup> The central issue is the role of poetry in winning *laus* for the poet-lover in the face of alternating *aequa* (2. 2-3) and *iniqua* (2. 4-5). These constitute the *rota amoris*, successive shifts between „success” and „failure” (2. 5-7, 2. 7-9) in the *militia amoris*, so that the *laus* achieved temporarily in 2. 7 is threatened abruptly by *mors inbonesta* in 2. 8 and an end to the relationship in 2. 9 and 2. 10, where the poet, by contrast with 2. 1, espouses contemporary epic and the current feats of Augustus and writes off poetry concerned with the *docta puella* (2. 11). Only the sudden turning of the *rota amoris* occasioned by the everpresence of Amor precipitates once again the writing of love-poetry (2. 12).

Thus the second *libellus* takes up the question of the validity of writing love-elegy in view of the shifting status of the lovers' relationship to each other and the effect on Propertius' poetry. A relatively simple structure results. The book is framed by the theme of the *recusatio* of epic and the avowal of Callimachean elegy and *laus in amore mori*, in 2. 1, coming full circle through the *rota amoris* back to Callimachean poetry in 2. 12 after facing *mors inbonesta* and a *recusatio* of love and love-poetry in 2.8-11. Three groups of poems explore the general *aequa-iniqua* of love which must be endured (2-4), provide an example from the Propertius-Cynthia relationship of the poetry of endurance which succeeds and results in *gloria* (5-7), and illustrate the poetry of failure and *mors inbonesta* (8-9). This structure can be shown schematically as follows:

Propertius' Second *Libellus*: 2. 1-12

- 1: Introduction: avowal of Callimachean love-poetry; *recusatio* of epic; *laus in amore mori*; the *dura puella* (78 lines)
- 2-3-4: General principles: the *aequa-iniqua*
- 2: The attraction of the mistress' *facies*; mythological *exempla* illustrate the *militia amoris* (*dura*)

nich, 1960, 153-157); H. Herter, *Kallimachos und Homer*, Bonn, 1929; G. Giangrande, „Hellenistic Poetry and Homer”, *AC* 39, 1970, 46-77). It has the important effect of equating the value of the epic and elegiac life.

<sup>13</sup> For the epic connotations of *dura* see Guillemin (s. oben Anm. 5). Cynthia, or any mistress, is an „epic” experience for the lover who earns *laus* by survival. The mythological *exempla* from epic and tragedy underline the principle that love is an epic alternative. The scene at the grave may be inspired by Callimachus' fanciful epitaph for himself, *Epigr.* 35 Pf. = A. P. 7. 415. Wiggers (s. oben Anm. 4) comments on the poetic terminology in 71-78.

<sup>14</sup> Ites (s. oben Anm. 3) first showed how each poem in Book 2 picks up ideas used in the

- 3: The *facies* plus other attractions: the mistress' accomplishments; the mistress as *gloria*; the *aequa-iniqua* to be endured by the lover-*vates*
- 4: The *delicta* to be endured: the *paraclausithyron*, no *medicins* for love; sudden *funus* (2. 2-4: 92 lines)
- 5-6-7: Propertius—Cynthia: the *aequa-iniqua* endured
- 5: Cynthia's *nequitia*: poetry as *arma*: Propertius' choice: a new mistress / endurance of the *iniqua*
- 6: Cynthia's „open door”: poetry as *arma*: the appeal to *pudicitia*; Propertius endures: Cynthia always his *amica, uxor*
- 7: Propertius' fidelity confirmed: the marriage law repealed; Cynthia as *gloria* for Propertius (2. 5-7; 92 lines)
- 8-9: *mors inbonesta*: the *iniqua* rejected
- 8: The *rota amoris*: *puella eripitur*; the choice: *mors inbonesta* / endurance
- 9: *Militia amoris*; Propertius stays away: endurance rejected; *mors inbonesta* reconsidered (2. 8-9: 92 lines)
- 10-11-12: The *rota amoris* and Callimachean love-elegy
- 10: Avowal of epic; *audacia laus erit*; Propertius as *vates magnus* of Augustus; *vilia tura*: Permessus, not Ascrea
- 11: The *damnatio memoriae* of a *docta puella*; the *recusatio-sphragis* of a Callimachean love-poet; *mors inbonesta* for both
- 12: The *rota* turns again: *gloria magna* for Propertius as *vates* of *Amor*; *militia Amoris* (2. 10-12: 56 lines)

Although numerical correspondences ought not to be pressed, some striking patterns can be observed in this scheme. The programmatic poem, 2. 1, has 78 lines. Each of the three succeeding groups, 2-4, 5-7, 8-9, contain 92 lines each. The final demonstration of the *rota amoris* in 2. 10-12 contains only 56 lines. 2. 1, however, devotes 22 lines to the *recusatio* of epic, the remainder to the program of love-poetry. 2. 10-12 are essentially a series of programmatic poems for epic and elegy in turn; the *recusationes* are not repeated. If we subtract the 22 lines for the *recusatio* of 2. 1, which has no equivalent in 2. 10-12, then 1 and 10-12 are parallel in length and thematic conception.<sup>15</sup>

#### 2. 2, 3, 4: *The aequa and iniqua of love*:

If 2. 1 proclaims the general principle *laus in amore mori*, what is involved is taken up in 2. 2, 3, and 4. 2. 3. 49-50 summarizes the theme:

sic primo iuvenes trepidant in amore feroces,  
dehinc domiti post haec aequa et iniqua ferunt.

Each poem in the group contributes to the understanding that both *aequa* and *iniqua* are concomitants of love,<sup>16</sup> and that endurance is a prerequisite for *laus* in

preceding (and earlier) poems; both Ites and Juhnke (s. oben Anm. 3) comment on the continuity of motifs in 2. 2-3, 4-9, 10-13.

<sup>15</sup> These figures presume that no lacunae exist in these poems; not all editors agree on this point, but I see no reason to think that there are any missing couplets in 2. 1-12. The Oxford text admits two, after 2. 1. 38 (for which see Kühn, s. oben Anm. 4) and after 2. 9. 48 (for which see my discussion on 2. 9).

<sup>16</sup> More apropos to Propertius' meaning than the parallels cited by Enk and Shackleton Bailly is Ovid, *Tr.* 1. 2. 6: *aequa Venus Teucris, Pallas iniqua fuit*.

*amore mori.*

2. 2 is the first promised (in 2. 1. 12) *aition* inspired by the *ipsa puella*. In highly Callimachean fashion,<sup>17</sup> Propertius illustrates his poetic program by presenting very briefly, in 16 lines, why he has devoted his life to love and turned down living in an empty bed (*vacuo ... vivere lecto* [1] = the epic life). His mistress' *facies* (3, 15), *fulva coma* (5), and *longae ... manus* (5) have forced this decision. With beauty like that of Juno and Pallas Athena she inspires awe and respect; but like Ischomache and Brimo she also encourages violence on the part of prospective suitors (5-12).<sup>18</sup> The *exemplum* (13-14) of the judgement in which Paris chose Venus and the most beautiful woman in the world instead of the traditional *summum bonum* of wealth and glory, thus touching off the Trojan War, illustrates the point that even in the epic tradition love figures as an important value.<sup>19</sup>

Some important implications result: Propertius' original plan, *vacuo ... vivere lecto*, fits the traditional Roman view that love was of no public value, such esteem belonging to military *res gestae* like those described in 2. 1. 17-34.<sup>20</sup> But the overwhelming power of a woman's beauty can be shown to have a worthy, even epic, precedent: the greatest heroes were in the Trojan War begun by rivalry in love. Thus the question of the greater worth of the epic life versus love becomes confused, for figures in both are involved in the *militia amoris*. *Laus in amore mori* has relevance for both epic heroes and elegiac lovers, and Propertius underlines this point by citing heroic figures from epic poetry as examples of the power of love and the capacity the love relationship had for creating *laus* for the heroic lover.

Propertius' effort, however, is not to gain fame for love through epic *per se*,

<sup>17</sup> Many examples of Callimachean poetic technique are displayed in this poem: e.g. its brevity (16 lines is the same number as Callimachus' longest epigram, *Epigr.* 1, but shorter than usual for Propertius), its aetiological function, use of epic motifs for the purpose of short poetry, use of esoteric proper names, rare geographical placenames, use of uncommon or local versions of myth. Especially notable is the repetition of *facies ... faciem* (3, 15) reminiscent of Callimachus *Epigr.* 28 Pf. where repetition of *καλός καλός* is a declaration of the poet's love, making it a courting poem (G. Giangrande, *Eranos* 67, 1969, 33-42, *Maia* 24, 1974, 227-230; QUCC 19, 1975, 111-125), at the same time the poem is an indictment of infidelity and epic poetry – all themes present in 2. 1-12. 2. 2 especially seems to illustrate by example the means by which Propertius applies Callimachean poetics to his original purpose of writing love-elegy.

<sup>18</sup> The mythological *exempla* of 2. 2. 6-14 look ahead to the *aequa et iniqua* of 2. 3. 50. Pallas and Juno suggest benevolent dominance, Brimo and Ischomache, in addition to illustrating Callimachus' propensity for abstruse names and versions of myth, evoke, through the derivation of their names, the violence which Propertius suggests results from beauty. Ischomache is a *bapax legomenon*, „one who withstands a battle" (Forcellini, *Onomasticon* 3. 589) equated by W.H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon d. griechischen u. römischen Mythologie*, Leipzig, 1890-1894, 2. 1. 359, with Hippodameia, the wife of Pirithous, at whose marriage the rape of the Lapith women took place. Brimo is a Hecate-Artemis-Persephone figure worshipped at Pherae in Thessaly near Lake Boebeis (Strabo 9, 442). Tzetzes (on Lycophron 698) says that Hermes sought to ravish a Brimo-Persephone but she cried out (*ἐβρομήσατο*) and he desisted. *Composita pace* (2), by referring to the celestial life as „peace" also implies that love is war, an idea confirmed by the mythological *exempla* of 5-12.

<sup>19</sup> A consequence of Propertius' insistence on the epic *dura* love entails is his denigration of traditional epic values, thereby elevating elegy: e.g. in 2. 2. 13-14, the Trojan War is made out to be caused by rivalry in love; cf. 2. 3. 32-40; in 2. 8. 29-38 Achilles eschews heroism when deprived of his beloved; Maecenas, a contemporary „epic hero" looks effeminate in 2. 1. 78 (see Wiggers [oben Anm. 4]).

<sup>20</sup> See J. Fontenrose, „Propertius and the Roman Career", *CPCP* 13, 1949, 383-384, Hubbard (s. oben Anm. 9) 101-102; Commager (s. oben Anm. 6) 37-50.

but to employ epic *exempla*, in the manner of Callimachus, in „slight” poetry, to glorify the *dura* (chiefly rivalries), the „epic” qualities, of love. The effort of Propertius to be Callimachean in 2. 2 underlines his role as a poet. Just as Homer achieved fame from his writing about the Trojan War – and Callimachus by his novel use of Homeric diction in „slight” poetry – so Propertius tries to show how a modern Latin poet can vie for honors by applying epic motifs to love.<sup>21</sup>

Another important aspect of *laus*<sup>22</sup> is the success the poetry achieves in pleasing (courting) his mistress. Even though the *dura* of the *militia amoris* are implied throughout 2. 2, nevertheless, the emphasis on the power of beauty framing the poem and ever-present in the *exempla* have a dominant effect, flattering the mistress and letting her know her importance to her lover.

In 2. 2, the poet-lover appears only indirectly as the perpetrator of a Callimachean *tour de force*, a combination courting-poem and *aition* telling the mistress how beautiful she is and why he loves her but revealing at the same time the permanent hazards of the course. In effect, 2. 2 serves as an *exemplum* of what the poet’s role in love really is and why he makes such an issue in 2. 1 of being a Callimachean poet.

If 2. 2 paints with a small brush befitting the Callimachean *multum in parvo*, 2. 3 portrays in far more detail what the poet’s role is in love and why the mistress’ *facies* and *dura* go hand in hand. In 2. 3, the poet’s role frames the poem, underlining, in lines 1-8, the necessity of love-poetry and, in 51-54, the price the poet-lover must pay. In 1-8, as in 2. 2. 1-2, the poet cannot avoid love-poetry (and love) for long. He is like a fish out of water (5-6; cf. 2. 1. 39-46). He can scarcely wait a „month” (3) before composing a new book of poetry (4). His conclusion: *differtur, numquam tollitur ullus amor* (8). By the end of the poem it is clear that this way of life involves both *aequa* and *iniqua*: *debinc domiti post haec aequa et iniqua ferunt* (50). The *exemplum* of the *vates* Melampus is cited to show that traditionally there was a poet-lover who was motivated not by *lucra* but by the *formosa* to undergo *turpia vincla*, just as Propertius in 4 is motivated by his mistress’ *facies et al.* to write *turpis ... liber alter*.<sup>23</sup>

But what is the nature of this motivation? The *aequa* to which Propertius

<sup>21</sup> Propertius’ use of epic differs somewhat from that of Callimachus who employed rare Homeric words and varied Homeric phrases to show both his antiquarianism and his originality in the new „short” poetry; Propertius’ use of epic tends toward original use of *exempla* either through variations in detail (as in 1. 15. 9-14) or changes in application or emphasis, as here. See also note 12 above.

<sup>22</sup> Propertius’ hope for *laus* must rest primarily on the popularity of his poetry with the reading public (cf. 2. 24. 1-2) but also, for the continuance of the relationship, and the poetry, on its appeal to the mistress who is its subject.

<sup>23</sup> Some editors question the unity of 2. 3 (Butler and Barber divide it into 1-44 and 45-54; Rothstein and Enk attach 3. 45-54 to 2. 4; Richardson combines 2. 2 and 2. 3; Damon and Helmbold (s. oben Anm. 3) think 45-54 „have nothing to do with what precedes or follows”. Camps sees 2. 3 as a unity; 47-54 is a return to the resignation of 1-8. But the poet-lover’s role frames the poem (1-9, 51-54) and the attraction of a *docta puella* for the *poeta doctus* is important in 19-22, this theme serving to unify the poem. Boucher (s. oben Anm. 6) 388-389 thinks that 45-54 are part of 2. 4 because beauty is the subject of 2. 3 and difficulty is the subject of 2. 4. We have seen that both beauty and difficulty are subjects of 2. 2 and 2. 3, the *aequa* and *iniqua* in 2. 3, the *facies* and the *dura* implied in the *exempla* of 2. 2.



refers in 2. 3. 50 must be interpreted in the context of the poem as referring to the unequalled attractions or „rewards” which draw him to the beloved (9-22). These are defined not only as her *facies* (9-16), an expanded version of 2. 2. 5-6, but more so as her many accomplishments, dancing, singing, playing to the lyre, and composing her own poetry which Propertius confesses must be gifts of the gods (23-28). So outstanding is his *vita* (23) that she alone was born to be a source of *gloria* (29) among Roman girls; she will attract even Jupiter (30). This use of *gloria* is important to the development of the motif *laus in amore mori*, because it shows that one aspect of the love-poet’s reputation is that he, as lover and poet, attracts a woman who sets on fire both East and West and Jupiter himself (30, 43-44), the woman for whom Troy should have fallen (31-40). She is, in other words, a worthy prize. But obviously many others also are attracted to his beloved, creating the rivalry which constitutes the *dura* or *iniqua* of love. It is also clear that if the mistress is the poet-lover’s source of *gloria* because of her capacity to create rivalry in which he excels, it follows that love, with all its *iniqua*, is by necessity a permanent way of life for the lover who seeks *laus*. The term of endearment, *mea vita*, thus takes on a more compelling quality. The mistress is his life because she is the sole source of his *laus* in the *aequa* and *iniqua* which she embodies.<sup>24</sup>

Just as 2. 3 expands the meaning of 2. 2 in respect to the role of the lover-poet and the attractions of love, so, too, 2. 4 takes up in more detail the negative aspects of the love relationship implied in the *iniqua* of 2. 3: *multa prius dominae delicta queraris oportet* (2. 4. 1). Many *topoi* of love elegy, as seen in Book 1, reappear. The lover complains before the door (1-6; cf. the *paraclausithyron* of 1. 16). No medicine helps (7-8; cf. 1. 5. 27-28); the lover resorts to magicians and soothsayers (7-16; cf. 1. 1. 19-24). Nothing in fact helps (11-12), nor can it after 2. 2 and 2. 3, for the lover *must* remain committed to love and to his beloved, regardless of unexpected circumstances if he is to achieve *laus in amore* because of these *delicta*. 2. 4 thus underlines the extreme difficulties, the „hidden blows” (9), encountered by the lover in his quest for *laus*. The emphatic new point made in 2. 4 is that love is full of unexpected twists and turns, *nec apertos ... ictus* (9); it is a *caeca via* (10) whence come *tot mala* (10); it is *incautum* (14). The lover is likened to a man who is walking about healthy one minute and is dead the next (13): *et subito mirantur funus amici!* Although Propertius does not elucidate the point here, the reader presumes that a dysfunction in the love relationship is the cause of his statement *vix ipso sanguine mollis erit* (22). She won’t give in, and this results in the poet’s inability to „live”, i.e. his *funus* in line 13. Yet, love for the mistress is the very subject-matter which is the poet’s life, as we saw in 2. 3. Dysfunction can only lead to death, death with dishonor, if poetic *laus* is as yet unachieved and the source of *laus* is now non-existent.

The poem ends on a note reminiscent of the *militia amoris* and the epic vale of love elucidated in 2. 1-3: *hostis si quis erit nobis, amet ille puellas* (17). For Propertius, this advice comes too late; he is totally involved already in this *militia* both on the personal and on the professional level.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. 1. 7. 24, where Propertius bases his claim to fame on the fact that he speaks to the younger generation who proclaim him *ardoris nostri magne poeta*, a poet of love who uses his poetry *duram ... in dominam* (1. 7. 6).

Thus 2. 2, 3, and 4 can be seen as a unit of three poems emphasizing the *aequa*, or attractions, and the *iniqua*, or difficulties, of love. Both are necessary components of the poet-lover's struggle to achieve *laus* in an alternative to epic. In 2. 2, the mistress' *facies* motivates the lover's life-long commitment to love, while the concomitant *dura* resulting from rivalry are merely suggested in the *exempla*. In 2. 3, we see further elucidation of what attracts the lover to the beloved who is the source of *gloria*. At the same time more details explain why many rivals vie for such a prize and create *iniqua* which the lover must endure if he would win the girl in the end. In 2. 4, before this happens (*prius*, 2. 4. 1), he risks unseen blows and even „sudden death". All of this is presented in general terms (Cynthia herself is not referred to or addressed by name in 2. 1-4) applying not only to Propertius but to any lover. As in Book 1, Propertius continues to play the role of *praeceptor amoris*. If *laus in amore mori* is the poet's purpose, the implicit vehicle is the Callimachean poetry in which the history of the relationship is recorded and the mistress is courted.

2. 5, 6, 7: *Cynthia's nequitia/pudicitia: Propertius' poetry of endurance:*

If 2. 2, 3, and 4 portray in generalities the dichotomy between the *aequa* and *iniqua* of love and imply the necessary presence of both, 2. 5, 6, and 7 present the particulars as they apply to Propertius and Cynthia, who is named and addressed for the first time in the book in 2. 5.

A modified story-line begins to develop. In 2. 5, Propertius, following up the theme of the *delicta* of the *domina* in 2. 4, attacks as bitterly as he can the *nequitia* of Cynthia whom he vows to „punish" with his poetry if she refuses to reform. In 2. 6, trying to „endure", he tempers his criticism of Cynthia with an admission of his own hypersensitivity and devotion at the same time that he incorporates an appeal to her sense of honor by asserting that a woman's *pudicitia* is essentially her own responsibility. By 2. 7, Cynthia has responded to the remonstrance by showing her delight at the repeal of Augustus' marriage law, thus assuring Propertius of her continued fidelity. In this way 2. 5-7 illustrate the tendency in a love relationship for a constant shifting from *dolor* and *ira* to mutual *amor*, from *nequitia* to a show of *pudicitia*,<sup>25</sup> the *rota amoris*.

In 2. 5 Propertius is angry (9, 13, 22, 23).<sup>26</sup> Cynthia is *perfida* (3) and guilty of *nequitia* (2); the poet supposes that everyone in Rome knows (1). The poet is self-righteous (4) and demands punishment (3). For the first time in the corpus he openly threatens breaking off the relationship.<sup>27</sup> He will find a woman who appreciates the publicity (*quae fieri nostro carmine nota velit*, 6) to be derived from his love-poetry. She will be faithful (5) and not difficult (7). Cynthia, for so long a time Propertius' mistress, will no longer be loved, and she will be sorry (*heu sero flebis*

<sup>25</sup> G. Luck, „The Woman's Role in Latin Love Poetry", *Perspectives of Roman Poetry*, Austin, London, 1974, 21 observes that Propertius wants Cynthia to be reasonably, not absolutely, faithful. *Pudicitia* should be understood in this light.

<sup>26</sup> On 2. 5, see also E. Burck, „Sextus Propertius: Elegie II. 5", *Antike Lyrik*, ed. W. Eisenhut, Darmstadt, 1970, 431-450; F. Solmsen, „Propertius in his Literary Relations with Tibullus and Vergil", *Philologus* 105, 1961, 273-277 = *Kleine Schriften*, Hildesheim, 1968, 2. 299-303.

<sup>27</sup> In 1. 8A. 21-22 and 1. 12. 19-20 he affirms *fides*; in 1. 17 he has left and is remorseful; in 1. 18. 11-12, he swears that no other woman was involved; similarly in 2. 1. 55-56, 71-78 and in 2. 3. 45-46 he promises fidelity.

*amata diu*, 8).<sup>28</sup> The lover knows that it is appropriate to break away when passion is fresh: *nunc est ira recens, nunc est discedere tempus* (9). When anguish is gone, love returns (10). Angry lovers easily change their minds when the storm is past (13). If the lover endures, all the pain of love is light (16).

In spite of the obvious anger of lines 1-8, 9-16 suggest lack of resolve. The poet-lover is clearly bound to an „iniquitous” mistress, as he sees her, for he too quickly rationalizes his way out of breaking the promise of everlasting fidelity confirmed in 2. 1. 47-48, 55-56, 71-78. But the poet-lover is angry. In the *militia amoris* he must retaliate. He demands punishment. To release his pent-up emotions he will indulge in public recrimination.<sup>29</sup> As a lover and successful poet (26) he refuses physical violence (19-26).<sup>30</sup> He will exact a poetic revenge. He will publicize his mistress in his poems, ‘*Cynthia, forma potens: Cynthia, verba levis*’ (28), a line which epitomizes the *amor/dolor* dichotomy elucidated in every poem of Book 2 to date. Propertius seems confident that Cynthia will pale at the thought of an everlasting reputation for *non ignota nequitia* (29-30, 1-2), that like the accused in a *flagitatio* she will reform.

In its emphasis on the use of poetry in the *militia amoris* against the *docta puella*, 2. 5 is reminiscent of 2. 1 and 2. 3: Propertius is playing the conscious role of *poeta doctus*. He employs several allusions to the poetry of his predecessor in love, Catullus, knowing the *docta* would recognize the implications of their use. Like Catullus in *Carmen* 8, Propertius is upset by his mistress’ *nequitia*, thus revealing his jealousy and his devotion. Two choices are available within the framework of this poem, to break off the liaison completely and find a new mistress or to back off and „endure”, thus following the advice of 2. 3. 50. A *docta* would know that Catullus in *Carmen* 8 was trying to break off the relationship completely, even though he failed. Propertius makes no such attempt here. Rather, he opts for a course reminiscent of that of Catullus 42, an appeal to popular justice, the *flagitatio*. The *poeta doctus* will punish with poetry: Cynthia will be immortalized as a beautiful but fickle girl who obviously will continue to inspire his poetry. Here is a new way of showing the lover’s endurance. This ingenious appeal to the mistress’ intellect is no doubt designed to evoke a positive response to the poet’s fidelity.<sup>31</sup>

If 2. 5 offers a first look at the specific details of how Propertius reacts to the lessons of endurance, 2. 6 explicates even more fully how the lover can rationalize his position and at the same time express his feelings of jealousy.

We guess in 2. 6 that Cynthia has been moved to a degree by the appeal of 2. 5,

<sup>28</sup> Burck (s. oben Anm. 26) 436 ff. points out how Propertius in 2. 5 varies certain Catullan treatments of *nequitia* (as in *Carm.* 37, 58, 11. 15-20, 8 and 42).

<sup>29</sup> Burck (s. oben Anm. 26) discusses the similarity of treatment in 2. 5. 27-28 and Catullus’ *flagitatio*, *Carm.* 42, a resort to popular „folk justice” (cf. E. Fraenkel, „Two Poems of Catullus, JRS 51, 1961, 46-53 = Kleine Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, Rome, 1964, 2. 115-125.) The diatribe was also a feature of Callimachus’ poetry (in the *Iambi* and elsewhere, e.g. the *Epigrams*), a variation on the iambic tradition instituted by Archilochus and perpetuated by Hipponax. See W. Bühler, „Archilochos und Kallimachos”, *Archiloque, Vandoeuvres-Genève*, 1963, 225-253.

<sup>30</sup> See Solmsen (oben Anm. 26) for discussion of 2. 5. 19-26 as an answer by the *poeta doctus* to Tibullus *rusticus*. The violence of the *poeta doctus* has important ramifications in later poems (8-11) which we discuss later.

<sup>31</sup> Burck (s. oben Anm. 26) points out that 2. 5 is still a courting poem; Propertius can-

for in 2. 6. 7-8, she is offering excuses for her behavior, claiming that the visitors to her house are „relatives” (7-8). Propertius notes that more cross her threshold than went to see the famous courtesans of Greece, Laïs, Thaïs, and Phyrne. But in 13-14 he admits to a tendency to overreact:

omnia me laedent: timidus sum (ignosce timori)  
et miser in tunica suspicor esse virum.

Such overreaction led in the past to the Trojan War (16), the rape of the Lapith women (17-18), and even the Romans' rape of the Sabine women (19-22).<sup>32</sup> Propertius overlooks the fact that the responsibility for fault in these stories lay with the men involved, not the women, and he prefers to make the point that in fact many inducements to *nequitia* exist (25-36); a girl is a faithful Penelope or Alcestis (23-24) because she wants to be (37-40).

2. 6 represents a compromise position on Propertius' part. He finds excuses for the presence of his mistress' many suitors by pointing to epic and historical precedents for outside interference in love relationships (15-22). At the same time he urges circumspection on her part. This both shows his own concern and affection and acknowledges her appeal to others (cf. 2. 2-3). A show of devotion on her part, like that of Alcestis or Penelope or *quaecumque viri femina limen amat* (24), rejecting other suitors, can only come through Cynthia's own volition (39-40), since she is not a married woman. Propertius expects a lot — more than he has the right. But, as he puts it, he thinks of her as both *amica* and *uxor* and, by implication, he will behave as a loyal husband (41-42). He hopes obviously for reciprocity.<sup>33</sup>

Thus 2. 6, at the very center of the second *libellus*, portrays in a very positive way the line of thought a lover who is *domitus* (as in 2. 3. 50) can take when he is aware that he has no legal right over the actions of an *amica* (and a popular one at that, 1-6) in an age where the concept of *pudicitia* is generally despised (25-36) through even old Roman precedent (19-22).<sup>34</sup> He can only show his own degree of devotion (41-42) and hope for an affirmative response because Cynthia loves him too (39-40).<sup>35</sup>

The positive approach taken by Propertius in 2. 6, avoiding estrangement and taking his chances concerning Cynthia's fidelity, comes to fruition in 2. 7. The break-up of the relationship has been threatened by Augustus' marriage law of 28 B.C. which would force Propertius to dissolve the *foedus* with Cynthia to marry a not break off the relationship (even though he threatens to) because Cynthia's beauty (28) continues to inspire his poetry; his jealousy of rivals underlines his own devotion.

<sup>32</sup> Earlier the Trojan War (2. 2. 2. 3) and the rape of the Lapith women (2. 2) illustrated how a *facies* could incite rivalry and violence, but in these poems the woman's beauty was emphasized and the violence viewed as a natural concomitant. In 2. 5 and 2. 6 Propertius changes the emphasis to the effect of this rivalry on himself as poet-lover.

<sup>33</sup> Baker (s. oben Anm. 11) 678 remarks that, because of the dependent stance taken by Propertius, the permanence of the relationship depends entirely on Cynthia.

<sup>34</sup> G. Williams, „Poetry and the Moral Climate of Augustan Rome”, JRS 52 (1962) 28-46, discusses the concern for moral reform which prompted Augustus' attempted legislation of 28 B.C.

<sup>35</sup> Scaliger, Enk, Richardson, and Luck (s. oben Anm. 25) 26 do not think that 2. 6. 41-42 belong to 2. 6. Scaliger and Enk transpose them to follow 2. 7. 20, Richardson to follow 2. 7. 18, and Luck to begin 2. 7. But there is a contrast in 2. 6 between the way prostitutes behave (1-1-6) and devoted wives act (23-24); the *exempla* Propertius uses are *wives*, and the poet hopes for the same behavior from Cynthia. The affirmative result is seen in 2. 7.

legal partner. In effect, this represents the opposite threat from that posed in 2. 5 where Cynthia is feared to be breaking up the relationship by her attentions to other men. But in 2. 7 Cynthia is delighted at the news that the proposed law has been withdrawn. Thus her loyalty, questioned in 2. 5-6, is vindicated in 2. 7. 1-6, and the poet reiterates his *fides* (2. 7. 7-20) which appeared somewhat shaken in 2. 5. 5-8. The wheel of love has turned in Propertius' favor.

In an ironic variation of the *paraclausithyron* motifs used earlier in 2. 4 to emphasize the time the lover spends in unsuccessful persuasion „before the door”, Propertius exults that he would „rather die” (2. 7. 7) than pass by his beloved's *limen* which would be closed to him if he were married to another.<sup>36</sup> He thinks of how much like death his marriage to another woman would seem to Cynthia (11-12). As it is, he wants no part of providing sons for military service (2. 7. 13-14), but if the *castra* of Cynthia were *vera* (15), then Castor's horse couldn't carry him there fast enough (16). As it is, he has earned so much *gloria* in the *militia amoris*, his fame has reached even the wild reaches of the far northern coast of the Black Sea, *hibernos ... Borysthenidas* (18).

Thus the general statements about love in 2. 2-4, that *aequa* are mixed with *iniqua* which must be endured are exemplified in 2. 5-7, with emphasis on Propertius' successful reaction to rivalry through endurance. The *delicta* of the mistress described as general in 2. 4 prompt Propertius to assume *nequitia* on Cynthia's part in 2. 5. His first reaction is to threaten to find a new appreciative mistress, thus creating the likelihood of a „sudden death” of the relationship as forewarned in 2. 4. 13. But endurance of the *iniqua*, counseled in 2. 3, is put to the test in 2. 5-7 and prevails. Propertius cannot give up the fight – Cynthia is his *vita* – even though he recognizes like Catullus that abandonment might be the better plan (2. 5. 9-16). Instead, as an avowed poet, he uses his poetry, not physical violence, as *arma militiae* to remind Cynthia of the effect of her beauty on him, an appeal to the *docta*'s better nature. This poetry of endurance, tolerating the parade of prospective suitors at Cynthia's door, is rewarded in 2. 7 by her pleasure in the continuance of the relationship. The promise of 2. 5. 16 is fulfilled: *omne in amore malum, si patiare, leve est*.

The *laus* anticipated in 2. 1. 47 seems achieved in 2. 7. 17-18:

hinc etenim tantum meruit mea gloria nomen  
gloria ad hibernos lata Borysthenidas.

We assume that the *nomen* derives from the winning of Cynthia through appropriate use of his poetry as *arma*, that the *gloria* refers to Propertius' personal and poetic success in the *militia amoris*.

<sup>36</sup> Propertius' use of another Callimachean *topos* may be noted: the *paraclausithyron* in 2. 4-7 (cf. Epigr. 63Pf.) underlining the threat of estrangement which is the basis of the *iniqua* faced by the lover. In 2. 4, the lover is often *repulsus* before achieving success (1-6). In 2. 5, Propertius promises not to use violence in breaking down the door which separates him from his beloved (2. 5. 22). F.O. Copley, *Exclusus Amator*, Baltimore, 1956, 75-76 discusses how the *limen* symbolizes faithfulness in love in 2. 6. In 1-6 it stands as the symbol of meretricious love, the „open door” of the prostitute. In 24 it stands for the perfect loyalty of wife to husband; in 37-38, for the device which would assure Cynthia's faithfulness to Propertius alone. In 2. 7, Propertius' own loyalty is illustrated by his refusal to „pass by” her door. The use of the *topos* unifies the sequence of poems dealing with Propertius' endurance of the *iniqua* imposed by Cynthia.

In love all things change from one extreme to the other: *aequa* are balanced with *iniqua*, *ira* and *dolor* (2. 5) with mutual pleasure (2. 7), thus proving the maxim of 2. 5. 13: *quam facile irati verbo mutantur amantes*.

2. 8, 9: *The rota amoris: mors inbonesta*

A defeated Propertius laments in 2. 8. 7-8:

omnia vertuntur: certe vertuntur amores:  
vinceris aut vincis, haec in amore rota est.

Like the leaders of Troy and Thebes, Propertius suddenly suffers catastrophe in 2. 8 and 9, learning first hand what it means to face sudden death, as in the *funus* of 2. 4. 13. After the vaunted *gloria* of 2. 7. 17-18, deriving from mutual dedication to the love relationship, the „wheel of love” has turned. Propertius’ mistress has been snatched away (like Helen and the Lapith and Sabine women in 2. 6. 17-22). The poet-lover is thus „conquered” in the *militia amoris* and faces possible *mors inbonesta* (2. 8. 27-28; 2. 9. 49-52) before he has achieved the hoped-for *laus in amore mori*.

Death is a key theme in 2. 8, occupying the central position in the poem (17-28)<sup>37</sup> before being rejected by the poet as a viable alternative to simply standing by and enduring, like Achilles in 29-38, the loss of his mistress to a rival (1).<sup>38</sup> This turn of events illustrates the principle of the *rota amoris* mentioned for the first time in 2. 8. 8 but already hinted at in 2. 1 and 2. 2-4 and observed in 2. 5-7: love involves the constant change from happiness to *dolor* and *ira*, from „victory” to „defeat” in the *militia amoris*, or, as Propertius puts it in 2. 8. 8: *vinceris aut vincis*.

At the moment, the poet-lover is „losing”, but he reminds himself that he is no different from epic heroes (9-10, 21-24, 29-38). Two alternatives come to mind. First, in 17-28, thinking of Haemon’s suicide which permitted staying with his beloved, he contemplates early death by suicide.<sup>39</sup> But to keep his mistress with him he must kill her too, a *mors inbonesta*, he thinks (27-28). At this point, the poet backs down and finds an alternative:<sup>40</sup> he can be like Achilles (29-38) who was so

<sup>37</sup> Important discussions of Propertius’ treatment of death, with application to 2. 8, include Baker (s. oben Anm. 11), A.K. Michels, „Death and Two Poets”, TAPA 86, 1955, 171-179, and Boucher (s. oben Anm. 6) 65-104. Helpful articles on 2. 8: P.J. Enk, „The Unity of some Elegies of Propertius”, Latomus 15, 1956, 181-185; D.P. Harmon, „Myth and Proverb in Propertius 2. 8”, CW 68, 1975, 417-24; T.A. Suits, „Mythology, Address, and Structure in Propertius 2. 8”, TAPA 96, 1965, 422-437.

<sup>38</sup> This interpretation differs somewhat from that proposed by Enk, Harmon, or Suits who are not considering 2. 8 in the light of a continuous narrative associated with 2. 5-7 and 2. 9. I shall explain this difference in some detail later. For the moment we may note that Propertius in 2. 5 was faced with a similar decision between breaking off the relationship or enduring the mistress’ *delicta*; there he chose to endure and „won”, i.e. found success in 2. 7.

<sup>39</sup> I accept Harmon’s interpretation (s. oben Anm. 37) of the sequence of ideas followed here; for other views, see the editors *ad loc.*, Suits, and Enk.

<sup>40</sup> Harmon (oben Anm. 37) notes that by murdering Cynthia, Propertius will *make* her conform to the image of the faithful woman he wants her to be; he does not explain why this is a *mors inbonesta* except that it is „inappropriate ... to the poet’s situation” (cf. Butler and Barber *ad loc.*; but in 2. 7, *gloria* comes from Cynthia’s *voluntary* devotion (cf. 2. 6. 39-40). Harmon also sees the Achilles *exemplum* as justifying Propertius’ resolve in 27-28. Rather, the emphasis in 29-40 is on the hero’s temporary disgrace as he sits out the wait until his rival returns his girl – then he returns to the fight. So, too, Propertius. In line 5, he asks, *possum ego*

overcome by love for Briseis that when she was taken from him he simply laid aside his traditional commitment to war and sat by watching his comrades die in battle (31-34) — an epic example of the *dolor* which comes *in erepto amore* (36). The poem ends with the suggestion that Propertius is more like Achilles even though he is „far inferior in weapons and in the kind of mother he has” (39), i.e. he is even more helpless in the face of love (40).

The result of 2. 8, rejection of *mors inhonesta*, does not come as a surprise, for we can recall the injunction of 2. 3. 50, *domiti post haec aequa et iniqua ferunt*. Also we know that to earn *laus in amore*, the lover must be in love and endure its complications at the time of death. A premature death, *in erepto amore*, or giving up too soon, would be *inhonesta*. Also, at the moment, in 2. 8, the lover is suffering defeat in the *militia amoris*: death now would be ignominious except as a last resort.

The Achilles *exemplum* is suggestive: Achilles in the end became the greatest hero of the Trojan War but only after his girl was returned with recompense and he had killed Hector (as in 2. 8. 37-38). Propertius swallows his pride, endures the *iniqua* (his *munera* and *carmina* have never yielded an *amo*, 11-12), and decides to sit and wait.<sup>41</sup>

The situation in 2. 9 remains the same — the lovers are still separated.<sup>42</sup> Propertius seems aggressive at the beginning of the poem. After a two-line introduction in which he shows pity for the plight of any lover of his mistress, he launches into a 16-line mythological *excursus* to show that she is no Penelope or Briseis (cf. 6. 23-24). At the end of 2. 8, Propertius seemed to want vengeance on the rival; now the poet is emphasizing the mistress' fault, as in the *mors* section of 2. 8. 17-28. He would appear to have changed his mind from the wait-and-see attitude of 2. 8.

In 2. 9, Propertius is pursuing a different line of attack. Apparently after 2. 8 he sat, waited, and watched (as in 2. 8. 29-35) or at least stayed away from his mistress for a long enough time (2. 9. 19-20, 29-30)<sup>43</sup> that he complains that she could not stay alone for even one night but sought out an old lover with whom she laughed and possibly joked about him (21-24). She shows no sign of appreciation for Propertius' concern about her when she was deathly ill, preferring instead the old lover who on that occasion was nowhere to be seen (25-28). Such are the *iniqua* Propertius endures. Indeed in 25-28 he looks very much like an unappreciated Briseis, the *exemplum* used to contrast the mistress' infidelity in 9-16.<sup>44</sup>

The editors *ad loc.* pay little attention to the fact that in 2. 9 the mistress appears to be an aggrieved party. She is angry in 35-36 (cf. Propertius in 2. 5):

*in alterius positam spectare lacerto?* In 29-38, the answer implied is „Yes, vengeance will come later.” Love triumphs (40); it cannot be cut in the bud in a *mors inhonesta*.

<sup>41</sup> In waiting, Propertius intends eventually to punish the rival, a more conciliatory move than murdering Cynthia whom he obviously considers responsible (1-28). 2. 8 thus represents a backing away from an uncompromising position (*contra*, Harmon [s. oben Anm. 37] 422).

<sup>42</sup> In addition to editors, see on 2. 9: N. Wiggers, „Epic Themes in II. 9”, *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 367-374, Wiggers and Richardson note the number of repeated motifs which link 2. 8 and 2. 9: *mors*, the *rota amoris*, the Achilles and Theban cycle *exempla*.

<sup>43</sup> Only Richardson *ad loc.* notes that Propertius' charges against the mistress are mitigated by the poet's own absence: „a new dimension is given the situation.”

<sup>44</sup> See also Wiggers (oben Anm. 42) on this.

quam cito feminea non constat foedus in ira,  
sive ea causa gravis sive ea causa levis.

Although Propertius generalizes the mistress' reaction as typical of females, Propertius admits there may be a reason, large or small, which could justify her breaking of the *foedus*. Quickly he backs off in surrender, *nunc, quoniam ista tibi placuit sententia, cedam* (37). If the mistress will have her own way and, ungratefully, keep her old lover (23-24, 28), the *pueri* (= Amor) may as well shoot him with sharper arrows and take away his life (37-39). Let his blood be a sign of Love's victory!

A final plea ends the poem. In 41-43, *paraclausithyron* motifs are used once again (see note 36 on 2. 7) to show the poet's fidelity in the past and to promise, whatever happens, devotion in the future:

sidera sunt testes et matutina pruina  
et furtim misero ianua aperta mihi.  
te nihil in vita nobis acceptius unquam:<sup>45</sup>

This constitutes an „attack” in the *militia amoris*, the conscious use of a poetic device to break down the mistress' *ianua* and cross the *limen*. He is trying to show his poetic ingenuity (as he succeeded in doing in 2. 5-7) to convince the mistress of his good intentions regarding *fides*, in spite of the apparent lapse in 19-20). He is, and always has been, the faithful partner. But this evokes the *exemplum* of 3-18, where the mistress is contrasted with Penelope and Briseis and is to be counted as never faithful. This is just the aspect of *fides* which the lover is supposed to be learning to accept after 2. 3. 50 (*domiti post haec aequa et iniqua ferunt*), not quarrel over. Thus 2. 9 represents a kind of climax to the learning experience proposed in 2. 3 and seen exemplified already in 2. 5-7.

The final lines of 2. 9 I feel have been generally misunderstood, and yet they fit easily into the thematic movement from 2. 8 to 2. 9. The editors *ad loc.* assume that *morte ... tua* (52) refers to the rival who Propertius in 48 wishes would turn to stone, and they do not understand the significance of the reference to Jocasta and the duel between Eteocles and Polyneices in 48-49.<sup>46</sup> But the mistress has been addressed consistently in the poem (in 19, 23, 25, 37, 43, and 46), and we expect the mistress to be the reference in *morte ... tua* if we still remember that her *mors* was seriously considered in 2. 8. 17-18, even though it was rejected then as *inhonesta*. In 2. 8, Propertius contemplated murder (and his own suicide) as a way to force her compliance and fidelity. Here, in 2. 9, he goes a step further. Like Eteocles, he would not hesitate to fight a duel to the death with his rival, if only his girl, like Jocasta, were present (*media ... matre*, 50; *media ... puella*, 51). Jocasta, in the model for this scene, Euripides' *Phoenissae* 1457-58, committed suicide at the death of the combatants. If Propertius has in mind the mistress' suicide in 52, her death would represent, from the lover's point of view, more of a victory than the *mors inhonesta* of 2. 8 for it would show that she loved him, a thing she has refused so far to say (2. 8. 12).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. 1. 16. 23-26, 35-36, 45-46 for similar use of these *paraclausithyron* motifs.

<sup>46</sup> Camps separates 49-52 from 1-48 and considers it a fragmentary „four-line growl” addressed to a rival; Butler and Barber think a sudden change of address to the rival harsh and presume a hiatus of one or more couplets; Housman inserted 2. 8. 3-4 here. Rothstein sees the parallelism between 50 and 51 but thinks that Jocasta's suicide spoils the comparison. As we shall see, suicide is the point.



In 2. 9, unlike 2. 8, Propertius is willing to reconsider *mors* and his mistress' suicide, and the poem ends on that note.

When the *rota amoris* turns in 2. 8 to the threat of „sudden death” after the *gloria* of 2. 7, Propertius is in much the same relative position as in 2. 5 where Cynthia's *nequitia* implies consorting with other lovers. In the *militia amoris* the poet-lover must use the *arma* available through poetry to „attack”. In 2. 5-7 his approach was a success. In 2. 9-9, his patience worn thin perhaps, he uses a different approach which brings him dangerously close to the end of the relationship, his very life, at the end of 2. 9.

In 2. 8-9, Propertius explores the available options, death in some form to force reunion with his mistress in the underworld – but the end of the life which brings him *laus* – or sitting and waiting until his mistress is given back, the endurance enjoined in 2. 3. In the end, the lover is too personally disturbed by what he considers primarily the fault of the mistress, and he is led to consider murder-suicide, the *mors inhonesta* of 2. 8, and the duel-suicide of 2. 9, a more attractive alternative since it involves a heroic duel to the death for the rival and himself and suicide for the mistress in a public display of fidelity which would unite the lovers in death.<sup>47</sup> What this means for *laus in amore mori* remains to be seen in 2. 10 and 11.

#### 2. 10-12: Poetry and the *rota amoris*:

In 2. 10<sup>48</sup> Propertius writes that „it is time to circle Helicon with other measures” (1) and to give epic poetry a chance (2). Now he feels like telling of troops brave in battle and the Roman camp of his *dux* (4; cf. 2. 7. 15-16). Even if his strength in such a project fails, *laus* will still come in the trying: *in magnis et voluisse sat est* (6). The poem is thus the antithesis of 2. 1, the *recusatio* of Augustan and traditional epic and the avowal of love-elegy, where *laus* comes *in amore mori*.

We can only presume reading this that after 2. 8 and 2. 9 the mistress was not favorably enough impressed by the poetry presented to change her mind. The „death” anticipated in 2. 9. 38-39, if the mistress were to persist in scorning Propertius, demands that the poet write no longer about love.<sup>49</sup> He must, if he conti-

<sup>47</sup> Propertius likes such displays of female loyalty; cf. 1. 15. 21-22 (the suicide of Evadne), 3. 13. 15-24 (the praise of suttee). Cynthia in 1. 15 is not at all the type to behave like Evadne. 2. 9. 47-52 also is wishful thinking; the mistress is not likely to commit suicide.

<sup>48</sup> For a good discussion of 2. 10 and its relation to 2. 7-9, 11, see Nethercut (s. oben Anm. 3).

<sup>49</sup> In this discussion I am being careful to emphasize the literary sequence of events in the second *libellus*; this in no way implies autobiographical correspondence (see A.W. Allen, „Sincerity” and the Roman Elegists”, CP 45, 1950, 145-160). Nethercut (s. oben Anm. 3) 89 emphasizes the effect of the decline of the relationship to be seen in 2. 8-9 on 2. 10 but sees this decline from the personal point of view, i.e. that Propertius is undergoing a change and sees a time when love-elegy about Cynthia may be terminated because of her infidelity. This I would modify in view of the narrative progression in the book to date: Cynthia has been presented (as in 1. 3) as the dominating factor in the relationship; in 2. 10 Propertius portrays this relationship as terminated, and this means the writing of epic instead of elegy. If Propertius has given up love (this is the implication of *cedam*, 2. 9. 37), it is because he is unwilling to recognize that the price of love with a woman like Cynthia (i.e. *docta* and independent) is not to be able to complain about her infidelity (cf. 2. 3. 50), the „lesson” of 2. 8 and 2. 9. (cf. 1. 15-19)

nues to write at all, find a different genre. To give up love-poetry and take on epic means throwing over the entire life-style on which Propertius' career was predicated: he is no longer in love; there is no longer a subject for elegy: *bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est* (8). Now he will be a more serious person and poet (*gravior*, 9). He must rise *ex humili* (11), from the „humble” genre of Callimachean elegy, if he would earn *laus* and produce work worth of a „mighty voice” (*magni ... oris*, 12).<sup>50</sup>

In 13-20, Propertius outlines roughly the current or proposed military campaigns which would provide alternative subject-matter: the Euphrates region<sup>51</sup> and the Parthian, India, Arabia, or any land which to date has avoided Roman rule. Although the poet's intention is to write „grand” epic on these themes, many words typical of amatory verse shine forth: *tueri* (13) and *se tenuisse* (14) make of the Euphrates a *ianitor* in a *paraclausithyron*; *dat colla* (15) evokes the marriage yoke as well as military surrender; *intactae* (16) makes of Arabia a virgin; *si qua tellus se subtrahit oris* (17) suggests the „shrinking violet” who is courted against her will; *capta* (18) is a word applied to the mistress in 2. 9.24. Even in Propertius' protestations of loyalty to his new cause, suspicious terminology is used. In 19-20, *haec ego castra sequar: vates tua castra canendo/magnus ero*: we recall too easily 2. 7. 15-18 where he followed the camp of his girl and his *gloria* stemmed from feats described in elegy. Such lapses reveal in advance the truth of 23-24:

sic nos nunc, inopes laudis conscendere carmen,  
pauperibus sacris vilia tura damus.

Propertius does not know yet the poetic heights of Ascræ;<sup>52</sup> epic is not yet his polished genre. Love has „washed him” only in the Permessus (25-26). His natural bent is still love-elegy (cf. 2. 1. 41-42, 46).<sup>53</sup>

If the *recusatio* of epic in 2. 1 is meant to convey in special terms the professional emphasis which Propertius in Book 2 is putting on a career in love, then the *recusatio* of love-poetry implied in 2. 10 is meant to be similarly definitive and mark the end of his career in love. Even though Propertius speaks of his epic efforts as *vilia tura*, he uses the present and future indicative throughout the poem to un-

<sup>50</sup> Nethercut (s. oben Anm. 3) 81 rightly compares 2. 10. 11-12 with Pindar, *Isth.* 5. 38 and sees the „sincerity” of Propertius' response. He aims to become a *vates* in the Horatian sense of the word (*Odes* 1. 1. 35-36). We note also the contrast between the desire for *laus* in 2. 10 and *laus in amore mori* in 2. 1 in view of the similarity in theme between the two poems; in 2. 1. 47-48, *laus* comes from a life spent with the *dura puella*.

<sup>51</sup> Much has been written, for dating purposes, about Propertius' choice of geographical locales in this poem (see editors *ad loc.*). I would suggest that in view of the emphasis on the epic genre in 2. 10, mention of the Euphrates could have literary as well as political significance. Callimachus repudiates traditional epic in *H.* 2. 108 by likening it to the Euphrates, a *μέγας ὄδας, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ / λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι τυρφορὸν ἔλκε* in 2. 10, Propertius, by mentioning the Euphrates first in his list of locales, may be suggesting that he is thereby repudiating the Callimachean poetics avowed in 2. 1 at the same time.

<sup>52</sup> See G. Luck, *The Latin Love Elegy*<sup>2</sup>, London, 1969, 140 on this much disputed line.

<sup>53</sup> Nethercut (s. oben Anm. 3) 80-82 comments on the elevated diction of 13-26 as an indication that Propertius intends to write sober verse, especially noting the poet's address of Caesar as Augustus, a solemn name appropriate for the great events enumerated in 13-18. I should suggest in addition that the undertones of love elegy which creep into these lines serve to remind the reader of the poet's earlier commitment to that genre, his „natural” medium (2. 1.46). In these lines, his attempt to sound like an epic poet make him look like „a fish out of water” (2. 3. 5-6).

derscore his determination.<sup>54</sup> All of this successfully illustrates the *rota amoris* as it applies to poetry.

2. 11 is a 6-line epigram typical in length and theme of a Callimachean diatribe poem.<sup>55</sup> In addition, its similarity to a grave epitaph makes it especially appropriate here for a mistress whose *mors* was assented to in 2. 8-9:

scribant de te alii vel sis ignota licebit:  
laudet, qui sterili semina ponit humo.

Propertius will no longer write poetry about this unnamed woman; if no one else does, she will be *ignota* (1); when she dies, her considerable gifts (cf. 2. 3) will be buried with her (3-4) forever. She will „die” in truth, scorned by passing travelers who will never know that she was a *docta puella* (6) who liked Callimachean poetry. Her poet-chronicler, too, it is implied, will pass into the ranks of the unidentified of the past, the perfect fulfillment of a *mors inhonesta* for both. This makes an appropriate *sphragis* for an author who has „written off” (2. 10. 8) Callimachean short poetry and the mistress who inspired it.

But never underestimate the ways of *Amor* who comes and goes constantly and turns lovers into vacillating fools (2. 12. 1-3, 5-8), forcing them into blind decisions which squander their wealth (4, 9-11). Propertius knows! Except that in his case *Amor* never leaves but wages constant war turning him into a mere shadow of his former self (13-20). But if he ruins him totally, who ever will make poetry about the head, fingers, and black eyes of his mistress and tell how softly she moves her feet (21, 23-24)? Propertius' elegiac Muse is the source of great *gloria* for *Amor* (22).<sup>56</sup>

So now the *rota* comes truly full circle: from sudden death (in 2. 8, 9, 10, 11) Propertius, a *tenuis umbra* (20), comes back to life as a love-poet to sing *ut soleant molliter ire pedes* (23-24), words typical of elegy. Self-interest should prevent *Amor* from destroying him completely, for Propertius provides important publicity for the greater power of Love!

<sup>54</sup> Nethercut (s. oben Anm. 3) 84 ff. discusses Propertius' use of the present and future indicative and concludes that Propertius shows through their use that he is undergoing a change and is determined to write epic some day. I would modify this assessment to note that in 2. 10 Propertius is writing a „programmatically” poem telling that from now on (*nunc volo*, 9 ... *nunc ... Musa docet*, 10 ... *nunc erit ... opus*, 12) he will write epic. We see later, in 2. 12, that this determination is undermined by *Amor*.

<sup>55</sup> 2. 11 was regarded for a long time as a fragment. Richardson, after Postgate, calls it a „perfect epigram” (cf. 1. 21, 22). It epitomizes the Callimachean *Kreuzung der Gattungen* (W. Kroll, *Studien zum Verständnis der römischen Literatur*, Stuttgart, 1964, reprint of 1924 edition, 202-224).

<sup>56</sup> K. Quinn, „The Power of Love”, *Latin Explorations*, London, 1963, 168-182, discusses 2. 12, emphasizing the different meanings of *amor* implied in the poem: 1) the basic idea of love, 2) the power of love, and 3) the Hellenistic god Eros who merely serves as a symbol to aid in understanding the complex nature of the lover's feelings. Quinn would not capitalize *Amor* in 1, because he thinks the emphasis in the poem is on the effect of love and the personification of Eros is immediately subordinated to senses 1 and 2. However, *amor* personified in sense 2 in 13-20 seems in 21-22 to return to the *Amor* of sense 3, as in line 1. The lines evoke the relationship between tutelary divinity and *vates* such as is seen between Callimachus and Apollo in *H.* 2, although in Propertius' case, on a playful level. This similarity is in line with Propertius' avowal of Callimachus' poetics and their application to love in 2. 1.

For a book in which the *rota amoris* is a major theme, 2. 12, which shows the *rota* of love-poetry turning the poet again to love-elegy, is the perfect outcome. The principle propounded in 2. 1. 47, *laus in amore mori*, is consummated in 2. 12. 22: *haec mea Musa levis gloria magna tua est. Mors inbonesta* is averted after all. The apologetic Propertius of 2. 1, whose *pectus* is too *angustum* for anything but Callimachean-type *aitia* on love, is fully vindicated in 2. 12. 21-24, where he has become a *vates* and source of *gloria magna* for his tutelary divinity – a role consonant with Callimachus' conception of the poet's function (*H.* 2). The return to the fold of elegy in 2. 12 establishes the validity of the grave epitaph in 2. 1. 78: *buic misero fatum dura puella fuit*, Propertius' life-long commitment to love which was threatened in 2. 8-11.

2. 12 is a light-hearted poem, the most frivolous in the book to date, an appropriate end to a *mollis ... liber* (2. 1. 2). Although 2. 2-11 purport to be a serious exploration of the changes occurring in love and the life-and-death struggle love entails, the general impression of a description of Love as a flighty boy turning the lover into a fool must be one of self-irony and distance, qualities which typify Callimachus' work as well<sup>57</sup> and serve as a final seal, or *sphragis*, identifying Propertius as truly a „Callimachean" poet, proving the point made in 2. 1. 39-46.

The picture of *Amor* in 2. 12 as a flighty boy who tosses the lover from one position to another (5-12) rationalizes the constant and sudden changes of the *rota amoris* in the second *libellus* and Propertius' own changing attitudes to them.<sup>58</sup> The fact that this *rota* comes full circle in 2. 12 shows the truth of Propertius' feeling that wingless Love in his case never leaves but wages constant war (13-20). Furthermore, it paves the way for a new book of poetry.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> See especially Giangrande (oben Anm. 17).

<sup>58</sup> I follow Richardson and Enk in seeing *alterna in unda* as a reference to the heights and depths of love rather than, with Quinn (s. oben Anm. 56), to love of different women; in 13-16, Propertius' situation is distinguished from the general as seen in 5-6: love never leaves Propertius but comes and goes from other men. Propertius with others shares the experience of the „ups" and „downs" of love (7-8); *alterna in manu* is another way of expressing the idea of the *rota amoris*.

<sup>59</sup> The question may arise why 2. 12 is a more appropriate concluding poem than 2. 9, 2. 10, or 2. 11. First, 2. 12 evokes 2. 1 in a number of key themes, framing the book and confirming initial assertions: 1) it shows Propertius' never-ending commitment to love (cf. 2. 1. 47-78); 2) the *militia Amoris* motif confirms the *dura* nature of the mistress' love (2. 1. 78); 3) the Callimachean evocations attest to the espousal of that poet's poetics in 2. 1. 39-46; 4) 2. 12. 23-24 evoke the physical details of the mistress adduced in 2. 1. 5-16, 2. 2. 3-6, and 2. 3. 9-16 to show why the poet is captivated. Then, 2. 12 sums up key motifs elucidated in 2. 2-11: 1) the *tenuis umbra* evokes Propertius' near-*mors* in 2. 8-11; 2) the abrupt turning of the *rota* completes the cycle on poetry (as 2. 2-4, 2. 5-7, 2. 7-8, 9 do for love); 3) the picture of *Amor* explains the flightiness of love seen generally in 2. 2-11.

2. 9 would end the book too negatively, leaving too many questions unanswered as to the future, and it does not balance the key theme introduced in 2. 1, the poet's commitment to Callimachean poetry. 2. 10 serves to complement 2. 9, but as a concluding poem it closes the door on a new book of love-poetry and negates the general principle proclaimed in 2. 1 about ever-lasting love-poetry and love. 2. 11 evokes the *sphragis* and lends atmosphere to the swearing-off of love-poetry, but this denial again negates the program of 2. 1; 2. 10-11 do not illustrate the complete cycle of the *rota amoris*.

2. 10-12 belong together as a unit illustrating the *rota amoris* as it applies to poetry, the principal theme announced in 2. 1. 1-2; how the *dura* of love apply to poetry is necessary to complete the presentation.

*Summary: Key themes in 2. 1-12*

Propertius' avowal of Callimachean poetics is the heart and soul of the second *libellus*. The *angustum pectus* not only frames the book with the program of love-elegy in 2. 1 and 2. 12 but Callimachean *topoi*, or rather Propertian variations of these *topoi*, permeate the poetry and incorporate the innovative themes the poet is emphasizing.

2. 1 introduces these themes. In the *Monobiblos*, Propertius emphasizes Cynthia, her domination, and the importance of love. The primary interest in 2. 1 is the poet's dedication to a particular genre, love-elegy, and the personal honor to be derived from it. The *unde* in *quaeritis unde mihi totiens scribantur amores* (2. 1. 1) suggests aetiological short poems explaining the provenance and necessity of such poetry. The *ingenium* comes not from Apollo (as in *Ait.* fr. 1, *H.* 2) but from the *ipsa puella* (2. 1. 4), a Propertian innovation. A *maxima historia* will result (2. 1. 16; cf. 2. 2-12).<sup>60</sup> Callimachus' *angusto pectore* (2. 1. 40) is more closely defined as *angusto versantes proelia lecto* (2. 1. 45) or *vero longas Iliadas* (2. 1. 14), looking ahead to the *militia* imposed by the *dura puella* (2. 1. 78).

The *recusatio* of epic suggests not only Callimachus' antipathy to weighty poetry but also Propertius' preference for personal rather than public themes. But Callimachus' use of epic variations Propertius adapts to his own technique. Mythological *exempla* taken from epic and tragedy show that the *militia amoris* is *vera militia* (2. 1. 51-56, 59-70). Whatever the mistress says or does (2. 1. 5-16) provides an epic catalogue of themes for Propertius to use in his *causas mille novas* (2. 1. 12), his *Aitia*. His mistress is a *dura*, a source of epic trials. Thus Callimachus' pride in his professional achievement, reflected especially in the *Hymn to Apollo* 2. 28-29 and *Aitia* fr. 1. 33-38, finds expression in Propertius' *laus in amore mori* which applies the principle to love.<sup>61</sup> Without *dura* his life would be without honor; a lover's life cannot be an easy one (2. 1. 78).

Callimachus' *Kreuzung der Gattungen* is exemplified by Propertius' application of Callimachean *topoi* and poetic technique to love-poetry throughout the second *libellus*. 2. 2 provides an example of a brief poem of epigrammatic length serving both as a courting poem featuring the mistress' beauty at the same time as it explains why the poet is in love and shows by inference from the *exempla* how love for a beautiful woman can result in violence, the *militia amoris*. In 2. 4, 5, 6, and 7 *paraclausithyron* motifs, familiar from Callimachus and Hellenistic epigram generally, are used successfully by Propertius to show his fidelity in spite of adversity; by contrast, and unsuccessfully, Propertius uses Trojan and Theban cycle examples in

<sup>60</sup> Allen (s. oben Anm. 49) 151, in addition to showing that a biographical reconstruction of Propertius' poetry is impossible, holds that the poet did not intend that his elegies should be read as a story. I believe that the facts belie the case (for Book 1, see Otis, King, oben Anm. 3); in Book 2, we have seen three groups of poems in sequence which deal generally with the problems of the *aequa-iniqua* of love (2. 2-4), then with two tests for the poet in 2. 5-7 and 2. 8-9. The initial success predicted in 2. 1 leads first to success in 2. 7, then for failure in 2. 10-11, a new try in 2. 12, proving the truth of 2. 1. 16, *maxima de nibilo nascitur historia*. The *rota amoris* presumes progression in time.

<sup>61</sup> Wimmel (s. oben Anm. 4) 17 suggests that Callimachus' comments on shedding old age through writing poetry in *Ait.* fr. 1. 32-35 may have inspired Propertius' discussion of death.

2. 8-9 to point up the infidelity of his mistress and to complain about the ingratitude displayed toward his own *fides*.

A grave epitaph, a Callimachean genre, serves a programmatic purpose in 2. 1. 78, where Propertius adapts it to show he will devote his life to the *dura puella*. In 2. 5. 28, such an epitaph serves as poetic *arma* in the *militia amoris*. By showing Cynthia that he has the ability through poetry to establish forever her reputation as *forma potens, verba levis*, he succeeds in preserving her favor. In 2. 11. 6 the epitaph is used to threaten *mors inbonesta* for an unknown *docta puella*. This „attack” sounds serious: no longer will the beloved be immortalized for better or worse in poetry. By 2. 12, the *rota amoris* has turned. *Amor* has not deserted the poet who once again declares himself a source of *gloria magna* for the god, a veritable Callimachean *vates*.

In this way, following the principle that actions speak better than words, Propertius proves directly through practice, using Callimachean forms and *topoi*,<sup>62</sup> that the *angustus lectus*, Propertius' *variatio*, can successfully be melded to the Callimachean *angustum pectus: laus in amore mori*.

## II. 2. 13: *laus in amore mori: tres libelli*

In 2. 13. 1-16, Amor has shot a multitude of arrows into Propertius' heart and forbidden him to give up „slender” poetry (1-2). His aim now will be to please the *docta puella* with his verse (3-14). If she will only turn her ears to peace, Propertius will be able to scorn even the „enemy actions” of a Jove (15-16).

For the time when death comes the poet gives detailed instructions to Cynthia (17-42). His funeral is to be small and suitable for an ordinary man (19-24). His procession will be large enough if *tres ... libelli* (25) and his mistress, mourning appropriately (27-30), accompany him to the grave. A small urn will hold his remains and a laurel will mark the site along with a 2-line spitaph telling how Propertius was a *servus* of one love (31-36). Like Achilles' grave Propertius' will be famous. Cynthia must remember to honor him when he is gone – even the dead remain somewhat aware (37-42).

But Propertius also knows that in too long a life one can see events best unseen (43-50). He can only exhort Cynthia to remember that a lost love is to be honored always; even Venus mourned Adonis when he was killed. Cynthia must also remember that when Propertius dies, his bones will no longer be able to speak to her (51-58).<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Since Propertius especially mentions Callimachus in 2. 1 and uses typically Callimachean *topoi*, as we have seen, I have limited my discussion of Propertius' debt to Hellenistic writers to him; the editors and others (e.g. Giangrande [s. oben Anm. 6], Boucher [s. oben Anm. 6], and F. Cairns, *Generic Composition in Greek and Roman Poetry*, Edinburgh, 1972) point out a number of reminiscences of other Hellenistic poets.

<sup>63</sup> The Oxford text divides 2. 13 into two parts, 1-16, 17-58; I follow P.J. Enk, „The Unity of some Elegies of Propertius”, *Latomus* 15, 1956, 186-190, L.P. Wilkinson, „The Continuity of Propertius ii. 13”, *CR* 16, 1966, 141-144, and Wimmel (s. oben Anm. 4) 41, who consider the poem a unity. Wimmel and Wilkinson comment on its Callimachean features. Neither discusses 2. 13 as a prologue poem for the third *libellus*, although Wilkinson sees its programmatic nature and refers to it as a variation on the *Aitia* prologue; he also sees the parallelism between 2. 1 and 2. 13 on the subject of death (2. 1. 47 ff., 2. 13. 17 ff.).

The question to be answered is how this poem can be viewed as appropriate for the beginning of a new book of poetry.<sup>64</sup> It is clear that many themes taken up in 2. 13 evoke points discussed already in 2. 1-12. In lines 1-16, Propertius renews his program of writing love-elegy (cf. 2. 1, 12); he has been shot many times by *Amor* (as in 2. 12); he is not allowed to give up Callimachean „slight” poetry (cf. 2. 1. 10). As a poet he intends to inhabit Ascræ, but his primary aim is to please Cynthia, not to compose poetry to benefit the public (cf. 2. 1, 10). If he succeeds in pleasing this *docta puella* (and the fact that she is *docta* makes her especially attractive [2. 13. 9-14; cf. 2. 3. 19-22]), he will be more famous even than Linus, a symbol of Callimachean poetry.<sup>65</sup> Only his mistress can be an appropriate judge; her approval is needed to show that he is a successful lover; as a *docta*, she will seal his fame as a Callimachean poet as well.

This is both similar to and different from the program of 2. 1. It is similar in that Propertius is committed again to love-poetry and he intends to win fame through this poetry. What is different and new is that in order to find success in love-elegy he must please Cynthia, for only a *docta*, which she is, can put the seal of approval on what is his primary purpose. Apparently the later poems of the second *libellus* did not please her: 2. 7 suggests approval; 2. 8-11 do not. If Propertius will win *laus in amore mori* he must revise his poetry so that she will make peace. If the second *libellus* has ended in near failure, at least the third *libellus* is starting out in a renewed effort to succeed by pleasing the *docta puella*.<sup>66</sup>

Propertius' effort to please his *docta* accounts for the description of his *exsequiæ* in 17-42. If *laus* is achieved *in amore mori* at the hands of the *docta*, it cannot be recognized until the moment of death. Therefore Cynthia must attend to his funeral. Like Callimachus,<sup>67</sup> Propertius does not count on hope for the future after death or on respect for value.<sup>68</sup> The death arrangements themselves, and especially the grave epitaph (cf. 1. 7. 24; 2. 1. 78; 2. 5. 28; 2. 11) establish forever the *fama* of the dead person. In line with his stated aim of using Callimachean poetics to please the *docta*, Propertius employs every possible Callimachean mannerism in this section to show his beloved that he has lived and died a Callimachean lover-poet. The *longa ... pompa* which is scorned (19) evokes long poetry, epic, as does the *tuba* (20) which is *gravis* and *tristis* (as in 2. 7. 12). Obvious signs of wealth (21-23) are eschewed by the *pauper amator*; a Callimachean poet has need only of a *parvae funeris* (24). Three short *libelli* of brief poetry are sufficiently *magna*; indeed, they are *maxima dona* for Persephone. For Cynthia to mourn him shows both her devotion which Propertius craves and her approval of his poetry, the *laus* for which he hopes. Appropriately Callimachean memorials will mark his success after death. His remains will rest in a *parvula testa*; the prize given to the successful poet, the *laurus*;

<sup>64</sup> I am avoiding discussion here of how 2. 13 anticipates themes presented in 2. 14-34. This necessitates a study in depth beyond the scope of this paper. I limit my discussion here to the ways in which 2. 13 is generally programmatic and reflects a change in intent from that seen in 2. 1-12.

<sup>65</sup> See Vergil, *Ecl.* 4. 56; 6. 67; Callimachus *Ait.* fr. 1. 27.

<sup>66</sup> A similar effort is evident in Book 1 where 8A is especially reminiscent of Cornelius Gallus' elegiac writing and pleases Cynthia; 11 is too „epic” and does not.

<sup>67</sup> See J. Ferguson, „The Epigrams of Callimachus”, *G&R* 17, 1970, 76-78.

<sup>68</sup> See Michels (oben Anm. 37) 173 ff.

will be put over his *exiguo busto*. Two short verses of Callimachean-type epigram prove forever his fidelity to Cynthia as *unius ... servus amoris*. These arrangements seem designed especially to please a *docta* who would be impressed (*stupefiat*, 7) by this kind of ingenuity and flattered by the renewed effort of a third book, suggesting the total surrender of Propertius to an effort to please her throughout with Callimachean terminology culminating in a grave epitaph declaring forever that her lover is her *servus*.<sup>69</sup>

Lines 37-42 also evoke earlier poems in that Achilles served as an *exemplum* in both 2. 8 and 2. 9. In 2. 8 he is the frustrated lover who sits out the battle without honor while his mistress is off with another lover. In 2. 9, after success and death in battle, he is mourned sincerely by his mistress. The recollection of these poems here suggests that Propertius expects to move from failure (like the *mors inbonesta* in 2. 8) to success, *laus in amore mori*, in that his mistress will in the end show Briseis' devotion (as in 2. 9. 9-16).

In lines 43-58, the realistic Propertius uses the example of Nestor to verbalize what he knows at heart — who can tell what *iniqua* the future will bring? Cynthia should at least remember the *exemplum* of the goddess Venus who mourned her Adonis when he was gored by a *durus aper*. (Is Propertius thinking here of his own wounds in the *dura militia* of love?) When Propertius is gone, he will no longer be able to please her with poetry, even when she asks (2. 13. 57-58). Perhaps the implication is that she should listen with favor now while he is yet alive.

As a programmatic poem suitable for a new book, 2. 13 seems eminently appropriate. It not only reiterates the programmatic aspects of 2. 1 but it serves as a courting poem flattering the mistress as a *docta puella* and demonstrating in action how a poet can appeal to a woman in Callimachean-type elegy. We need not suppose that any significant time interval elapsed between the publication of the second and third *libelli*. Indeed joint publication would underline the effect to renewed effort on the poet's part to try harder.

Colorado

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<sup>69</sup> This epitaph is significantly different from 2. 1. 78 where the mention of the mistress as a *dura puella* suggests complaint: 2. 13. 35, *unius ... servus amoris erat* shows acceptance of the *servitium amoris*.