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CYNTHIA AND ARTEMIS: A PROBLEM
OF IDENTIFICATION

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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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INTRODUCTION

Le pseudonyme avait encore pour effet de produire une transformation de la femme aimée, de la rendre plus glorieuse, de l'auréoler d'une lueur particulière: si Lesbie est parée de l'éclat d'Aphrodite, les héroïnes apolliniennes participent du prestige éclatant du chorège des Muses; le pseudonyme transforme la femme en héroïne littéraire et relève du même principe que l'emploi de la mythologie:...les amantes vont de pair avec Aphrodite et Hélène; leur nom de lettres leur donne droit de cité dans le monde des mythes, des déesses et des héroïnes légendaires;¹

So wrote J.P. Boucher in his concluding remarks on the implications of the pseudonym of "Cynthia." The purpose of this paper will be to raise certain questions concerning the identification of Cynthia in the poems of Propertius. Along with Boucher, several others have as well maintained that Propertius has in fact intended the name to suggest an identification with Apollo.² I make no attempt at refuting this view, but shall merely suggest the hypothesis that in "le monde des mythes, des déesses et des héroïnes légendaires" the goddess Artemis would appear the more suitable symbol for a poet to use who was attempting to make his mistress a part of that ideal world. I refer of course to the suitability of a female symbol over that of a male. To this end I have

¹ Boucher, Etudes sur Properce, Problèmes d'Inspiration et d'Art, Paris, Editions E. de Boccard, 1965, pp. 467-468.

² Cf. below my Chapter 2, pp. 27-28.

gathered together a great deal of hopefully relevant evidence in an attempt to suggest what would presumably be the more probable view.

It might be best at this point to clearly define what I mean by the "identification" of Cynthia with Artemis. By the word "identification" I mean to imply a conscious and purposeful effort on the part of the poet to claim for Cynthia (both by word and by allusion) a definite and specific affinity with a certain attribute of the goddess Artemis, and that attribute I take to be the goddess' manifestation as Phosphoros, the Dawn-goddess and Nursemaid of the poet's genius.³ This affinity between Cynthia and the goddess is everywhere postulated throughout the Propertian corpus with what seems, to me at least, unmistakable intent. That the female creative principle should so influence Propertius' thoughts and art is an absorbing question and one which is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this present paper, although it seems to me to have had its roots in the poet's origins. All of the Latin poets who most come under the spell of the divine power of Woman, who best understand her nature and who are closest to her eternal mysteries, seem to have been from the North. One immediately thinks of

³ Cf. ll. i. ⁴ "ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit" and see l. vii. 7.

Catullus, Vergil and Propertius. Jacques Heurgon⁴ reminds us of "la toute-puissance d'une divinité féminine" in Etruscan religious life, and Propertius, raised on the Umbro-Etruscan border and under the influence of Perugia, could not but have been affected by this sense of wonderment in the face of the Goddess. That Propertius had, however far back on his family tree, Etruscan blood can reasonably be postulated from a remark by Servius,⁵ who records that Capena was founded by young men sent there by the king of Veii, a man called Propertius. It is also known that Etruscan society was somewhat matriarchal, for in Etruscan epigraphy one regularly finds the name of the mother added to the parental list.⁶ And the curious fact that Propertius had but two names⁷ (i.e. Sextus Propertius) is also an indication

⁴ J. Heurgon, La Vie Quotidienne chez les Etrusques, Paris, Hachette, 1961, p. 122.

⁵ Servius, ad Verg. Aen., 7, 697.

⁶ Heurgon, op. cit., p. 97.

⁷ Cf. Butler & Barber, The Elegies of Propertius, Hildesheim, Georg Olms, 1964 (1933), p. xviii "A large number of manuscripts style him Sextus Aurelius Propertius Nauta. Nauta is ridiculous...Aurelius is like Propertius a gentile name, and the double nomen gentile may be ruled out as impossible. Haupt (Opusc., p. 286) suggests that Aurelius crept in from a confusion with the name of the Christian poet Aurelius Prudentius. The poet always speaks of himself as Propertius, while Donatus (Vit. Verg. 45) calls him Sextus Propertius. As Sextus Propertius we must be content to know him."

of Etruscan or Italic (but definitely not Roman) influence.⁸ I by no means wish to appear to be stating that Propertius himself was an Etruscan, but merely to suggest that a possibly influential connection exists, and the well-established role played by women in Etruscan society and religion might serve somewhat to explain the strong feminine bias in Propertius' poetry and help as well to clarify for us the matter of his identification of Cynthia with Artemis rather than with Apollo. There is also the fact that Diana was the ancient patroness of the Latin League, her shrine on the Aventine having been a federal sanctuary,⁹ and that the 13th of August was sacred to her throughout the whole of Italy.¹⁰ She thus exerted a very powerful influence in both the religion and the history of the entire peninsula. It would seem plausible then for Propertius to choose her as the model for his ideal woman. The dictates of his blood and the inclination of his character both conspired that this should be so.

8 Cf. H.H. Scullard, The Etruscan Cities and Rome, London, Methuen, 1967, p. 237: "Etruscans followed the method used by other peoples in Italy, namely a personal name combined with that of the gens."

9 Cf. Varro, de ling. lat., 5, 43 "Aventinum...quod com[m]une Latinorum ibi Dianae templum sit constitutum."

10 Statius, Silv. 111. i. 59 sq.. Cf. as well A. Alföldi, "The Diana of Aricia," AJA 64, 1960, pp. 137 sq..

Throughout the course of this paper I have made exclusive use of the admirable edition of Butler and Barber when quoting passages from our poet and the translations of Latin and Greek passages quoted (except where specifically indicated) are my own. I have attempted to keep my translations as literal as possible in the interests of clarity and comprehension. Several exceptions to this do occur, of course, when a strictly literal translation would mean nothing (e.g. "iter faciamus," lit. "let's take a trip," fails altogether to capture the flavour of Propertius' sermo amatoria if rendered literally; I have therefore rendered it as "let's make love").

Besides the edition of Butler and Barber, I have also consulted the following: E.V. D'Arbela, E.A. Barber, W.A. Camps, P.J. Enk (Books I and II), D. Paganelli (ed. Budé), E. Pasoli (Book IV), and J.P. Postgate (Select Elegies).

I have found Enk's commentaries extremely useful and next to Butler and Barber I have made the most extensive use of his editions. I must also here mention J.P. Boucher's marvellous book, Etudes sur Properce, of which I made continuous use and to which I am most indebted. Paganelli's edition I found to be the least satisfying, the few sparse remarks in his introduction appearing to be but a re-statement of the

theories and ideas of F. Plessis.¹¹ E. Pasoli's edition of Book IV came into my hands at the recommendation of Prof. Godo Lieberg, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for his most solicitous and helpful letter. This contains a most perceptive exegesis of Book IV and a thoroughly up-to-date statement on the status of the development of the Latin elegy question, covered in my Chapter 1.2. I found Postgate rather more interesting than useful, especially as regards what appear to be, to-day at any rate, his curiously quaint moral judgments on the character of Propertius, e.g. "A life which consisted to a very large extent of convivial pleasure and social distractions and which was not steadied either by fixed aims or regular employment, still further weakened and disintegrated his character."¹² There is one extra thing to mention: during the final stages of this paper, the Clarendon Press published a work by Gordon Williams, entitled Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry (1968). Although I wrote in the latter part of April, 1969 to order a copy, I have so far been unable to acquire one, so that all I can do is to refer my readers to Mr. Williams' book for further interpretations of Propertius' poems and the latest status of the personal Latin love-elegy question.

¹¹ See esp. his n. i on p. vi of the Introduction.

¹² Postgate, Select Elegies of Propertius, New York, Macmillan, 1962 (1881), p. xxxvii.

I must also state that due to the scope of this paper I have often been obliged to be rather more sketchy in certain areas than I might have been, so that at times certain facts or quotations used seem to be examples to elucidate my position rather than evidence to prove it. However, as there really lacks any truly convincing 'proof' for my hypothesis, the best that can be hoped for is a convincing plausibility in the fact of the evidence we do have. This same enforced brevity also has prevented me from a pursuit of all the ensuing ramifications of several particular themes. To take but a single example, in Chapter 2, pp. 30-34, I deal with chiefly the Latin references to the name "Cynthia" without listing the many references to it contained in Greek literature and considering singly all the mythological and literary relations surrounding them. This again would appear to be beyond the scope of this present paper and consequently I have omitted doing so.

Finally, I present this paper to my readers in all humility and devoutly hope, not that they will necessarily agree with all of it, but rather that what they do not agree with will be due to a personal preference for the other side of the question on their part, than to any lack of scholarly research and plausible arguments on mine.

CHAPTER ONE

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

1.1 Myth in Poetry

It is the common belief of all cultures that poetry was invented by the gods, and this belief stretches in an unbroken line from Tammuz to Allah, from the writers of the Rigvedas to Robert Graves. We are all familiar with the account of how Hermes, while but a child, had fashioned an ingenious toy out of the shell of a tortoise and some cow-gut, and with the aid of a plectrum, which he had also invented, was able to produce modulations of such an alluring nature that he managed to mollify the angered Apollo. Later the amazing Hermes made a shepherd's pipe out of some reeds and played another tune. With this he was able to bargain with Apollo and win his acquittal in the matter involving a bit of cattle-rustling.

The guardianship of poetry was allotted to the Muses, whose mother was called Mnemosyne, since in the poetic act memory often becomes suspended and details of the past or future are confused with the present; Memory's motherhood might also be the result of the poet being the custodian of the collective memory of the race, as well as of the ancient custom, yet preserved in some parts of the world where poetry

is still respected, of reciting from memory. The seat of the Muses was on Mount Helicon, though this was not their earliest abode, as their title "The Pierians" shows:¹ they were originally a triad (Pausanias: IX. 29. 2) and Hesiod calls them daughters of Mother Earth and Air. With poetry thus so inextricably bound up with divinity, the poet's position was then a sacred one, charged with the interpretation of the Divine Will, the welfare of his people, and the preservation of the myriad formulae which insured the continued favour of the gods. Indeed, since poetry was held to come from the gods,² and the poet's relationship with the Divinity was an especial one, he early became associated with the vates and divine inspiration soon rendered him a seer, one who celebrated the tales of the gods and who interpreted their motivations.³

Later on, as the poet's craft developed along with the sensibility of his audience, a subtle change begins to take place. Poseidonius' definition (quoted by Diogenes

1 This is the opinion of R. Graves, The White Goddess, New York, Vintage Books, 1960 (1948), p. 427.

2 Iliad 2. 197; 2. 484 sqq.; Odyssey 1. 10; 8. 44., 64., 488., 498; 22. 347.

3 Horace, in the Ars Poetica, still in some sense retains this view of the poet as vates. According to Plato mythologia=ratio in qua de deis exponitur; and cf. Callimachus, Aitia 3, 75, 55.

Laertius vii. 60) of poetry as a significant literary work which imitates or represents things human and divine (*μῦθος... ἡέτις καὶ ἀνθρώπων*) undoubtedly reflects the prevailing idea or ideal of Greek poetry.⁴ Otis goes on to add that Homer's influence and reputation had in effect fixed heroic myth as the proper subject of poetry.

Thus post-Homeric poetry was faced with a dilemma. On the one hand it could not accept Homer's world, his mythos, with his own 'natural piety': on the other it was bound to that world by an all but unbreakable tradition. A compromise was reached, whereby narrative poetry was replaced by choral lyric and tragedy. The myth ceased to be taken as a simple reflection of life or actuality--truth in the sense of history or narrative⁵--and became instead exemplum, a kind of paradigm of the values upheld by a particular poet. We now see a surprising transformation taking place in which the myth assumes a far greater meaning, or validity, than its literal one, with its symbolic sense largely replacing its factual sense. Thus a shift from a narrative to a lyrical or a dramatic form and style implied a shift in the poetical function of myth itself: "myth was no longer a story that could be told in a

⁴ Brooks Otis, Virgil, A Study in Civilized Poetry, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963, p. 6.

⁵ *μῦθος* = poetic or legendary tale, as opposed to the historical account.

direct and simple way but had become the lyric expression or dramatic re-enactment of quite contemporary feelings and ideas."⁶

Karl Kerényi remarks that the Greek divinities are best understood as eternal forms, or great world realities, that in fact they are true psychic realities.⁷ This meta-genesis of myth from literal narration into symbolic figuration must have occurred quite early in the history of poetic literature, for even in Homer the gods are less factual realities than states of mind or psychic attitudes. C.M. Bowra states: "Symbols stand in a special relation to myths. A myth may even be regarded as a single, long, coherent symbol, in which every detail is worked out to a given end."⁸

Later on, among the Greeks and Romans, the myth and what it symbolizes are no longer identified as substantially the same. The symbol still may incorporate certain features of what it symbolizes, but it has now become separate from it. Now poetry begins to use symbols to further enhance, or to illustrate, experiences which have become tarnished by

⁶ Otis, op. cit., p. 7.

⁷ K. Kerényi, Essays on a Science of Myth, New York, Pantheon Books, 1949, pp. 5-7.

⁸ C.M. Bowra, Primitive Song, Toronto, New American Library, 1962, p. 232.

the blight of familiarity; thus mythology, or rather a mythological experience, comes to be used to render more intelligible an experience of everyday life. In other words, myth loses its religious, inspirational character and becomes more psychological and artistic; and even, among the Alexandrians, an object of erudite poetic concentration in itself.

In earliest times among the Romans the word vates was applied exclusively to the man of oracles, who expressed his prophecy in song. Gradually his activities were extended to include songs not strictly prophetic but which still dealt with religious matters.⁹ There is a disagreement as to when vates was first employed as a complete synonym for poeta. Actually, before the Augustan period, vates was sparingly used, and when used the word on the whole retained its original meaning of 'seer.'¹⁰ The word was tinted with brighter hues by the Augustan poets, conscious of its more ancient religious connotation, and by so doing they renewed the ancient alliance between poetry and prophecy. Further on it will be seen how Propertius redirected the entire source of his poetic inspiration--he is still vates, but of Love--and that in Love he found a more quickening current of

⁹ Alice Sperduti, "The Divine Nature of Poetry in Antiquity," TAPHA, vol. 81, 1950, p. 210.

¹⁰ Ibid.

the Divine afflatus. For the first time one sees in Propertius that the gods and goddesses are no longer subjects of poetry in themselves, but serve rather as exempla to which the poet relates his experiences and through which he seeks to articulate his deepest and most heartfelt sentiments. As Diel expressed it:

Tout mythe est un drame humain condensé. Et c'est pourquoi tout mythe peut si facilement servir de symbole pour une situation dramatique actuelle.¹¹

¹¹ P. Diel, Le Symbolisme dans la mythologie grecque, Paris, Payot, 1966.

1.2 The Evolution of Myth and the Latin Love Elegy: A Debate

The debate began from the researches of two German scholars at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The opposing opinions of these two men concerning the development of Latin erotic elegy are only at the present time in the process of being resolved and the position of one gaining ascendancy over that of the other. The argument seeks to define the relations between the passionate and subjective nature of Roman elegy and a Greek elegy of similar nature. Or, in the face of the subjectivity of the Roman elegy, to determine whether the Greek was exclusively objective, concerning itself solely with matters of erudition and of mythic (or historical-mythic) narration. This question has great relevance for a consideration of the nature of the treatment of myth in the elegy as well, since the treatment varies considerably as we move from the Greek elegy to that of the Romans. By arriving at as close an understanding as is possible, in the light of present evidence and research, of the essential natures of the two elegiac styles, it is hoped that the unique contributions of Propertius to the development of the elegy through his use of myth will become clearer. It must be stressed that no claims of originality are made for the discussion which follows, a matter which has been researched and

discussed by many competent scholars; below is a synopsis of their findings and a presentation of the problem as it now stands.

The dependence of the Roman elegists on a common model, the Elegy of the Alexandrian poets, was long considered a dogma,¹² and while it was admitted that mythological narrative was the form characteristic of the Alexandrians, and that the remains of Alexandrian poetry provided very little evidence of a personal or subjective elegy corresponding to the Roman elegy, it was urged that these subjective Alexandrian elegies had simply failed to survive like so much else of later Greek poetry. In 1895 a series of researches inaugurated by Leo¹³ attempted to show that the erotic situations and motives most frequently displayed in the Roman elegists have coincidences in motive of expression with other types of Greek and Roman literature (especially in the New Comedy of Menander, as adapted by Plautus and Terence) and attempted to fill the gap by suggesting the existence of an Alexandrian subjective elegy as a common source, and that the Romans had in turn imitated this Alexandrian elegy. Further, on the basis of the Latin

12 See Butler & Barber, Intro., pp. xxxvi-vii.

13 Leo, Plautinische Forschungen, ed. 1, Berlin, 1895; ed. 2, (Ib.), 1912.

elegists and the Greek and Latin comedies, Leo believed that he might reconstruct the lost Alexandrian subjective elegy. On the other hand we have the view, put forward by Jacoby in 1903,¹⁴ that no such thing as an Alexandrian subjective elegy, dealing with erotic themes, had ever existed and that the Latin elegy could never have been founded on a Greek base; further, that the first creator and founder of such eminently subjective elegies was Cornelius Gallus, and that, in the main, they were an expansion of the erotic epigram.¹⁵ A.A. Day¹⁶ in addition adds that the traditional belief in a pre-Latin subjective elegy which was assailed by Jacoby with considerable force "has suffered further through the criticisms of Butler and Barber."

The evidence for the existence of Alexandrian subjective elegy has been drawn up by Butler and Barber under four headings:¹⁷ (1) the statements of grammarians, &c.; (2) the assertions of the Roman elegists; (3) the fragments of Alexandrian elegies and titles of lost works; (4) the evidence from alleged coincidences.

¹⁴ F. Jacoby, Zur Entstehung der römischen Elegie, Rheinisches Museum, 60, 1905, pp. 38-105.

¹⁵ Jacoby's theories are further elaborated in the Intro. of Butler & Barber.

¹⁶ A.A. Day, The Origins of the Latin Love-Elegy, Oxford, Blackwell's, 1938, p. 28.

¹⁷ Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. xxxvii.

Under the heading (1) the most explicit example is the statement of Diomedes (GLK i, p. 484, 17): elegia est carmen compositum hexametro versu pentametroque...quod genus carminis praecipue scripserunt apud Romanos Propertius et Tibullus et Gallus, imitati Graecos Gallimachum et Euphoriona. This text, which ignores Ovid and mentions only two Greeks--one of whom was perhaps not even an elegist--for three Romans, has been interpreted as the proof of a strict imitation of Greek elegy by Roman poets. The evidence of Quintillian is more vague; he writes (X. i. 93) elegia quoque Graecos provocamus. By Graeci here one supposes that he means the two Alexandrian poets, Gallimachus and Philetas, whom he has previously (X. i. 58) mentioned as being first and second among writers of Elegy.¹⁸

In citing the weaknesses of these testimonies, Butler and Barber first mention both the relative lateness of Diomedes (second half of the fourth century A.D.) and our ignorance of his source. Next they mention that imitari is a vague term which certainly does not imply such close resemblance as is in question here, and finally that Quintillian's evidence is too vague to prove anything.

As regards type (2), only Propertius and Ovid can be appealed to, since Tibullus is silent about his models.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. xxxviii.

Rostagni¹⁹ asks whether in a completely approximate and limited sense are we to take all the pompous declarations with which the Romans proclaimed their dependence on Greek models. He holds that they were merely conventional acts of homage which referred to the outer limits of style, in conformity with the prevailing prejudice of the literary *γένος*, and implies no more profound affinity with the authors who are imitated. Boucher²⁰ further adds that the mention of Callimachus and Philetas as the two heads of the list reveals the simple wish to place oneself under the patronage of the great Greek names, without implying an imitation or even a precise knowledge of their works.

It is significant, say Butler and Barber, that in Book 1 Propertius does not claim descent from any Greek (nor for that matter any Roman) predecessor, whereas the first verses of 1, 1 contain a visible imitation of Melaeus (A.P. xii, 101).²¹ Callimachus only appears in Book 11, since the success of Book 1 would have given the poet a plainer knowledge of his originality and the desire to find an illustrious patron to consecrate it.

19 A. Rostagni, "L'Influence grecque sur la poesie latine," Entretiens sur L'Antiquite classique, Tome 11, Geneve, Vandoeuvres, 1953, p. 64.

20 J.P. Boucher, Etudes sur Properce, Problems d'Inspiration et d'Art, Paris, de Boccard, 1965, p. 165.

21 Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. xxxviii.

Rostagni claims that when Propertius and Ovid refer themselves to Callimachus as the greatest master of the elegy, even of love elegy, they mean no more than the Aetia (whose echo resounds most often as a kind of norm and critical model in the Latin elegists), the typical work of the leader of Alexandrianism.²² The Aetia were a vaguely contrived collection of flavourful historical-mythic narrations in which the tone of love was not lacking, but yet never the love of the poet himself, merely of heroines and of heroes, as exemplified in the famous myth of Acontius and Cydippe.²³ However, his treatment of this myth, says Rostagni, rendered the leader of the Alexandrian school the champion of the erotic elegy in the eyes of the Roman poets.²⁴ Further, A.A. Day quotes Legrand²⁵ in stating that Philetas and Callimachus alike are at times mentioned, in contrast with epic writers, as "masters of the new elegy, whatever their subject may have been, and of the short emotional poem: even if Philetas and Callimachus wrote no subjective elegy, yet simply because these poets devoted their art on occasion to

22 Rostagni, op. cit., p. 59.

23 Aitia, Book 111, 67-75; see also Ovid, Her., 20 and 21.

24 So Ovid, Rem. Am., 381 sq.:
Callimachi numeris non est dicendus Achilles
Cydippe non est oris, Homere, tui.

25 Legrand, Notes Alexandrines: Sur l'Elegie, Rev. des Etudes, 1911, p. 27.

the portrayal of love scenes, the Latin elegists were right in considering them as their models." Finally, Butler and Barber state:

If the most suitable model among Callimachus' works for a poet anxious to sing of his own ignes was the Aetia, Jacoby's inference seems justified that Callimachus had not written subjective love-elegies.²⁶

Nothing definite is known of the poetic grammarian of Cos, who sung under a shady plane tree of his love for the fickle Bittis. Callimachus deified Philetas, recognizing him as his predecessor and initiator of his taste (or else of the typical Alexandrian taste), and referred to his subtle mythological erudition and to his λεπτόν, i.e. his exquisite formal perfection of the brief, the concise, and the subtle. The current opinion,²⁷ that in a collection of elegies with the title Bittis the writer had expressed the many vicissitudes of his personal passion for the lady (in the manner of Tibullus or of Propertius) remains futile: Rostagni further supports his case by drawing on reasons of analogy--just now resolved--about the nature of the elegiac collections that were composed by Greek authors in honour of beloved women, i.e. a poem in dedication to a loved one or consort which was prefixed to a more or less long series of mythic-

26 Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. xliii.

27 Refuted by Rostagni, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

narrative elegies. He concludes (p. 62):

Certo nei frammenti superstiti di Filita
non c'è traccia di elegie erotiche soggettive.

The fame of Mimnermus as an elegiac poet of love, a fame which made Propertius exclaim "plus in amore valet Mimnermi versus Homero," would be due to the fact that Mimnermus had sung of his love for the flute-player Nanno. It is not to be inferred from this, however, that Mimnermus must have written subjective elegies in honour of Nanno.

P.J. Enk writes:

Mimnermus, autore Porphyrius (ad Horati Epist., 11.2.101), duos libros scripsit. Toti carmini titulus erat Ναννώ... Versibus suis amoenis queritur iuventutem nimis celeriter dilabi, vitam sine amore nihil esse, senectutem hominibus formam et mentem adimere. Mimnermi fragmentis perlectis videmus poetam non de suis amoribus, sed in universum de amoris iucunditate loqui.²⁸

To this, Butler and Barber add:

(Mimnermus) may have addressed his reflections on life and love to her, as Theognis addressed his philosophy of living to Cyrnus. The statement of Hermesianax (καίετο κέν Ναννοῦς) may be no more than an inference from such a title as that given by Suidas to Theognis' elegies (πρὸς Κύρνον, τὸν αὐτοῦ ἐρώμενον, γνωμολογίαν δι' ἐλεγείων). It is certainly not proved that Mimnermus anticipated the Roman elegists.²⁹

²⁸ P.J. Enk, Sex. Propertii Elegiarum Liber 1, pars prior (prolegomena et textum), Leiden, Brill, 1946, p. 30.

²⁹ Butler and Barber, op. cit., Intro., p. liii.

Rostagni affirms the foregoing, stating that, of the two books into which the Alexandrians divided the literary inheritance of Mimnermus, the one was entitled Nanno, but contained mythological and historical matter, and the second book, which had nothing to do with Nanno, and which was subtle and delicate and thus preferred by Callimachus, was composed of short, gnomic elegies on the condition of human life, particularly the curses of old age--all attuned to the mourning of the passing of youth and love; not the 'love' of the poet himself, nor even of the loves of other heroes and heroines (both of which would be the themes of writers of love-elegies) but rather only of love in the abstract as the essence of joy and youth,³⁰ and adds that the title Nanno, whether the original one or one bestowed upon the work by the Alexandrians, was merely indicative of a dedicatory poem:

Probabilmente anche in questo caso, così come nella Leonzio di Ermesianette e nella Lide di Antimaco e nella Nanno di Mimnermo...non si trattava d'altro che d'un carme di dedice all'amata o consorte che forse, premesso ad una più o meno lunga serie di elegie mitico-narrative, magari concernenti in tutto o in parte l'antica storia della patria Cos.³¹

30 Rostagni, op. cit., p. 68.

31 Ibid., p. 62.

The bulk of modern scholarly opinion, then, seems to favour the view that the elegies of both Philetas and Mimnermus contained no portrayals of personal passion, but were valued chiefly for their artistry and delicacy of construction. As R. Pfeiffer states:

We conclude that the shorter poems of Philetas and Mimnermus were compared with their longer ones and preference was given to the ὀλιγοστυχίη, the pieces of a few lines. The main point was not the length, but the exquisite workmanship, the τέχνη.³²

After Mimnermus, the elegy was chiefly didactic. The Lyde of Antimachus, a mythological narrative in elegiacs, enjoyed some success in the Alexandrian age and even people like Callimachus who opposed his style still followed Antimachus in using elegy for narrative.³³ The method or style of the Lyde, i.e. its Hesiod-like cataloguing of the mythological material with which it deals and its tenuous rapport with the sentimental feelings of the author, became fundamental to the elegiac collections of the Alexandrian age.³⁴ The evolution of a subjective erotic elegy from such a mélange as this seems unlikely. In any case, in all of this is illustrated the chief defects of Alexandrian poetry,

³² R. Pfeiffer, A History of Classical Scholarship, Oxford, 1968, p. 89.

³³ Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. liii.

³⁴ Rostagni, op. cit., p. 70.

i.e. the excessive preoccupation with form and versification to the exclusion of originality and of delicacy in the choice and treatment of the theme, the erudition, the elaborate style and the overly pretentious elegance.³⁵

Butler and Barber (p. liii) claim that there is no evidence that the personal or subjective element extended beyond the outline of the poem. The Leontion of Hermesianax goes a bit further in that his tales are addressed to a mistress, but the subjectivity of the poems themselves are not increased. The other Alexandrians devised other modes for their tales, e.g. a colloquy with the Muses (Callimachus); Rostagni adds that given these characteristics of the Alexandrian and earlier Greek elegies, the contrast between them and the work of the later Roman elegists could not be more sharp. He concludes that:

è utile ricorrere alle idee generali e mostrare dal punto di vista storico-letterario le ragioni e i modi per cui non ebbe adeguato presso i Greci, neppure presso gli Alessandrini, quel mondo interiore che culmina invece negli erotici romani.³⁶

Already on the threshold of the Alexandrian age, Aristotle in his Poetica (xxiv, 1460a) made the point that the poet must express his own feelings as little as possible, that to express oneself subjectively was not really the

³⁵ Day, op. cit., p. 20.

³⁶ Rostagni, op. cit., p. 72.

poet's function. This teaching, identical with that voiced by Plato in the Phaedo, 60-61, that the poet is to compose myth and not treatises (*ποιεῖν μύθους ἀλλ' οὐ λόγους*), has great value since it identifies what was, in practice as well as in theory, the natural and normal limits of the poetic conception of the Greeks.³⁷

An examination of the similarities between Roman elegy and the epigrams of the late Greek writers, notably of Agathias and of Paulus Silentiarius, brings us to a conclusion perhaps equally negative as far as the establishment of a common source in Alexandrian elegy is concerned.³⁸ In the epigrams of Silentiarius one finds the stock phrases of any love-poem, and little else; even the names of the ladies mentioned ring false--Philinna or Chariclo or Rhodope, or the conventional Galatea and Doris and Lais. But when Propertius borrows a theme or an expression, he "adapts it to his own purpose and assumes no alien emotions; with graceful originality and with fine poetic instinct he leaves the work of his own genius upon whatever he borrows from the stock common to all poets."³⁹ But everywhere the epigrammatic tone of the Greeks clearly illustrates the restricted nature

37 Ibid.

38 Day, op. cit., p. 50.

39 Ibid., p. 52.

of their subjectivity. In every case the epigrams attest to the general reluctance and lasting unwillingness to transgress the admonition of Aristotle and to reveal to us their personal self.⁴⁰

In the face of that profound difference in tone and content one need only compare the erotic elegies in which Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid unfold, describe and analyze, each according to his own bent and genius, his proper and personal loves, hates, torments and soulful passions, all spun within a web of subjectivity, all told with an almost autobiographical veracity, and each creating a new capacity for the description of one's inner torments and anxieties. This new capacity the Roman elegists derived in great measure from themselves:⁴¹ in addition to that, they were indebted to the evolution in consciousness which took place in the passage from the Greek to the Roman world, by which the poetic attention was turned from the objective towards the subjective, and the human spirit in general began, in a literary sense, to interrogate and to reflect

⁴⁰ Rostagni, op. cit., p. 74.

⁴¹ This is apparently true even as regards the development of Greek lyric. Bruno Snell (The Discovery of the Mind, Oxford, 1953) states that "even...Sappho's treatment of love is purely 'mythical': love is not an emotion which breaks forth from within, but the intervention of a deity." (p. 53), and (p. 65) "In spite of the wilfulness of Archilochus, or the profundity of Sappho, they do not lose themselves in the abyss of their own sensations."

upon itself.⁴² Rostagni goes on to give the consequences of this evolution (and revolution):

per cui non gli elegiaci soltanto, non i cultori di questa anzichè di quella forma letteraria, ma tutti in generale i Latini a confronto dei predecessori ellenici ed ellenistici furono più spirituali, più riflessivi, più sentimentali; in una parola, furono più moderni: non solo cronologicamente ma spiritualmente più vicini a noi.⁴³

At the end of the second and the beginning of the first century B.C. the most ancient and ubiquitous literary forms--epic poetry, tragedy, comedy--were becoming worn out, chiefly because the world of individual interests, of private leisure, of intimate sentiment, of personal loves and hates, and of personal consciousness was urgently searching for its own means of expression. As a consequence of this, literature specifically Alexandrian was welcomed in full to Rome, and Alexandrian instructors, grammarians and versifiers who had settled in Italy furnished their models of epigrams, elegies and ἐπελλικά ready for translation and imitation. The first practitioners of Latin epigram based on Greek models were those in the circle of Q. Lutatius Catulus (c. 100 B.C.). One of the epigrams attributed to Catulus himself--the one beginning aufugit mi animus--is an adaptation of Callimachus, Ep. xli.⁴⁴ Both Butler and Barber (p. lv)

⁴² Rostagni, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 75.

⁴⁴ Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. lv.

and A.A. Day (p. 102) mention the possibility that the poet Archias, the client of Cicero, who had dealings with Catullus and who himself imitates Meleager, might well have brought with him a copy of the Garland of Meleager, which would have been of the greatest service as a source-book of epigrammatic themes; also, this would explain the sudden popularity of the Alexandrian erotic epigram at Rome. And yet this Alexandrian vogue could not finally be other than one of formulae and outline, erudition and technique, given the extreme forces of inspiration and of individualism alive in the age of Cicero and Caesar. The best example is that of Catullus, whose personality overflowed, even though he identified himself with Hellenisation and Alexandrianism. For Lesbia he manages a *mélange* of every sort of poem--hendecasyllabics, iambs, Sapphic odes, elegiac distichs: and it is significant that in her name he has not at all thought of combining a collection of elegies like those of Hellenistic tradition.⁴⁵ No such marked sense of personality and individualism had ever been witnessed among the Alexandrians. Of the other *νεώτεροι* of the Roman school, Calvus also confined himself to epigram and short lyric for the expression of his personal sentiments.⁴⁶ Along with

⁴⁵ Rostagni, op. cit., p. 76.

⁴⁶ Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. lvi.

Catullus and Calvus, Propertius mentions Varro in his list of elegiac poets (ll. 34. 85 sq.). Nothing is known of him, save his passion for Leucadia.

The first really secure case of a collection of Latin elegies is that of Cornelius Gallus, who wrote four books of elegies about his Lycoris.⁴⁷ He is the last name on Propertius' list, but in the historic-literary tradition expressed by Quintilian (X. i. 93) Gallus is placed first in the line of Latin love elegists, followed by Tibullus and Propertius and ending with Ovid. This tradition, and the assertion by Servius (Ad Verg. Buc., x. i.) that certain pathetic verses of Vergil were taken from Gallus, have given rise to the opinion that Amores or Lycoris was of the same intimate nature as the books of Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid and that Gallus might have been, as Jacoby maintains, the true initiator of the subjective erotic elegy.⁴⁸ Yet it seems on the whole improbable to both Butler and Barber and to Rostagni that Gallus, reputedly the most abstruse and Alexandrian of the Roman poetae novi and the direct disciple of Parthenius who furnished him with an outline of erudite terms and subjects, might have filled four books of elegies with his own intimate experiences of love. Mythological

⁴⁷ Servius, Ad Ecl. x. i, mentions of Gallus that "Amorum suorum de Cytheride scripsit libros quattuor."

⁴⁸ Rostagni, op. cit., p. 78.

exempla in the Propertian style may be inferred, but the loss of the work impedes every definitive statement. Rostagni thinks that the elegies of the singer of Lycoris would still be comprised, like the collected elegies of the Alexandrians, of myth, i.e. heroic adventures of love, which Gallus would set forth in elegies of exquisite Alexandrian manufacture.

However, the belief of Jacoby that C. Gallus was the founder of the Latin erotic elegy has found renewed support from the most recent Propertian scholar. W.A. Camps, in the introduction to his edition of Book 1 of the Elegies, concurs with Jacoby in at least placing the subjective love-elegy in the Augustan Age. He states:

But the typical elegy on the love theme as we meet it in Propertius and his contemporary Tibullus and his successor Ovid--a piece of some extent in which the poet discourses about his own love...or some occasion arising from it--seems to be a product of the Augustan Age (if one may use the term loosely to embrace the whole period 43 B.C. - A.D. 14) and to have had no established form as predecessor in Greek or Latin literature. The known love poems of the Alexandrian elegists are epigrams in which the poet speaks of his own love in the compass of a few lines, or are narrative elegies in which the poet recounts or enumerates the love stories of mythology.⁴⁹

And no less an authority than P.J. Enk writes:

⁴⁹ W.A. Camps, Propertius, Elegies Book 1, Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 3.

Apparet igitur Catullum poetarum Romanorum praecursorem, fuisse, Cornelium vero Gallum primum Romanorum *Κυκλον* scripsisse elegiarum eodem fere modo quo post eum Tibullus, Propertius, Lygdamus, Ovidius scripserint.⁵⁰

Yet right after Gallus a change of taste seems to have developed, in which poetry casts off its mantle of scholarly erudition, its artificial elements of doctrine and 'précieuse' style, to become simple, spontaneous, alive and stamped with an authentic lyricalness.⁵¹ Thus Tibullus, with his tenderly lyrical and subjective elegies, appeared as the champion of an elegiac poetry of love, which totally differed already from that of the Alexandrians and those imitating Alexandrianism.⁵² At this juncture, then, Propertius had before him, as a model for his art, the poetry of poetae novi, of Catullus and of Tibullus which incorporated with the most genuine frankness the voices of a sincere and unrestrained individualism:⁵³ and further, these Roman models which Propertius could consult

aveva pasto a legge dell'arte non la celebrazione di eroiche imprese o la magnificazione di ideali, ma i romanzi dei propri amari e dei propri dolori.⁵⁴

50 Enk, op. cit., (prolegomena), p. 40.

51 Rostagni, op. cit., p. 80.

52 Ibid., p. 81.

53 Luigi Alfonsi, L'elegia di Properzio, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1945, p. 15.

54 Ibid.

Quite numerous traces of Alexandrian influence still remained, even in Tibullus, who is the most transparent and terse (tersus atque elegans maxime, said Quintilian), i.e. most immune from abstruse erudition and contortions of style. But these are elements of common poetic stock which each poet transforms into his own style. The use of mythology still remained (rare in Tibullus, but to a great extent in Propertius and Ovid) which served to indicate the link with the elegiac tradition of the Greeks. But in this use of myth there is to be noticed one of the most profound and innovating developments in the evolution of the erotic elegy. In the famous Alexandrian and pre-Alexandrian collections of mythic material, the use of mythology appears as an accessory, a decorative motif, an outline or a simile.⁵⁵ Its use is always the prime source of inspiration of the Alexandrian elegy. The proper amor of the poet, his subjective and personal relations with his lady, serve merely as a link or bridge which permits him to proceed to the real theme of his poetry--an elaborate and erudite mythical-historical narration concerning which the poet's own love was a mere pretext. With the development of the Roman elegy we have, however, precisely the opposite; here the personal love of the poet, which was a simple initiative pretext with the Greeks,

⁵⁵ Rostagni, op. cit., p. 82.

becomes the essential object of the poem, and myth is used in an attempt to illustrate and define the poet's passion, an accessory to the proper theme of the poem which was, as has been stated, the poet's own, subjective feelings, desires and ardours. This quite startling reversal, which Rostagni calls "rovesciamento," is the whole key to the treatment of myth in Propertius, who uses myth not merely as a simple expedient in the explication of his own passion, but rather as an absolutely indispensable ingredient without which the entire foundation of his poetic structure would surely crumble.

The break with the past which the New Poets made was a complete one. They would have no more to do with the time-worn, impersonal poetry, with its national impulse and its tone of Stoic morality; no longer would they turn solely to the past. They would live and write in the present, as individuals, not as a part of the State. They would express their own emotions, their own loves and hates, and they would write not for the glory of Rome but for their own satisfaction and fame.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Clarence W. Mendell, Latin Poetry, The New Poets and the Augustans, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1965, p. 2.

CHAPTER TWO

THE IDENTIFICATION WITH ARTEMIS

2.1 Modern Attempts at Identification

The material written by modern scholars dealing with the identification of Cynthia with Artemis is exiguous indeed. There is a general agreement to limit her identification to either Apollo or to Artemis (indeed the epithet *Kύνελια* somewhat restricts the alternatives) but the commentators have declined to pursue the matter much beyond the relatively simple stage of identification, save for several brief articles on the subject.¹ The Apollonian origin of the epithet *Kύνελια* has been defended by Th. Birt (Die Cynthia des Properz, Leipzig, 1922, p. 5) and by P. Boyancé in L'Influence grecque... who states on p. 173 "Quant à Cynthia un surnom compagnard me paraît encore moins probable;" he favours an Apollonian connection and mentions the Lycoris of Gallus which makes one think of the Apollon Lycoreus addressed by Callimachus in Hymns ll. 9. G. Lieberg ("Die Muse des Properz und seine Dichterweihe," Philologus, 107, 1963, p. 116sq. and 263 sq.) opts for an Apollonian identification as well, since Cynthia, who is a poetess, participates

¹ See, for example, Edw. O'Neil, "Cynthia and the Moon," CPh 53, 1958, 1-8.

in the ceremonies of the Muses and is conceived of as a Muse by the poet. He further adds (p. 117):

dass sowohl in der klassischen wie nachklassischen griechischen Dichtung, als auch in der römischen, besonders in der augusteischen Poesie Apollo sehr häufig Cynthius genannt wird. Unwillkürlich mussten sich also die Leser des Properz bei dem Pseudonym Cynthia an diesen Gott erinnert fühlen.

That "unwillkürlich" catches one up; his unwillingness can be but wondered at. Finally, P. Boucher (Etudes sur Properce, p. 466) also leans toward the Apollonian identification, due to what he calls "la serie des pseudonymes du cycle apollinien: Leucadia, Lycoris, Delia, Cynthia."

On the other hand, the Artemisian origin of the epithet *Kivβηα* is upheld by A. Rostagni on two occasions. In La Storia della Letteratura latina, II, L'Impero, Turin, 1952, p. 214, he states:

A questa egli applicò il nome poetico 'Cynthia', analogo al nome 'Delia' di colei ch'era cantanta proprio nei medesimi anni da Tibullo. 'Cinzia' e 'Delia' erano entrambi attributi della dea cacciatrice, Artemide (Diana) e quindi avevano una certa corrispondenza fra loro.

Later (L'Influence grecque..., t. II, p. 210-11) he writes:

...si offre l'attinenza con Artemide, dea della caccia.

P. Grimal too, in Revue des Etudes latines, xxxiv, 1956, p. 349, remarks:

Une bien-aimée ressemble à Artémis, d'emblée, non qu'elle soit chasserresse, ou 'paysanne', mais simplement parce qu'elle possède cette beauté jeune et 'exclusive' dont aucune autre divinité ne saurait suggérer l'image. Il y a, dans l'assimilation de l'aimée à Artémis, comme une tradition épique et aussi un hommage humble et ardent à la 'maîtresse'.

It is here to be remarked that Grimal, while identifying Cynthia with Artemis, does not accept Rostagni's identification of her with Artemis the Huntress (Ἄρτεμις ἑρπιδέσθια). This particular epithet of Artemis will become important further on.

2.2 Mention of Cynthia among Classical Sources.

In the face of the foregoing paucity of information, it would appear to be rewarding to cull our ancient sources and attempt to discover in what light they viewed Cynthia and with what aspects was that epithet associated.

To begin with, then, the name *Κύνθια* is derived from *Κύνθος*, a mountain on Delos where Apollo and Artemis were born,² and as an adjective *Κύνθιος* or *Κύνθια* could equally be applied to either deity without overly offending the divine numen of the one or the other. But the Scholiast on Statius Theb. 11. 239 has something quite interesting to say:

Cynthus Deli mons est Dianae sacer, unde Diana Cynthia dicta est.

("Cynthus is a mountain on Delos which is sacred to Diana and from which Diana is called Cynthia.")

Callimachus, whose elegiac traditions Propertius professed to follow,³ can be of some assistance on this matter. In Epigrams lxiii, 1 sqq., he states:

Κύνθιαδες καρσεῖτε, τὰ γὰρ τοῦ Κρητὸς Ἐχέαια
κεῖται, ἐν Ὀρτυγίῃ τόφα παρ' Ἀρτέμιδι,
οἷς ὑμῶν ἐκένωσεν ὄρος μέγα. νῦν δὲ πέπαιται,
λίγες, ἑπεὶ σπονδὰς ἢ θεὸς εἰργάσατο.

² Callim., Hymns IV, 1. 326.

³ Prop. III, i, sqq.

("O goats of Cynthus, have no fear, for the bow of Cretan Echemmas is stored in Ortygia in Artemis' temple, by which he emptied the great mountain of you. But now he has stopped, O goats, since the goddess has made a truce.")

Here, in addition to the association of Artemis with the mountain of Cynthos, it is to be remarked that Callimachus associates Artemis as well with the bow, with hunting; she is here styled Ἄρτεμις ῥοχέαιρα. Callimachus further states, in Hymns II:

Ἄρτεμις ἄγχιόσσουσα κερήκεα συνεχὲς λίγῶν
κυνθιάδων φορέσκειν.

("Artemis the huntress unceasingly brought the heads of Cynthian goats.")

Here again Artemis is the huntress, bagging her limit of capricious game on the slopes of Cynthus.

Vergil provides a helpful reference at Aen. I.

498 sqq.:

qualis is Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi
exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae
hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades.

("Just as on the banks of the Eurotas or along the slopes of Cynthus Diana leads her chorus, and all about her thousand Oreads follow in a mass.")

In this passage Vergil links Mount Cynthus with Diana, and further connects her with some highland rite by having her lead her mountain Nymphs in a cult dance. It is further to be remarked that in the Homeric passage which parallels the one above (Homer, Ody., 6. 102), mention is

made of *Ἀρτεμις ῥοχέαιρα*, i.e. "delighting in arrows" (lit. "arrow-pourer") and Hesiod uses the same phrase at Theog. 918, when he describes the birth of Artemis and Apollo.

Horace too provides a reference to Cynthia in Carm. 111. 28. 12:

tu curva recines lyra
Latonam et celeris spicula Cynthiae.

("And you shall loudly praise Latona on the curved lyre and the darts of the swift maid of Cynthus.")

The points to remark upon here are that Horace identifies Artemis by naming her "Cynthia" and associates her with hunting, first by mentioning her swiftness and then by emphasizing her arrows.⁴

Ovid, always interesting and surprisingly reliable in matters which touch upon mythology,⁵ may furnish two further references. At Metam. 11. 464 sq. he has:

i procul hinc, dixit nec sacros pollue fontes!
Cynthia deque suo iussit secedere coetu.

("Go far from here," Cynthia said, "and pollute not our sacred font: and so she bid her leave her company.")

⁴ Cf. as well the Carmen Saeculare, l. 1:
"silvarumque potens Diana."

⁵ In a private letter which I have from Robt. Graves, the poet ventures the opinion that, as a mythographer, Ovid was "remarkably good."

In the incident quoted above, Ovid is recounting the myth of Callisto who, while out hunting with Diana and her company of Nymphs, was violated by Jupiter in the guise of Diana. It is to be noticed, then, that here too Ovid uses the epithet "Cynthia" when describing Diana in her role as huntress. Further, in Metam. VII. 754 sq., we have:

quem cum sua traderet illi
Cynthia, 'currendo superabit' dixerat, 'omnes'.

("[a dog] which her own Cynthia had given her. 'It will surpass all with its speed,' she had said."

This quotation is taken from Ovid's narration of the myth of Cephalus and Procris: she was an ardent huntress, one of Diana's devotees, and after her betrayal by her husband, she devoted herself entirely to the pursuits of Diana, having been given a wondrous hound by the goddess for this purpose.⁶ The point to notice is that again Artemis is named "Cynthia" when cast in the role of huntress and mistress of the chase.

In addition to the identification of Artemis-Cynthia with the hunt, there is a second aspect of Artemis to be noticed when she is addressed under this appellation, and that is her identification with Luna-Selene.⁷ The importance

6 See Hyginus, Fab., 189.

7 The Elizabethans were later to make much of the identification of Cynthia with Luna; cf. for instance Ben Jonson's "Queen and huntress, chaste and fair...Cynthia's shining orb was made/Heaven to clear, when day did close."

of the identification of Artemis-Cynthia with the Moon will be discussed further on. It suffices at this point to take note of the fact and to list several ancient sources who provide references for the validity of such an identification.

Seneca, in the Apocolocyntosis, 2 vers., says:

iamque suum victrix augebat Cynthia regnum

("and now the conquering Cynthia enlarged her shining sway.")

And on the same theme mention may be made of Petronius,

Satyr., 122. 130 sq.:

parte alia plenos exstinxit Cynthia vultus
et lucem sceleri subduxit.

("and in another quarter Cynthia hid her full face and withdrew her light from the crime.")

Martianus Capella 9. 912 vers., simply states:

Cynthia noctis honos

("Cynthia, the evening's adornment.")

while the statement of Juvenal in Sat. VI. 7

haut similis tibi, Cynthia

("not at all like you, Cynthia")

is explained thusly by the Gloss. V. 653. 39

Cynthia dicta est Diana

("Cynthia is called Diana.")

There remains a relatively modern source, this time from the seventeenth century, which may be added to the foregoing ancient ones as a confirmation of Artemis-Cynthia

in her role of goddess of the chase and woodland grove. A.B. Cook⁸ records the existence of an ancient tree at Lake Nemi, which might have been the ancestor of the sacred tree guarded by the Rex Nemorensis. He further mentions a work by A. Kircher entitled Latium, which appeared at Amsterdam in 1671 and in which is contained the following description of the tree:

e regione Nemoris diametraliter opposta
Cynthianum, vulgo Genzano, situm est.

It then seems that the name Cynthianum was given to the town near Nemi, anciently associated with Diana's worship as Nemorensis, as goddess, that is, of the woodlands and of the chase.

What has therefore become apparent from all of the foregoing is that Artemis, when addressed with the epithet "Cynthia," seemingly is then associated with both the chase and the moon. Thus granting the assertion that the adjective "Cynthios(ia)" may be equally applied to either Apollo or Artemis, it seems reasonable to assume, in the light of the above references and quotations, that as Propertius was using the epithet to refer to a lady, he meant us to identify his Cynthia with Artemis rather than with Apollo. At least one would seem to be on empirically safe grounds in so

⁸ A.B. Cook, Zeus, A Study in Ancient Religion, vol. II, part i, New York, Biblo & Tannen, 1964 (1925), p. 419.

doing. Having then allowed that Propertius probably was identifying the Cynthia of his poems with Artemis, the question then becomes "why?"--why does Propertius wish to associate the lady of his verse with Artemis, goddess of the chase and of the Moon? Convincing proofs are also required from the text of Propertius which in fact corroborates the assertion that he indeed has identified his Cynthia with Artemis.

2.3 The Use of the Name "Cynthia" in Propertius.

The name "Cynthia," auspiciously enough, is the very first word of the first book of Propertius⁹ and it may well have been that 'Cynthia' was the name given to the entire Monobiblos.¹⁰ The name, then, by its very prominence of position, takes on an especial significance. The poet states that 'Cynthia' was the very source and font of all his poetic inspiration.¹¹ Here he seems to be equating her with his poetic Muse, all of which made G. Lieberg remark:

Als musisches Wesen steht sie [Cynthia] unter
seinem [Apollo's] Schutz und in seiner besonderen
Gunst.¹²

However, instead of seeing Cynthia as the Muse, Lieberg seems to have identified Cynthia with only a muse, a mere one of the nine, though which one he doesn't say. Further, in ll. iii. 33, Propertius mentions the "novem Puellae" and even has one speak to him: nowhere is there mention of Cynthia. Presumably, then, Propertius identified Cynthia with his own, proper Muse rather than with the muses or a muse in general, for later, in ll. xxx. 40 he does so again:

9 Prop. 1. i. 1: "Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis."

10 Prop. 11. xxiv. 1-2 and see Camps, Book 11, p.162 and Butler & Barber, p. xxxi.

11 Prop. 11. i. 4: "ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit."

12 G. Lieberg, "Die Muse des Properz und seine Dichterweihe," Philologus, 107, 1963, p. 117.

nam sine te nostrum non valet ingenium

("For without your inspiration my genius is worthless.")

The poet expressly states that it is Cynthia alone who is responsible for his poetic genius: she is not one of the muses, nor an especial variant who assumes, as it were, the Pierian prerogatives, but rather the Muse, the one sole inspiration, "ipsa puella" he says, "the girl herself and no other." Martial (VIII. 73. 5) seems to agree when he says:

Cynthia te vatem fecit, lascive Properti

("Cynthia made a poet out of you, lusty Propertius.")

The dedication of a book of poems to a lady was, of course, nothing new. Propertius took his cue from the Bittis of Philetas, the Nanno of Mimnermus, the Lyde of Antimachus and, among his own countrymen, the Lesbia of Catullus, the Lycoris of Gallus and the Delia of Tibullus. Yet, with Propertius, two very basic and quite distinct differences are at once apparent, the first one being that his book of poems entitled Cynthia dealt with the amorous relationship between poet and lady in an intensely personal manner and with a degree of subjectivity never quite met with before (with the possible exception of Catullus), and the second one being that the lady so honoured was in no way a simple hetaira nor flute-player, as was generally the case with the Greeks

mentioned above, nor a mere dedicatory pretext to a book of verse, but became by virtue of his poetry and the uses he made of mythology in connection with her name, the living, breathing transference of the epic dedication to the *Movida*. Propertius took over from religious myth its sacred and sanctified worship, its divine aspects rich with religious symbolism, and transferred it to the sphere of poetry in much the same way as did Vergil.¹³ Indeed, Rostagni avows that the ability to transform an outward physical occurrence into an inward psychological symbol was uniquely Roman.¹⁴ Propertius then became the poet as vates, the vates who sang of love and who dedicated his poetic abilities to the Goddess of the poetic art and of his own poetic inspiration. This is partly what he seems to be saying in *lll. i. 4* where he claims to have transported "Greek mysteries" to Rome, i.e. he is following the traditions of Callimachus and Philetas in that he is writing elegies, but the added touch of the apotheosis of a mortal woman into the poetic Muse was Propertius' own extension of that tradition and he justly claimed recognition for his accomplishment.¹⁵

13 Otis, op. cit., p. 309.

14 Rostagni, op. cit., p. 74.

15 Cf. Prop. *lll. i. 3-4*.

If indeed the foregoing has any validity, the choice of a name for this prototypic supersession of the epic Mouſa then presumably becomes immensely important, a name which would be poetically and symbolically (i.e. mythically) appropriate to her new bipartite function as mortal mistress, the object of amorous elegies in her honour, and immortal goddess, the Muse of poetry and the containing font of the poet's inspiration. At first sight, then, 'Cynthia' suggests *Kivvlic*, the one from Cynthos, as has already been noted above. Yet the question still remains: why did Propertius wish to identify his lady with Artemis-Cynthia?

A tentative answer to this question may now be attempted, beginning with Artemis. She was the daughter of Zeus and Leto, and Leto was herself daughter of the Titans Phoebe ("moon") and Coeus ("intelligence").¹⁶ It will be remembered also that one of the names of the Great Mother of the Gods in Asia Minor was Great Artemis.¹⁷ So then, Propertius has identified Cynthia with the powerful Threefold Great Goddess, as well as with the power of intelligence. Artemis was also the patron of women in childbirth,¹⁸ and so

¹⁶ Apollodorus l. 4. i; Hesiod, Theog., 918 sqq.

¹⁷ K. Kerényi, The Gods of the Greeks, London, Thames & Hudson, 1961 (1951), p. 145.

¹⁸ Callim., h. to Artem., ll. 21 sq.

Propertius will make this function of Artemis symbolic of the Muse who functions as midwife at the birth of the poet's ideas and verse. In this connection it is also recorded in Callimachus¹⁹ that she was called Phosphoros, i.e. "bringer of light." Artemis was hailed as well as the "Maiden of the Silver Bow"²⁰ and as such was the youngest member of the Artemis triad, 'Artemis' being one more title of the Three-fold Great Goddess. Her silver bow might be interpreted as standing for the new-moon crescent and thus representing the Goddess in her aspect of Maiden, as Artemis' perpetual virginity suggests. Yet the Olympian Artemis was more than a maiden, for she also resembled a boy in her strength and swiftness, and at Ephesus she was worshipped in her aspect of Nymph-goddess, a sort of orgiastic Aphrodite,²¹ and her midwifery and silver arrows of death could possibly belong to her aspect of the Old or Waning Moon, the Goddess of Birth, Death and Resurrection.²² In this connection as well Callimachus (loc. cit., l. 14) mentions the nine-year-old priestesses which accompany the goddess. At Athens the little handmaidens of Artemis were called arktoi, "she-bears,"²³

19 Ibid., l. 11. Cf. also Paus. iv, xxxi, 10.

20 Ibid., l. 119.

21 Ibid., l. 238.

22 This is a conjecture by R. Graves, The Greek Myths, vol. 1, chap. 22, no. 1.

23 Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 145 and see M.P. Nilsson, A History of Greek Religion, trans. by F.J. Fielden, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1956 (1952), p. 65.

as Artemis herself is figured to be a bear in several myths. The figure nine is meant to be a reminder that the Moon's death-number is three times three: the mystic number three, which stands for the moon's three phases of New, Full and Waning moon, multiplied by itself.²⁴ By so calling his muse 'Cynthia' Propertius thus identifies her with Artemis, the Maid of Cynthos, Goddess of Light and Inspiration and of the New Moon. In addition to all of this, the name 'Cynthia' contains seven letters, seven being the number of female enchantment and of light in the Pythagorean system.²⁵

One of the chief functions of poetry (as Plato already knew)²⁶ is religious invocation of the Muse: the sacred vocabulary of myth was to be used by the poet in his attempts to reveal the depths of his spiritual illumination. In a word, poetry is a written record of the poet's attempts to render homage to his Muse. In this connection, it appears that Propertius is operating on two levels at least: primarily Cynthia is for him the Muse, the Threefold Goddess, to whom he as poet paid spiritual and sexual homage; secondly she is the mortal embodiment of the very female principle which he

²⁴ 9 is the death-number since in the Greek numbering system 9 is represented by θ and this equals τελευτος.

²⁵ Graves, White Goddess, p. 419.

²⁶ Plato, Phaedo, 61B.

as poet is venerating. Hence her identification with the Moon as female principle as opposed to the Sun, (Apollo-Helios) as male principle. What Propertius presumably sees in the mortal Cynthia is the symbol of the female and he deifies it insofar as it represents the Eternal Feminine, or, as the title of a popular work on behavioral psychology would have it, the "Feminine Mystique."

John Skelton, in his Garland of Laurel, thus describes the Threefold Goddess in her three aspects of Earth, Sky and Underworld:

Diana in the leaves green,
Luna that so bright doth sheen,
Persephone in Hell.²⁷

As Goddess of the Netherworld she was concerned with Birth, Death and Resurrection; as Goddess of the Earth with the seasons of Spring, Summer and Autumn, she animated all plants and ruled all living creatures. As Goddess of the Sky she was the Moon, in her three phases of New, Full and Waning moon: when the new moon shone, Artemis was present and beasts and plants were enchanted. Yet it must be borne in mind that the Threefold Goddess was a personification of primitive woman--woman as creatrix and destructrix.²⁸

27 Cf. the Second Vatican Mythographer, 15: Ipsa est enim Luna in caelo, Diana in terra, Proserpina in erebo.

28 These two terms derive from Graves, White Goddess, p. 428.

K. Kerényi defines Artemis as standing "midway between maidenhood and motherhood, joie-de-vivre and lust for murder, fecundity and animality. She carries death within herself."²⁹ And so in Cynthia the fate of Woman becomes the symbol and expression of all birth and origination. Every maiden contains, as it were, all her descendents--an unending line of mothers and daughters in one--the Eternal Feminine.

²⁹ C.J. Jung and K. Kerényi, Essays on a Science of Myth, New York, Pantheon Books, 1949, p. 153.

2.4 The 'Puella Divina'.

Before embarking upon a systematic listing of mythological identification of Cynthia with Artemis, it would be useful at this point to quote from K. Kerényi's preface to his Gods of the Greeks:

...mythology is also fundamentally a special, creative, and therefore also an artistic, activity of the psyche...It encroaches on poetry, but nevertheless it is an activity of its own kind, to be ranked with poetry, music, the plastic arts, philosophy and the sciences...Mythology must transcend the individual, and must exercise over human beings a power that seizes hold of the soul and fills it with images.³⁰

Thus in rendering homage to his poetic Muse via the mortal embodiment of the Eternal Feminine, Propertius must first provide a base or springboard-through-images for Cynthia's alter ego: in a word, he must immortalize the all-too-mortal Cynthia. He must present her in such a way that she becomes linked to the immortal past and emerges a living symbol of the poet's artistic credo, and this he does through the world of myth, by symbolically identifying Cynthia with those mythic elements which suggest metaphorically what the poet inwardly feels. He begins to effect this metamorphosis in the very first poem of the Monobiblos which, since it is a prefatory poem, was presumably composed either near the end or at the completion of Book 1. His purpose here is to

30 Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, intro., p. 3.

identify his mortal Cynthia with the divine *Κύβηλα* and thus to structure the subsequent developments of his total poetic statement; this he succeeds in doing rather neatly. The connection between his lady Cynthia and Artemis is effected through the mention of Atalanta: this is accomplished ever so slightly, ever so fleetingly, as befits the fleet-footed priestess of Artemis, by the simple mention of "velocem...puellam"³¹ and thereby alluding to the famous footrace. Callimachus states³² that Artemis "greatly recommended swift-footed Atalanta" and in Apollodorus³³ it is stated that Milanion had brought golden apples from Aphrodite which were to assist him in his wooing of Atalanta. By thus comparing his wooing of Cynthia to that of Milanion racing with Atalanta, Propertius is enabled to establish his poetic premise by means of careful and learned employment of symbolic mythology: and that premise is that he, like Milanion, has received a commission from Love in his pursuit of Truth through poetic inspiration. The apples are, of course, symbolic of Immortality, the reward of faithful and diligent service to the Goddess. Many of the great heroes of myth were sacred kings who had attained the kingship by virtue of their marriage to a priestess of the Great Goddess.

31 Prop. 1. i. 15.

32 h. to Artem., 215 sqq.

33 The Library, 111. ix. 2.

Their ultimate reward was immortality, conferred upon them by the gift of golden apples.³⁴ Thus, akin poetically to the heroes of past myth, Propertius is setting out on his course in the pursuit of the Muse Artemis-Cynthia, goddess of Inspiration and Light, hoping that, like Milanion before him, he will be successful and wed Artemis (i.e. become immortal through his verse).³⁵

³⁴ Homer, in the Odyssey, IV, 561 sqq., has Proteus prophesying to Menelaus that he was fated to go to the Elysian Fields because he had married Helen and was therefore a son-in-law of Zeus. Cf. also J. Grimm, Teutonic Mythology (Deutsche Mythologie), trans. by J. Stallybrass, London, George Bell, 1882, p. 319: Isunn has in her keeping certain apples, by eating of which the aging gods make themselves young again (ER GODS IN SKULD. abita, pa ER pau eldaz, oc versa pa allir ungir, SN. 30^a). This reminds one of the apples of Paradise and the Hesperides, of the guarded golden apples in the Kindermärchen no. 57, of the apples in the stories of Fortunatus and of Merlin, on the eating or biting of which depend life, death and metamorphosis...". Cf. as well the words of the Serpent to Eve on the eating of the apple of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen. 3. 4 & 5): Nequaquam morte moriemini. Scit enim Deus quod in quocumque die comedaritis ex eo aperientur oculi vestri, et eritis sicut dii...; Dante recalls these Apples of Immortality at Inferno, xvi. 61-62:

Lascio lo fele, e vo per dolci pomi

Promessi a me per lo verace Duca;

where 'dolci pomi' = 'la dolcezza del Paradiso,' and again at Purg. xxvii, 115:

Quel dolce pome, che per tanti rami

Cercando va la cura dei mortali,

Oggi porra in pace le tue fami.

³⁵ The connection between Atalanta and Artemis wants further elaboration. Apollodorus (111. ix. 2) states that Atalanta's father Iasus, disappointed at not having a boy, exposed the girl: she however was suckled by a she-bear and grown to womanhood, became a huntress and vowed perpetual virginity. Now she-bears were sacred to Artemis, as is seen in the myth of Callisto (Hesiod, the Astronomy, 3): this would account for the appearance of two small girls dressed as she-bears in the Attic festival of Brauronian Artemis.

Later, after having introduced Milanion and made the symbolic comparison mentioned above, the poet then states:

At vos, deductae quibus est fallacia lunae
 et labor in magicis sacra piare focis,
 en agendum dominae mentem convertite nostrae
 et facite illa meo palleat ore magis. (ll. 19-22)

("But you, whose art it is to call down the Moon,
 and who invoke her with your ritual fire,
 Come and turn my Lady's attentions to me
 and make her face more pale than mine is now.")

This seems to be, on one level at any rate, a definite comparison of Cynthia with the moon. This is especially noticeable when the poet asks to have his lady's face made paler than his own. He is pale from contemplation of his Muse and from the aestheticism of the true and devoted poet. Could he here be invoking the New Moon to turn its gaze upon him and to sanctify his poetic aspirations? And if he is consciously identifying Cynthia with the moon in this passage, the use of 'domina' to refer to her is significant: it recalls the Cretan and Thessalian *Πότνια Ἥγητα*, the title anciently accorded the Threefold Great Goddess, who was also called, as has been pointed out above, Great Artemis. Moreover, the magical incantations involved in calling down the moon and all the various rites entwined in such midnight machinations, are strongly evocative of the rites of Hecate, the dea triformis who was associated with crossroads.³⁶

³⁶ See Catullus, carm. xxxiv. 15 and cf. Ovid, Metam. 11. 416.

Hesiod gives the following geneology:³⁷ the Titan couple Phoebe and Coeus had two daughters--Leto, the mother of Apollo and Artemis (who are at times named Hekatos and Hekate),³⁸ and Asteria, a star-goddess who bore Hecate to Persais or Perses. Hecate is therefore a cousin of Artemis, and at the same time a reappearance of the Great Goddess Phoebe, or "Moon."³⁹ Indeed, Hecate used to appear carrying her torch as a Moon-goddess.⁴⁰ Like Artemis and Phoebe (Selene), Hecate is also *Παφλῆϊος*, that is:

...capace di riacquistare, quando vogliano, bagnandosi in acque rientegratrici, quella assoluta libertà e indipendenza, che sono caratteri fondamentali e nella parthenia trovano la loro più perfetta espressione.⁴¹

It thus appears that in l.i Propertius has very subtly and neatly identified Cynthia first of all with Artemis Phosphoros, goddess of the New Moon, of poetic inspiration and Truth, and secondly with Hecate, one of the ancient names of the Threefold Great Goddess, as was, of course, Artemis herself. The mention of Venus in l.33, "in me nostra Venus noctes exercet amares," completes the Triad and appears

³⁷ Theog. 404 sqq.

³⁸ Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 35 and see Orphic Frag. 188.

³⁹ Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 36.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ U. Pestalozza, Nuovi Saggi di Religione Mediterranea, Firenze, 1964, p. 49.

to indicate that Propertius means to write poetry in honour of the Great Goddess; furthermore, the entire tone of the poem indicates that the poet is quite aware of what pain and hardship such an undiluted devotion to his Muse will require of him.

2.5 Comparison with Helen.

Having thus set out his identification of Cynthia with the Threefold Great Goddess in all her aspects (i.e. Artemis, Venus and Hecate, or Maid, Nymph and Crone) and so indicated the extent of his poetic commitment, the poet then proceeds in subsequent poems to elaborate on the divine nature of Cynthia's various physical attributes. A favourite subject of comparison for Propertius at this point is Helen, especially the comparison of her beauty with that of Cynthia. In ll. iii, 32 he states:

Post Helenam haec terris forma secunda redit

("a second time, since Helen, has this beauty
come to earth")

and further on in the same poem (l. 34) he adds that Cynthia is even more beautiful than Helen.

In ll. xv. 13 sq., we find:

ipse Paris nuda fertur periisse Lacaena
cum Menelao surgeret e thalamo

("Paris himself is said to have expired at the
nakedness of the Spartan as she arose from
Menelaus' bed.")

Further in lll. viii. 31 sqq. appears:

dulcior ignis erat Paridi cum Graia per arma
Tyndaridi poterat gaudia ferre suae:
dum vincunt Danaï, dum restat barbarus Hector,
ille Helenae in gremio maxima bella gerit.

("Sweeter was Paris' ardour when he could bring his delights through Greek arms to the bosom of the daughter of Tyndareus: as long as the Greeks pressed home, as long as fierce Hector stood firm, Paris was waging the greatest battles upon the breast of Helen.")

Propertius' obvious fondness for the legend of Helen in his attempts to deify Cynthia needs explanation, apart from her being synonymous with beauty and passionate love. An answer might be found in the fact that Helena (or Helle) was the name of the Spartan Moon-goddess.⁴² Helen had two temples near Sparta: one at Therapnae,⁴³ built on a Mycenaean site; another at Dendra to Helena Dendritis.⁴⁴ Pellux (X. 191) mentions a Spartan festival called the Helenephoria, closely resembling Athene's Thesmophoria at Athens, during which certain objects were carried in a special basket called a helene. By thus so closely associating Cynthia with Helen, Propertius is apparently cementing even further the bond between Cynthia and the Moon. It will be remembered that there is also a connection between Helen and the golden apples of Immortality, just as there was in the case of Atalanta. Like Paris, Propertius seems to be saying that he too has been commissioned by Love to woo the Goddess and if successful will be granted immortality.

⁴² Cf. Apollod. Epitome VI. 29 and Euripides, Helen, 1676 sqq.

⁴³ Cook, vol. 11, part ii, p. 1064 and see Nilsson, p. 24.

⁴⁴ See Pausanias, 111. 19. 10.

2.6 A Consideration of l. iii.

This double association of Cynthia with the Moon on the one hand, and with the apples of Immortality on the other, is brilliantly illustrated in l. iii, which some consider to be the most beautiful of the Propertian elegies.⁴⁵ The poet, returning home late at night, stops by at Cynthia's house. He is manifestly under the benign influence of "Liber Pater" (l. 9), the god of poetic inspiration (along with Apollo and the Muses), especially among the Augustan poets.⁴⁶ Thus encouraged by Bacchus and Amor, "durus uterque deus" he says, he comes to pay homage to the sleeping Cynthia.⁴⁷ The devoted nature of the poet's worship of her and her connection with Artemis are both early made apparent:

⁴⁵ See Archibald W. Allen, "Sunt qui Propertium Malint," Critical Essays on Roman Literature, ed. by J.P. Sullivan, p. 130, and also cf. P.J. Enk, Liber 1 Commen., Leiden, Brill, 1946, p. 32.

⁴⁶ See Horace, Odes 111. 25. 18; Lygdamus, El. 111. 4. 43 sq.; Propertius, El. 111. 17. 6; Propertius reunites the twin ideas of purification and immortality associated with the early Bacchic cult. Also cf. the remark by V. Pöschl in Entretiens... (t. 11, p. 217) that in Propertius "bei den Dichtern ist vor allen Dionysos göttliches Symbol...".

⁴⁷ Propertius' linkage of Bacchus with Artemis is not without parallel; cf. a dithyrambic fragment of Pindar (p. 560 of Sandys' ed. in the Loeb), ll. 19-20:

ῥίμφα δ' εἶπεν Ἀρτεμὶς οἰοπόλος ζεύ-
 ξαισ' ἐν ὄρεσσι
 βακχίλῃς φύλον λεόντων ἑγρότερων Βρομίου]
 ("meanwhile, lightly cometh the lone huntress Artemis,
 who in Bacchic revels hath yoked the brood of savage lions
 for Bromius.") [Sandys' trans.]

et modo solvebam nostra de fronte corollas
 ponebamque tuis, Cynthia, temporibus:
 et modo gaudebam lapsos formare capillos,
 nunc furtiva cavis poma debam manibus (ll. 21-24)

("and first I removed the wreath from my forehead
 and placed it, Cynthia, about your temples:
 then I delighted in straightening your touselled
 hair and now I hid some apples in your hollow
 hands.")

It is to be noticed how very deftly Propertius first
 wreathes Cynthia's temples and then places apples in her
 hands. Apples were, of course, the traditional lover's gift,⁴⁸
 and the wreath would presumably be of roses--symbolic of
 passionate love.⁴⁹ One must also not be forgetful of the
 association which apples have with the Threefold Goddess, as
 outlined above. The association with the moon is effected
 later in the poem:

donec diversas praecurrens Luna fenestras,
 Luna moraturis sedula luminibus,
 compositos levibus radiis patefecit ocellos (ll. 31-33)

("Until the Moon, passing by the window opposite
 her, the busy Moon whose rays would like to linger
 long, awoke her sleeping eyes with gentle light.")

Note how the poet has the Moon's rays linger lovingly
 upon the features of the sleeping Cynthia, and how she is

⁴⁸ See Propertius ll. xxxiv. 69; lll. xiii. 27 and
 Enk, op. cit., p. 39, says, "Mala puellis muneri missa amorem
 excitare Antiqui putabant," and cf. Theocr. 2. 120.

⁴⁹ Cf. The Song of Songs, 2:5, "Fulcite me floribus,
 stipate me malis, quia amore langueo." Cf. as well Ovid,
Fasti, V. 345-6:

Bacchus amat flores: Baccho placuisse coronam
 ex Ariadne sidere nosse putas.

finally awakened, not by the fumbling efforts of our poet, but only by the silent, beaming rays of her sister-spirit, the Moon.

Propertius has himself furnished us with a partial clue toward the interpretation of the role of Cynthia in this poem: at ll. 1-2, he says:

Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina
languida desertis Cnosia litoribus

("In such fashion lay, the Thesean skiff setting sail, the spiritless Cnossian upon the empty shore.")

Keeping in mind what Boucher calls the "tempérament visuel" of Propertius, a reference in Pausanias l. xx. 3 concerning some paintings in the sanctuary of Dionysos in Attica is of interest here; Pausanias describes the paintings in this fashion:

ταῦτα τε δὴ γεγραμμένα εἰσὶ καὶ Πενθεὺς καὶ
Λυκούργος ὧν ἔς Διόνυσον ὑβρίσαν διδόντες δίκας
Ἀριάδην δὲ καλεῖσθοντα καὶ Θησεὺς ἀναχόμενος καὶ
Διόνυσος ἥκων ἐς τῆς Ἀριάδνης τὴν ἑρπιδίην.

("There are also these pictures--Pentheus and Lycurgus paying the penalty for their hubris to Dionysos, Ariadne sleeping, Theseus sailing away, and Dionysos coming to seize Ariadne.")

Propertius seems to be at great pains here to ensure that we identify Cynthia with Ariadne, the bride of Bacchus, who through the power of the god was metamorphosized and set as a constellation in the heavens.⁵⁰ Does Propertius here

⁵⁰ Cf. Aratus, ll. 71-3.

suggest that he, through his identification of himself with Bacchus (l. 9 and again at l. 14), is attempting to render the mortal Cynthia deathless by virtue of his poetic art? This exemplum of Bacchus and Ariadne is especially applicable here for the poet's purpose, since she was the only one who was ever designated the wife of the god.⁵¹ It was further related that Artemis had killed (i.e. made immortal) Ariadne at the request of Dionysos--a fate which happened as well to Coronis, the beloved of Apollo.⁵² Thus, through direct intervention of Artemis, Ariadne and the god of poetic inspiration were united; all in all, a perfect poetic symbol for Propertius' ideal relationship with the Cynthia which he will create through his verse. Further, the association of the sleeping Cynthia with the lover's wreath and apples, as well as her familiar identification with the Moon, appears to be a quite evocative and artistic inversion of the myth of Endymion and Selene.⁵³ It was told⁵⁴ that when Selene disappeared behind the mountain-crest of Latmos, she was

⁵¹ Hesiod, Theog. 947-9 and cf. Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 269.

⁵² Homer, Ody. XI, 321 and cf. Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 270.

⁵³ Cf. the 1st Vatican Mythog. 229: "Endymion pastor amasse dicitur Lunam seu Dianam."

⁵⁴ See Apollonius Rhodius, l. 57.

visiting her lover Endymion. It was there in a cave that Endymion was lying asleep when Selene first saw him, lay down at his side and gently kissed his closed eyes. He afterwards fell into a dreamless sleep from which he has never awakened.⁵⁵ Whereas in the original version of the myth Endymion was loved by the Moon and bathed in its rays as he slept,⁵⁶ here it is Cynthia whom the Moon caresses; while Endymion was immortalized through the Moon's love for him, this is clearly what the poet has in mind for Cynthia, a deathless immortality through the divine medium of his verse. The name Endymion means one who "finds himself within,"⁵⁷ encompassed by his beloved as if in a common garment. What Propertius then seems to be suggesting is that he, as poet (under the approval of Bacchus), might prove worthy of the apples of Immortality. Still too timid and (poetically) unsure of himself to boldly embrace his Muse, he contents himself with straightening her coiffure. The Moon gently awakens its alter-ego who then proceeds to rebuke the poet's infidelity. This final portion of the poem would be an elaborate warning from the Muse; serve me faithfully, lest you be inflicted with the sleep from which no one awakes

55 Apollodorus, l. vii. 5.

56 G. Méautis, Mythologie Grecque, Paris, Editions Albin Michel, 1959, p. 183: "... le mythe d'Endymion...caressé par les rayons de la lune que l'aime."

57 Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 198.

(i.e. loss of creativity). The Moon has many lovers, but will not brook infidelity. The bumbling and clumsy attempts of the poet to court his Muse and his presumption in placing the apples in her hands (whence they promptly roll out again; the gift is the goddess' alone to bestow) are amply rewarded; the poet succeeds only in provoking her ire and her tears. The poem in its entirety, then, might be taken as an elaborately executed symbol of the poet's inchoative attempts at rendering due homage to the Muse, coupled with the dire results which inevitably follow such a display of artistic hubris. The flesh is indeed willing but as yet the spirit is far too weak.

2.7 Ἄρτεμις ἑρπυγία: l. xviii.

Book 1, elegy xviii contains several extremely felicitous attempts at identifying Cynthia with Artemis and the Moon. In it the poet displays a virtuoso acquaintance with mythic symbolism and a thoroughgoing mastery of his métier. Butler and Barber thus introduce the poem: "An elegy written during a quarrel with Cynthia, who has cast him off, causing him to retire to the country, where he laments his fate, protests his fidelity and carves her name upon the trunks of trees."⁵⁸ The forest setting and the carving of Cynthia's name upon the trees appear to be the important factors here. In both this and in the preceding elegy (xvii), the poet is lamenting his fate, having of his own accord torn himself away from Cynthia; here in xviii he is lamenting her fickleness ('levis,' l. 11) and is totally perplexed by her haughtiness and seeming insouciance ('unde tuos primum repetam, mea Cynthia, fastus?'). "To what shall I attribute your arrogance, Cynthia?"). She has, in fact, banished him from her favour. He claims not to be aware of the causes for her change of heart ("quae te mihi crimina mutant?") but thereupon takes up three possible cases she might have for her grievances and proceeds in an attempt to acquit himself of the charges. To regain her affection (and do penance for

⁵⁸ Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. 180.

his folly) he enters a sacred grove ('nemus,' l. 2) and calls upon the trees therein to be witness to his fidelity:

vos eritis testes, si quos habet arbor amores,
 fagus et Arcadio pinus amica deo.
 a! quotiens teneras resonant mea verba sub umbras,
 scribitur et vestris Cynthia corticibus. (ll. 19-22)

("You will bear witness (if indeed a tree is capable of love), you beech and pine, beloved of the Arcadian god, Ah! how often do my words ring out beneath your tender branches, and 'Cynthia' is written on your bark.")

The reference to 'Arcadio pinus amico deo' is of special interest here. Firstly, it refers to the myth of Pan and his infatuation with the Oread Pitys.⁵⁹ He was enamoured of her but she fled his embraces and was turned into a pine. Now *πίτυς* is "pine-tree!" and the Fir-goddess Pitys or Elate is to be identified with Artemis Elate, Goddess of the Fir-tree.⁶⁰ It is to be remembered that the Greek for fir is *ἐλάτη* (and see Pausanias' account of Elatos the Arcadian). The identification of Artemis with the pine can be established from several sources:⁶¹ i) depicted on a fresco discovered in

⁵⁹ For Pan's infatuation with Pitys see Lucan, *Dial. Deor.* xxii. 4 and Nonnius *Dion.*, xlii. 259.

⁶⁰ See Apollod. *Epit.*, l. 22; Ovid, *Metam.*, xii. 459 sqq., Servius, *ad Verg. Aen.*, vi. 448.

⁶¹ Cf., in addition to those listed above, Prop. ll. xix. 19, as well as Paus. x. 38.9: *καὶ ὀλίγον ὑπὲρ τῆν πόλιν κυπαρίσσου τε ἀναμίσξεται καὶ τῆς πίτυός ἐστιν ἄλλος, καὶ ναός τε Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ ἄγαλμα ἐν τῷ ἁλῶνι.*

Pompeii during the excavations of 1888-90 there stands, in the centre of a mountainous scene, a leafy pine-tree (cf. 'teneras...umbras,' l. 21). Raised on a plinth at the foot of the tree is the statue of Diana with a modius on her head. A man holds out to her a wreath of leaves. The hunting-spear that he carries, the pair of hounds with him and a stag in the background all point to the cult of Diana Nemorensis.⁶² ii) Statius⁶³ speaks of her effigy carved on "pitch-pine and cedar and every oak tree" of her grove near Thebes.

By thus suggesting an identification of Cynthia with Artemis Elate, goddess of the Fir, Propertius recalls Artemis agrotera, the goddess of the chase, to whom the hunter dedicated his fortunes of the hunt in the form of a hind's antlers or by carving the goddess' name on the bark.⁶⁴ Now Artemis

62 Cook, op. cit., vol. 11, part i, 147 sqq.

63 Stat. Theb. IV, 425 sqq.

64 Cf. Nilsson, op. cit., p. 28: "Artemis was the most popular goddess of Greece, but the Artemis of popular belief was quite a different person from the proud virgin of mythology, Apollo's sister. Artemis is the goddess of wild Nature, she haunts the mountains and woods, the groves and luscious meadows. There the 'rushing Artemis' (κελεύειν Ἄρτεμις) hunts and dances with her attendant nymphs. She protects and fosters the young of animals and growing human children. Different animals are her companions and theriomorphic representations are appropriate to her. In her cult orgiastic dances and the sacred bough occur; none of the great gods is so closely connected with the tree-cult."

agrotera is equally the goddess of the wild country and a goddess of the hunt, and in spite of appearances the two roles are not incompatible.⁶⁵ Pierre Chantraine⁶⁶ takes up the whole question of the relationship between Pan and Artemis agrotera. He mentions that if Pan is a country god, at the same time he is also a god of hunters since he is so described in an epigram of Leonidas of Tarentum found in the Palantine Anthology, VI. 13:

ταῦτα τὰ δίκτυα ὕηκαν ὀμαλμοί
ἄγροτα Πάν, ἄλλης ἄλλος ἀπ' ἄγρεσιγῆς

("The (three) brothers have consecrated to you, Pan the Hunter, these fillets taken individually in the hunt.")

E. Meyer,⁶⁷ laying stress on the common Greek belief that Penelope was by Hermes the mother of the Arcadian Pan, concludes that originally a goddess (Artemis) surnamed Penelope gave birth to Pan at Mantinea. This tradition is also mentioned by Cicero (De nat. Deor. 111. 22. 56), and Tzetzes (Schol. on Lycophron, 772) says expressly ὁ Πάν γὰρ ἑμοῦ καὶ Πηνελόπης ἄλλης. This self-dedication of the hunter

⁶⁵ Paus., 1. 19. 6 sees in Artemis agrotera of Athens a goddess of the hunt.

⁶⁶ P. Chantraine, Etudes sur le Vocabulaire grec, Paris, Klincksieck, 1956.

⁶⁷ "Der Ursprung des Odysseusmythus" in Hermes, 1895, xxx, 264.

to the goddess of the chase (oftentimes represented as the Dawn) is evinced not only by the myth of Pan and Pitys-Elate, but also by such myths as Cephalus and Procris, Orion and Eos, Actaeon and Artemis, and will be discussed more fully below. In any event, Propertius' deliberate evocation, by means of the Pan-Pitys myth and the bold inscription 'CYNTHIA' on the bark of the pine and beech, all seem quite ingenious and definite attempts to link Cynthia's name with that of Artemis.⁶⁸

All of this leaves but the word 'fagus' (l. 20) to be dealt with. Of the commentators at hand, all are in accord (here, at least) concerning Propertius' reference to the beech. P.J. Enk (Sex. Prop. El. Liber 1, pars altera, p. 165) says: "de fagi amoribus nihil traditum." Butler and Barber are suspiciously silent about the matter, and Camps (Prop. El. Book 1, p. 90) says: "No similar story (i.e. of a love-affair) is known about the fagus." Yet the answer would not appear to lie in any love-affair connected with the beech, but rather in its connection with Artemis. The word 'fagus' is etymologically connected with the Greek *φῆγος*, i.e. a kind of oak, bearing an esculent acorn. However, in

⁶⁸ The relationship between Pan and the Moon-goddess is quite definitely expressed in Vergil Georg. 3. 391 (and see Scholiast):

munere sic niveo lanae, si credere dignum est,
Pan deus Arcadiae captam te, Luna, fefellit,
in nemora alta vocans: nec tu aspernata vocantem.

Latin fagus means "beech-tree." It has been suggested⁶⁹ that oak-oracles were introduced into Greece by the Achaeans, who originally consulted the beech, as did the Franks, but finding no beeches in Greece they transferred their allegiance to the oak with edible acorns, its nearest equivalent, to which they gave the name phegos, the same word as the Latin for beech. At any rate, the connection between Artemis and both the oak and the beech is well-attested. The Amazons, when they founded their Artemis-cult in the Artemision at Ephesus, set up the effigy of their goddess "beneath an oak of noble girth."⁷⁰ Aristophanes similarly describes her as the "Maid who ranges the oak-clad hills"⁷¹ and Statius⁷² makes Atalanta dedicate a choice oak to her in Arcadia. Thus both the Arcadian god and the pine, as well as the oak are seen to have reference to Artemis, and both in connection with dedicatory

69 See R. Graves, White Goddess, p. 182 sqq. Cf. as well Grimm, Teutonic Mythology, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 651: "Of hallowed trees (which are commonly addressed as frau, dame, in the later Middle Ages) the oak stands at the head (pp. 72-77): an oak or beech is the arbor frugifera in casting lots (Tac. Germ. 10)." Similarly, on p. 649, there is quoted a passage from the Acta Bened. sec. 2, p. 841: "Adest quoque ibi (at Lutosas, now Leuze) non ignoti miraculi fagus (beech), subter quam luminaria saepe cum accensa absque hominum accessu videmus, divini aliquid fore suspicamus."

70 Callimachus, h. to Art., 237 sqq.

71 Aristoph. Thesm. 114 sq.

72 Stat., Theb., I. 585 sqq.

vows. Yet beech trees seem to have been a ritual, as they certainly were an etymological, equivalent for oaks. A.B. Cook has an illuminating article on the beech-trees of the Fagutal which makes the association clearer.⁷³ In Macrobius Sat. 3. 20. 2 it will be observed that the beech stands next to the oak in the list of lucky trees which he presents. The change from oak to beech seems also to have taken place near Tusculum, where Diana was worshipped in a grove of beeches.⁷⁴ Diana's tree in the grove near Tusculum was, presumably, comparable with Diana's tree in the grove at Nemi, which was an oak. And Latinus Silvius, who founded Tusculum, dedicated the beech-grove to Diana.⁷⁵

Quite plausibly, then, this poem might be a very brilliantly conceived allegory of the frustrations and disappointments in the poet's attempts to render fit homage to his Muse and of the resulting mental and spiritual anguish which her service entails. He protests that he has been faithful to his poetic commitment and bemoans his rejection by Cynthia, i.e. his loss of inspiration. He then enters her sacred grove for the purpose of rededicating himself to her

⁷³ Cook, op. cit., vol. 11, part i, p. 402 sqq. and note.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 403. The reference is to Pliny, Nat. Hist. 16. 242.

⁷⁵ Pliny, loc. cit., op. cit.

service (by carving her magic name upon her trees) and by so doing becomes spiritually resurrected, as were all the hunters after Wisdom who dedicated their lives to the service of the goddess of Light. How elusive Wisdom is! Yet Propertius is determined to find poetic truth:

sed qualiscumque es, resonent mihi 'Cynthia' silvae,
nec deserta tuo nomine saxa vacent.

("But even though you try to elude me, let the woods shout back 'Cynthia!' and let your name fill even these desolate places.")

2.8 A Dichotomy Emerges.

Still another poem in which Propertius makes a pointed and masterly identification of his lady's animus with the goddess Artemis is in ll. xix. This is admittedly not an easy poem nor one readily yielding neat solutions. Butler and Barber are content to make no introductory remarks at all about the poem, simply offering explicatory notes on several of the more difficult passages. Camps has this to say:

Cynthia is going to some rural retreat; the poet remains at Rome for the present but will shortly follow her. He imagines her (sentimentally) in her rustic setting, and himself, when he joins her, engaging (quaintly) in rural pursuits. But while at the beginning he professes to be glad that she will be out of harm's way, he is still apprehensive at the end.⁷⁶

Nor is P.J. Enk any more informative:

Pulcherrima elegia quae cum quietem et
tranquillitatem ruris, tum pericula et curas
Romae simplicibus et amoenis versibus describit.⁷⁷

Both comments are obviously mere preambles to the poem, with no attempt at anything more than surface explication of the meaning. And yet the poem seems to reflect a sort of spiritual dichotomy wherein the poet attempts to make a type of mental (artistic?) distinction between the actual woman (or women) known as 'Cynthia' and the spiritual or Platonic

⁷⁶ Camps, op. cit., Bk. 11, p. 142.

⁷⁷ Enk, Sex. Propertii Elegiarum, Liber 11, Comment., p. 262.

'idea' of Woman within her which he identifies with Artemis-Cynthia, his Muse. He also seems to have come to some sort of realization here about both his duties as a man and his duties as a poet. Kenneth Quinn explains:

If the poet is to speak in his own person, or through a persona that he assumes (the passionate lover, for example), and claim our recognition of what he writes as worthwhile poetry, he must, in addition to showing us he can write, convince us as well that he, or the persona he creates, is worthy of our respect.⁷⁸

Propertius is presumably setting out to do just that. In the first sixteen lines of the poem he effectively removes the mortal Cynthia to the country. There, he says, she will be safe from all temptation. But then he begins on a new track:

ipse ego venabor: iam nunc me sacra Dianae
suscipere et Veneris ponere vota iuvat (ll. 17-18)

("But as for me, I'm going hunting, for I should like to be a devotee of Diana and leave off praying to Venus.")

Note the distinct separation made here between Diana and Venus: there seems to be a visible attempt on the part of the poet to indicate symbolically his spiritual dilemma. The words "sacra Dianae suscipere"⁷⁹ mean something like "to

⁷⁸ K. Quinn, Latin Explorations, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963, p. 141.

⁷⁹ For "sacra...suscipere" cf. Catullus 64. 104 "succepit vota" and for "ponere vota" cf. Catullus 36. 2 "votum solvite."

undertake the rites of Diana (i.e. Nemorensis)" and "Veneris ponere vota" equals "to pay my dues to Venus" or "render Venus my due thanks" (i.e. for favours received in the past with reference to physical love). Veneris in the genitive is a textual emendation actually, supported by Butler and Barber and W.A. Camps. The MS tradition has Veneri, with which P.J. Enk concurs, and gives as his explanation:

Nihil igitur aliud restat nisi ut Veneri vota ponere interpretemur 'dona Veneri promissa dedicare,' ut iam in 'Commentario Critico' meo ad hunc verum exposui. Sic Phillimore quoque: 'From this very hour I have a mind to adopt the mysteries of Diana and set up votive trophies in honour of Venus.'⁸⁰

It thus appears that the interpretation of the passage comes off with fairly well much the same meaning whichever case is decided upon. From a purely aesthetic standpoint, however, one tends to favour the construction with the genitive, by metonymy with "sacra Dianae" (and cf. Vergil Aen. xi. 4 "Vota deum solvebat").⁸¹

In these lines, then, lie the crux of the poem and the clue to the poet's dilemma. He has in the past been a devoted servant of Venus and worshipped Woman in the manner suitable to such a devotee. Yet the poet in him sees the

⁸⁰ Enk, Commentary on Book 11, p. 265.

⁸¹ To Prof. Borgeaud goes the credit for suggesting the translation with the genitive and for first alerting me to the emendation and the difficulties inherent in this passage.

disadvantages of being chained to the flesh (one has only to read Catullus) and he now becomes aware that one must devote not only the mind but the body as well to the pursuit of poetic wisdom. One must finally go hunting in the groves of Diana. The poet here is presumably beginning to realize that what is ultimately immortal in Woman, what has always rendered her an object of devotion to mankind, is not her aspect of creatrix alone, but more importantly she is the instrument through which man may achieve the climax of his whole experience, the "breakthrough to wordless knowledge" as Kerényi phrases it,⁸² and that only through a devoted and life-long service to this divine principle may one finally achieve an Immortality.⁸³

In the next distich the poet elaborates:

incipiam captare feras et reddere pinu
cornua et audaces ipse monuere canes (ll. 19-20)

("I shall set myself to netting stags and returning their antlers to the pine and taking charge of the hunting hounds myself.")

With these lines Propertius clarifies his "sacra Dianae" of the previous distich: many such 'rites' come to mind but the

82 Jung and Kerényi, op. cit., p. 154.

83 Perhaps it is over-subtle to see such wide possibilities of interpretation in two enigmatic lines, but the quality of Propertius' symbols and his erudite mind are such that any, or all, of these may be latent.

poet's inclusion of the 'audaces canes' seems to identify this as an allusion to the myth of Actaeon. The association of Artemis with the chase is well-established,⁸⁴ as is her attribute of a stag.⁸⁵ Actaeon, whom Cheiron had brought up to be a hunter, stumbled across Diana and her nymphs as she was engaged in her ritual bath, and for this impertinence was metamorphosized into a stag and torn to pieces by his own pack of fifty hunting hounds.⁸⁶ Now the stag, the ritual bath and the fifty hounds all appear to identify Artemis in her aspect as Goddess of Death-in-Life. The number fifty is significant here, for it represents half a Great Year, namely fifty lunations, at the end of which time the sacred king was torn to pieces by the priestesses of the Goddess. The hounds also remind one of the functions of Cerberus, the Greek counterpart of Anubis, the dog-headed son of the death-goddess Nephthys, who conducted souls to the Underworld. In European folk-lore the souls of the damned were hunted to the Northern Hell by a baying pack of hounds.⁸⁷ In the Rig-Veda

⁸⁴ Cf., for instance, Ovid, Metam. 111. 163 sqq. and my remarks above, p. 61 with note.

⁸⁵ "A Melian amphora, now at Athens, has for its principal design the meeting of Apollo and Artemis. She has an arrow in her left hand and a stag in her right." (Cook, vol. 11, part i, p. 453, n. 3).

⁸⁶ Cf. Apollod. 111. iv. 4 and Ovid, Metam. 111. 185 sqq.

⁸⁷ Cook, op. cit., vol. 11, part i, p. 62 with the note and the references listed there: "Wodan (i.e. Mercurius)

mention is made of Yama, the 'gatherer of men,' whose two messengers generally take the shape of dogs as they escort the Dead to Yama's realm.⁸⁸ What appears to be indicated, then, by the myth of Actaeon is the tale of a pre-Hellenic sacred king of the stag-cult who was rent in pieces (i.e. immortalized) by the priestesses of the Goddess. Kerényi further adds that the sacred king was probably clothed in a stag's pelt as he approached the Goddess' precincts.⁸⁹ It thus appears that Propertius wishes to devote himself wholly to the faithful service of Artemis in his unending pursuit of poetic Wisdom, in much the same manner as did Actaeon. This interpretation is further supported in lines 23-24 where the poet mentions that he will hunt, not huge lions nor fierce boars (*vastos leones aut agrestes sues*) but rather tame

still survives...as leader of the Wild Hunt (die wilde Jagd) ...On windy nights in spring, or autumn, or winter he sweeps across the sky with a howling company at his heels--the souls of the dead." For Diana as a goddess of the chase accompanied by her hound, see Haug, "Die Viergöttersteine" in *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift*, 1891, 10, 315 sq. and Cook, *loc. cit.*, p. 62 n. 1 and p. 69. One may compare as well Aristoph., *The Frogs*, ll. 1359-60:

ἄμα δὲ Δίκτυνα παῖς Ἀρτεμὶς καλὰ
τὰς κυνίσκας ἔχουσα ἐλθέτω διὰ δόμων πανταχῇ

88 Z. Ragozin, *Vedic India*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1895, p. 182.

89 Kerényi, *Gods of the Greeks*, p. 146.

hares and birds (lepores molles et avem). Now hares and birds were both attributes of Artemis.⁹⁰

A further illustration of the pursuit of a stag and its dedication to Artemis can be found in the Third Labour of Hercules--the capture of the Ceryneian Hind, which had brazen hooves and golden horns and was sacred to Artemis.⁹¹ After a fierce struggle, Hercules sacrificed this Ceryneian hind to Artemis on the summit of Mount Artemision.⁹²

⁹⁰ Cf. Cook, op. cit., vol. 11, part i, p. 152 n.; Pausanias 11. 22. 12 and again Cook, op. cit., loc. cit., p. 457. These animals would be associated with Artemis inasmuch as she represents the Cretan Πότνια Θηρών the "Lady of Wild Things," as Anacreon says:

Γουνόμακί σ', ἐλαφροβόλε
 ξάνκῃ παῖ Διός, ἀγρίων
 δέσποιν' Ἀρτεμι Θηρῶν.

Pindar, in Pythian 11. 7 refers to ποταμίας ἑδος Ἀρτεμιδος and Farnell, Pindar, A Commentary, Amsterdam, Hakkert, 1961, p. 120, comments: "The scholiasts on this passage state that on Ortugia was a temple of Artemis Ἀλφειῶα (this had once been her cult-name at Elis also, Paus. VI. 22. 10)... 'Ortugia,' named from quails, was said to be the earlier name of Delos, and both at Delos and Ephesos was associated with the birth of Artemis... There was an early association between the goddess and the quail; perhaps it was her incarnation." And Nilsson, op. cit., p. 27, mentions that the epiphany of a god into a bird was a legacy from Minoan religion.

⁹¹ Cf. Apollod. 11. v. 3 χρυσόκερως, Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὰ. The Hind is said to have borne the inscription "Taygete dedicated (me) to Artemis." See Pindar, Olymp. 11. 29 (53) sq., with the Scholiast and the comments of Farnell, op. cit., p. 27: "on a black-figured Attic vase, Artemis is seen receiving or claiming the hind (Gaz. Archéol., 1876, pl. ix)... [Taygete's] name is probably that of an old-pre-Hellenic divinity, perhaps Artemis or one akin to her... the mysterious hind might be an animal form of the goddess herself."

⁹² Apollod., loc. cit.; Callim., h. to Artem., 100 sqq.

Yet another myth concerning Artemis and the chase is that of the Boeotian Orion, a hunter and the handsomest man alive. When both his eyes were put out by Oenopion, he wandered to the farthest Ocean where Eos fell in love with him and persuaded her brother Helios to restore his sight. Sailing on to Crete, Orion met Artemis, who shared his love of the chase. Some say⁹³ that Artemis slew him with her arrows on the island of Ortygia, where the sun rose, after he had offered violence to Opis, one of Artemis' Hyperborean priestesses. Kerényi says that Opis was but another name for Artemis herself.⁹⁴ According to others,⁹⁵ Apollo persuades Artemis to kill him, fearing lest his sister might succumb to the handsome hunter's charms. She afterwards raised him up as a constellation and his spirit still hunts in the asphodel-fields.⁹⁶

In Graves we read of the hypothesis that the chase of the Hind, or Roe, symbolized the pursuit of Wisdom, since it was sacred to Artemis, Goddess of Illumination.⁹⁷ Thus

93 Ibid., l. iv. 5.

94 Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 204, and see Nilsson, op. cit., p. 37: "The Hyperborean Virgins are closely connected with the tree cult, with Artemis and Apollo."

95 Hyginus, Astron., 2. 34.

96 Homer, Ody. XI. 310.

97 Graves, White Goddess, p. 271 sqq. It would hardly do to build one's entire interpretation on the significance of the Hind according to Graves' hypothesis. However,

we might have in the association of Artemis with a hind a symbol of Wisdom coupled with Wisdom apotheosized and spiritually conceived. All three myths referred to above deal with the relations of the sacred king with the Threefold Great Goddess. It would then seem that in this poem Propertius could be stating his belief that the poet's worship of the Goddess impels him to his death (i.e. from the considerations of the mundane, un-poetic world) and in death is made wise. At least that is what is implied were he truly to take up the "sacra Dianae" and affix the horns of the Hind of Wisdom to Artemis' sacred pine-tree. It remains to consider the poem's relation to the artistic credo of the poet as a whole and the central position it seems to have been accorded, occurring as it does almost at the center of Book 11; for after Book Two the character of the poetry changes and one notices a distinct

it seems fairly obvious that the pursuit of the Hind did represent something beyond its mere surface meaning. Pindar (Olym. 111. 25-32) gives a very mystical version of the chase of the Hind. He makes Hercules pursue it in the land of the Hyperboreans, a land closely connected with Artemis (see Nilsson, op. cit., p. 37), to the home of the Blessed, where Artemis kindly welcomes him. This version may well have arisen as an explanation of some folk-ritual, such as the consecration of stags to Artemis, as Farnell suggests (op. cit., p. 28). Pindar certainly was cognizant of Arcadian folk-lore. Yet it could as well be symbolic of the nature of the Hind and the reason for its pursuit, in that the capture of the Hind of Artemis was the capture of Artemis herself in her guise of Phosphoros, or Bringer of Illumination, and it is this motif which Propertius wishes to stress when he speaks of the hunting of stags. A lovely Oriental myth (see Grimm, op. cit., vol. 11, p. 744) speaks of Night as a timid roe which is routed by the claws of the lion of Day. In this sense the myth could be then interpreted as Day (i.e. Illumination, Intelligence) overcoming Night (i.e. Ignorance, Death). But cf. Pound's poem, The White Stag, in which the Stag is identified with Fame.

difference in tone, theme and temperament which marks the two final **Books** from those preceding. This consideration will be conducted in a subsequent chapter; for now it suffices to note the direction in which the poet appears to be moving.

2.9 The Inspirational Muse: ll. ii.

An amazingly effective and unique example of the identification of Cynthia with Artemis is to be found at El. ll. ii. Here Propertius, alone of all the ancients, has recorded intact the account of the love-affair between Hermes and the goddess Brimo.⁹⁸ The poem is a relatively short one, comprising only sixteen lines: the poet begins by wondering aloud at the beauty of Cynthia (l. 3) and after describing her (ll. 5-6) he gives exempla of her loveliness by recalling the beauty of Juno (l. 6) and the stateliness of Pallas (ll. 7-8). He next mentions the seizure of Ischomache⁹⁹ at the wedding of Pirithous by the Centaurs, on which Boucher comments:

ici encore il s'agit d'une variante rare des noces de Pirithoüs, car le nom d'Ischomaché est inconnu par ailleurs, et cette variante qui insiste sur le rapt de la belle, est très vraisemblablement elle aussi une variante picturale de la légende.¹⁰⁰

Then follows the account of the affair between Hermes and Brimo (ll. 11-12):

⁹⁸ The identification of Brimo rests upon the emendation of Turnebus, made in the 16th century, and is accepted by virtually all modern editors of Propertius.

⁹⁹ An ἄπας λεγόμενον, for a discussion of which see Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. 194, and Enk, Commentary on Book 2, p. 51.

¹⁰⁰ Boucher, op. cit., p. 373.

Mercurio sacris fertur Boebeidos undis
virginem Brimo composuisse latus¹⁰¹

("and it is said that by the sacred waters of
lake Boebeis Brimo entwined Mercury with her
maiden thighs.")

Butler and Barber¹⁰² identify Brimo as a chthonian
goddess, worshipped at Pherae in Thessaly, and identified
with Hecate, Artemis and Persephone. According to one account
(Tzet., ad Lyc. 1176 and 1180), Hermes sought to ravish her,
but she snorted and he desisted. However, Hecate is said
(Tzet. ad Lyc. 680) to have borne him three daughters, while
lake Boebeis is not far from Pherae, with which not only Brimo
but Hermes is associated (Callim. Fr. 117). P.J. Enk also
has an informative note on Brimo:

Brimo: ingeniosa emendatio Turnebi...pro primo.
Brimo est eadem atque Hecate, cf. Apoll. Rhod., 111.
861 *ἐπτάκι δὲ Βριμὴν κουροτρόφον ἑγκλέσασα /*
Βριμὴν νυκτεπτόλον, χθονίην, ἐνέσσειν ἔνδοσαν... Brimo
etiam nomen Proserpinae erat, cf. Lycophron 698
Ὀφειμονὺς τ' ἄλτος, οὐδ' ἄλ' ἑκείνης ...Apud Servium
ad Vergilii Aen IV. 577 legimus: 'nonnulli tamen
quattuor Mercurios tradunt, unum Caeli et Diei
filium, amatorem Proserpinae.' Praeterea Hecate
eadem esse putabatur atque Artemis Pheraea (cf.
Callim. Hymn. Art. 259 *χαίρε φεραίη*), cf. schol.
ad Lycophronis, Alexandriam 1180: *ἡ αὐτὴ δὲ δηλονότι*
τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι ἢ ἑκείνῃ. Mercurium autem cum
Diana rem habuisse docet Cicero, De natura deorum
111. 23. 60 'Cupido primus Mercurio et Diana prima
natus dicitur.'¹⁰³

101 Enk's text. Butler and Barber have:

+Mercurio satis + fertur Boebeidos undis
virgineum + primo + composuisse latus.

102 Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. 194.

103 Enk, Commentary to Book 2, p. 52.

In conjunction with that excellent note, one may also refer to Kerényi who, referring to this passage in Propertius, says:

An ancient story is told of the love-affair of a goddess of Lake Boibeis in northern Greece. In the local dialect this name meant 'the Lake of Phoibe.' The goddess herself was also called Brimo, 'the strong one.' According to this story, the details of which were kept secret, her lover was Hermes, a phallic god who in ancient times was simply a phallus.¹⁰⁴

Later along, on p. 171, Kerényi continues:

...it was told that when the god beheld the goddess--sometimes called Persephone, sometimes Brimo--his natural impulses were shamelessly excited...When it is also stated that Hermes begat Eros by Artemis, this is again the same story.

It is important to notice here the triune nature of the goddess Brimo--sometimes Persephone, sometimes Artemis, sometimes Hecate--and her identification with the Moon ("Lake of Phoibe"). Propertius has here incorporated this apparently little-known tale wondrously well into his scheme of things. The cataloguing nature of his exempla in this poem is working toward a climax, first comparing Cynthia's body with the majesty of a Juno, her stateliness and gait with that of Minerva, her ravishing beauty with that of Ischomache and finally, the most telling comparison of all, her seductively virginal appeal which so prompted Hermes to love Brimo.

¹⁰⁴ Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 143.

In this last and most potent of the exempla Propertius' implications seem clear: the Brimo-Hermes affair belongs to Apollo's "pastoral period" in Thessaly, during which time Hermes invented the stringed lyre which he later presented to Apollo. Thus Hermes is said to be the inventor of poetry and is a valid symbol for the poet. According to the Brimo legend, Hermes begets Eros from Artemis and so Propertius uses this as a symbol of the procreative power of his poetry upon Cynthia, whom he identifies with Artemis. Cynthia has attributes of all the goddesses mentioned in the poem, but it is her identification with Artemis-Brimo which elicits the spectacular reaction from Hermes (i.e. the poet himself).¹⁰⁵ Only she, as inspirational Muse, can stimulate the fertile flow of his creativity. It is curious that of the symbols either directly or indirectly expressed in this poem (e.g. the poetic lyre, the comparison with Minerva, Juno and Venus, and the artistic endowments of Cynthia) nearly all are echoed in Book One, in exactly the same placement as is this poem, namely the second poem of the Book. In l. ii. 27-30 occur the following lines:

cum tibi praesertim Phoebus sua carmina donet
 Aoniamque libens Calliopea lyram,
 unica nec desit iucundis gratia verbis,
 omnia quaeque Venus, quaeque Minerva probat.

¹⁰⁵ Perhaps the legend represents in part an aetiological account of the ithyphallic herm, but one rather suspects that Propertius here wants to stress only the symbolic implications of the union of Brimo and Hermes.

("Since to you above all Phoebus grants the power of his song, and Calliope gladly gives the music of the Muses; nor are you without a singularly ingratiating way with words: you incorporate all the charms of Venus tempered with the chastity of Minerva.")

Here, exactly one Book later, he takes a further step, and symbolically unites with her through the power of his verse to produce pure Eros. In a much more passionately explicit and poetic way Propertius identifies Cynthia with the Artemis triad and expresses the power she has to influence his creativity. Here clearly the physical act of love is symbolic of the creative act of producing verse and Cynthia, who is identified by the poet with Artemis-Brimo, is almost totally de-humanized and recreated by the poet as pure spirit --the illuminating Moon-goddess who makes his face paler than her own.¹⁰⁶ This is indeed a remarkable example of the inspirational effect Cynthia has upon the mind of Propertius and the felicitous ease with which the poet is able to present a distillation of his emotion into pure poetry. This working of what Boucher terms the "tempérament visuel" is active throughout all of Propertius, but hardly anywhere so perfectly expressed as here.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. l. i. 22 "et facite illa meo palleat ore magis."

2.10 An Attempt at an Interpretation of lll. xv.

Book lll. xv affords an even more complete and definite separation by Propertius of the human Cynthia on the one hand and the Artemis-Cynthia on the other. In this poem the two identities have become totally separated in the poet's mind and the Cynthia of his youthful passion, the delight of his flesh, seems but a shadow of her former existence. Indeed the poet has by now made an almost complete identification of Cynthia with Artemis. She now becomes a pure creation of poetry, the symbol of Woman rather than woman herself. On the surface, the poem relates the myth of Dirce and Antiope. It is a poem of pure myth, told in the Hellenistic manner, which if viewed in the light of poetic symbolism yields a provocative interpretation. Propertius might conceivably intend the poem to be a warning to the mortal Cynthia not to attempt to interfere with his pure poetic pursuit of the Muse, the divine Cynthia.

As Propertius recounts the myth, Dirce the wife of Lycus is jealous of Antiope, whom she suspects of having slept with her husband, who is also Antiope's uncle. As a result, Dirce cruelly ill-treats Antiope for many years. Up to this point in the story Propertius entrusts the narration to the reader's recall, beginning "in medias res" with a description of the hardships Antiope underwent under Dirce.

He then describes how she finally escapes from the prison in which she had been immured and flees to the shepherd's hut on Mount Cithaeron, where Lycus had exposed the twins born to her many years before when she had been seduced by Zeus. Her sons, Amphion and Zethus, refuse to recognize her, until at last a mother's tears prevail and the twins set off in search of Dirce, whom they tie to the horns of a wild bull.¹⁰⁷

A.B. Cook¹⁰⁸ records that a variant tradition exemplified, for example, in Lactantius Placidus' Gloss on Statius¹⁰⁹ and which emphasizes the analogy between Europa and Antiope, makes the latter, like the former, seduced by Zeus in the form of a bull. He also quotes Pausanias IX. 17. 6 in stating that the constellation Taurus is connected with Antiope as it was connected with Europa.¹¹⁰ Antiope's tomb was also honoured when the sun was in the sign of Taurus and late authorities make her a priestess of Helios.¹¹¹ Antiope,

107 Cf. Apollod. 111. v. 5; and Paus. 11. vi. 2; Hyg. Fab. 7. 8, for variants. Cf. as well with the Tyro-Sidero myth, which this one closely resembles.

108 Cook, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 734 sqq.

109 Lact. Plac., in Stat. Theb., 7. 189: (sc. Antiope) a Lyco expulsa per Dircen a Jove in taurum verso compressa est, unde Zethus et Amphion feruntur progeniti.

110 Cook, op. cit., loc. cit., p. 549.

111 Kephalion, frag. 6.

therefore, stood in some relation to the Sun. Cook further quotes O. Gruppe¹¹² in conjecturing that Antiope was a moon goddess, for Antiope means "she who faces" another, and Nonnus,¹¹³ for example, speaks of

καὶ φάεθων ἰσόμοιρος ἔην ἀντώπιδι Μηνῇ

("Phaëthon equalling the full-faced Moon")

Cook cites as well W.H. Roscher,¹¹⁴ who regards Antiope as a "moon-heroine, draws attention to her vaunted beauty, to the names of her father *Νυκτεύς*, the 'Nocturnal,' and his brother *Λύκος*, the 'Light,' and her connection with her twins Amphion and Zethes, the Theban Dioskouroi." They appear to be the familiar royal twins, borne by the Moon-goddess.

In addition, Graves records a rather interesting hypothesis,¹¹⁵ to the effect that Antiope, emerging joyfully from out her dungeon and followed by the scowling Dirce, recalls Kore's annual reappearance in Hecate's company. This identification of Antiope with Kore is interesting in this connection for it allows a consideration of the symbolically

112 Cook, loc. cit., p. 738.

113 Nonn., Dion. 6.76.

114 Cook, loc. cit., p. 738.

115 Graves, Greek Myths, vol. 1, sec. 76, n. 1, p. 258.

compelling Orphic interpretation of the Kore myth. According to this Orphic version, Zeus consorted with his own mother Rhea (or Demeter), both in the form of snakes, and had by her a horned, four-eyed, two-faced daughter Persephone (or Kore), with whom he, again in snake-form, united and had a horned babe, the chthonian Dionysos or Zagreus,¹¹⁶ the "Great Hunter." Now Kerényi¹¹⁷ states that Persephone, Demeter and Hecate are the Goddess in triad, and describes her three forms as: Maiden (παῖς), nymph or fulfilled woman (τελειή) and woman of sorrows (χρήρα): in Phigalia in her third aspect, she was called the Black One (μέλαινα). Every maiden then contains, as it were, all her descendants--an infinite series of mothers and daughters in one:

Δήμητρος
Ἑλευσινίας
καὶ κόρης,
καὶ γυναικός.¹¹⁸

Finally, in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter (ll. 8-16) it is mentioned that the narcissus was made to grow in order to be a snare for Kore. Now the twelfth-century Byzantine

¹¹⁶ See Cook, vol. 11, part ii, p. 1029, where he quotes Orphics, frag. 195; as well as Ovid, Metam. 6. 114.

¹¹⁷ Jung and Kerényi, op. cit.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 181.

writer Konstantinos Monasses¹¹⁹ assigned to each of the seven planets its appropriate metal and plant: in this series Selene ("Moon") is assigned the narcissus, and her animal is given as the cow. It thus appears that Kore is the Maiden New Moon, or Moon in its first phase, and as such is identified with Artemis.¹²⁰

The poem, then, may be taken as a mythological allegory twice removed. Antiope (Kore) disappears underground and emerges, accompanied by Dirce (Hecate), after having given birth to Zagreus-Dionysos.¹²¹ As has been

119 Cook, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 625.

120 Cf., for example, the 3rd Vatican Mythog., 8. 3 "Haec [sc. Diana] namque est secundum non paucos Diana Juno Proserpina." as well as the 2nd Vatican Mythog. 15 "Ipsa [sc. Proserpina] est enim Luna in caelo, Diana in terra, Proserpina in erebo." One may also cf. Servius ad Verg. Ecl., 111. 26: "novimus eandem esse Proserpinam quam Dianam." Hecate was also said to be a daughter of Demeter ($\Delta\eta\omega\tau\epsilon\rho\eta$) by Zeus (Callim. Fr., 466). The identification of Artemis-Hecate was made in Ephesus (Trypanis in his Loeb ed. of Callimachus, Aetia, p. 212).

121 All of this is, of course, mere conjecture. I have nowhere found (save in Graves) the connection made between Dirce-Antiope and Hecate-Kore. All the poet may be attempting to do (in addition to expressing the duality which Cynthia represents to him) is hinted at in Pausanias IX. 17. 6-7 and X. 32. 10-11: here Pausanias recalls how Dionysos was angered at Antiope over the killing of Dirce, who was a Bacchanante. The god therefore drove Antiope mad, causing her to wander all over Greece. Propertius may be merely telling Cynthia to be kinder to his former love, else he will gain revenge through his poetry (cf. Dionysos as symbolic of poetry and poets). Alternately, the supposed rift between Cynthia and Lycinna could be a mere pretext, in good Alexandrian fashion, for introducing the myth of Dirce and Antiope.

pointed out above,¹²² Augustan poets tended to identify Dionysos with the poet and his functions. Propertius here may be making an elaborate poetical statement regarding the direction of his art, as well as furnishing an allegory on the dual nature of his Cynthia and the difficulty he has in keeping the two separate. He may also be trying to illustrate the efforts he is making to shake off the darkling influence of his mortal Cynthia and become, like a resurrected Dionysos, the pure poet. If he is devoted enough in her service he may be born again through her and at last achieve a true, poetic immortality. The poem at least objectifies the actual duality which Cynthia has taken in the poet's mind and presumably his efforts to identify with only the Moon-goddess aspect of this duality.

122 Cf. p. 53 and Prop. 1.11. 17.

2.11 The Artemis-Identification in a
Series of Poems.

Turning now from an exclusive consideration of particular poems, attention shall be given to the Artemis identification theme as sustained throughout a series of poems. To even the most cursory reader of Propertius, it will soon become quite evident that the poet has a special predilection for the myth of Io. She is mentioned no less than six times¹²³ and each time in connection with mention of Cynthia. In l. iii. 20 he says:

Argus ut ignotis cornibus Inachidos

("as Argus [gazed upon] the strange horns of the daughter of Inachus.")

As he gazes upon the sleeping Cynthia he compares his all-encompassing, devouring vision to that of Argus as he stared at the form of Io, changed into a heifer. The identification made in this poem between Cynthia and Artemis has already been mentioned above.¹²⁴ Later, in ll. xxviii. 17 he has:

Io versa caput primos mugiverat annos

("Io, with the head of a cow, mooed in her youth")

¹²³ Prop. 1. iii. 20; ll. xxviii. 17; xxx. 29; xxxiii. 4 & 7; lll. xxii. 35.

¹²⁴ See Chap. 2.6.

Together with Io in this poem he also mentions Ino, Callisto, Andromeda and Semele, all of whom had astral connections, having been turned into constellations and all of whom, as the poet says, achieved greater glory after their metamorphoses:

sepultura facta beata tua (l. 26)

("made immortal by your interment")

and the poem could be construed as Propertius' continuing effort to make a clear, neat distinction between the physical and spiritual aspects of Cynthia; once separated and purified, his poetic devotion of his Muse will be all the more true and faithful. Like the great goddesses of legend, Cynthia will have to undergo a change, be spiritually conceived through his verse, before she attains to immortality. Then, at ll. xxx. 29 he has:

ut Semela est combustus, ut est deperditus Io

("how he was fired for love of Semele, and mad over Io.")

This is a very important poem, for in it Propertius is inviting Cynthia to come and dwell with him on Helicon, i.e. to become pure Muse, and says that there she will hear about Semele and Io, who were both deified by Jove. The distinction between the physical and the spiritual Cynthia is now almost completed in his mind. He must succeed in making this distinction, of identifying her totally with Artemis, for, as he states in the last line of the poem:

nam sine te nostrum non valet ingenium

("since without you for inspiration my poetry is nothing")

Next, in ll. xxxiii. 4 & 7, he writes:

Nilo quae sacra tepente
misit matronis Inachis Ausoniis

("the rites which the daughter of Inachus sent to Italian matrons from the warm waters of the Nile.")

In this poem Cynthia appears to be completely identified with Io, for in l. 2 he states:

Cynthia iam noctes est operata decem

("Cynthia has vowed ten nights of devotion")

i.e. she has devoted herself to Isis, later identified with

Io. However, in ll. 7-8, he remarks:

tu certe Iovis occultis in amoribus, Io,
sensisti multas quid sit inire vias.

("you at least, Io, fresh from Jove's secret embraces, knew what it was to wander many paths.")

The implication here seems to be that Io would not be expected to be cruel to lovers because of her own sufferings from love, and Propertius is remonstrating with Cynthia for devoting herself so excessively to Isis. A tentative answer might be that he does not want Cynthia to be identified with the Moon as Isis, but as Artemis-Cynthia. Isis has many names and attributes¹²⁵ and Propertius wants a strict identification

125 Cf. l. 6 "quaecumque illa fuit."

with Cynthia-Artemis-Diana.¹²⁶ The reason he gives is that Isis is too Egyptian, too foreign:

an tibi non satis est fuscis Aegyptus alumnis? (l. 15)

("or are the brown-skinned Egyptians not enough for you?")

Propertius, moreover, wants "Itala per Graios orgia ferre choros" (lll. i. 4), and this total identification with Isis here in ll. xxxiii is perhaps an intermediate step towards a complete separation of the physical and spiritual Cynthia and is therefore appropriate here for the end of Book ll. He has succeeded in making an intermediate identification with the Moon-goddess, but the complete Cynthia-Artemis transformation has not yet been effected. This remains for Book lll¹²⁷ and, once accomplished, he states:

ter faciamus iter (l. 22)

("we will make love three times")

using the symbolic number three, the number of the Moon-goddess Artemis-Cynthia. It must be stressed at this point that Propertius has no aversion for the Io-myth, but solely for her identification with Isis. Since Isis enjoyed a particularly orgiastic cult in Rome, frequented mostly by women,

126 Cf. Apuleius, Metam. xi. 22 "dea multinominis." That this is a characteristic of Diana as well can be inferred from Catullus xxxiv. 21-2 "sis quocumque tibi placet sancta nomine."

127 Cf. the discussion of lll. xv supra and see Chap. 2.10.

this could be but another illustration of Propertius' attempts at transforming the grosser nature of the mortal Cynthia into the pure and idealized conception of the Greek Moon-goddess Io and at steering her away from the more vulgar popular conception of the myth. It could equally be an illustration of the conflict waging within the poet himself and an attempt at conceptualizing his struggle to keep the dual nature of Cynthia distinct and not to succumb to the Isis-influence and thereby to lose his creativity.

But what would be the most likely explanation of the poet's preference for the Io myth seems to lie in the symbolism expressed by the fertilizing union of Zeus with the "wandering moon-cow"¹²⁸ Io. In the Third Vatican Mythographer is found the following:

Agenor, rex Lydiae, qui et in Tyro et Sidone regnavit, filiam habuit mirificae formae, nomine Europam, quam Iuppiter in specie candidi tauri rapuit. Unde postea in signum honoris taurus translatus est in caelum, et ex eo factum signum quod dicitur Taurus. Alii dicunt, quod fuit Vacca, in cuius forma fuit Io, filia Inachi fluvii, quae translata est in caelum in signum amoris Jovis. Unde Ovidius in Metamorphos:

Nunc dea linigera colitur celeberrima turba
Et libro de Fastis ait:

Vacca sit an taurus, non est cognoscere promptum;
quia prior pars videtur, posterior vero non videtur.
Secundum physicam sol dicitur esse in Tauro, quia tunc incipiunt labores tauri; vel quia sicut taurus per cornua fortior est, ita sol tunc incipit esse ferventior.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 112.

¹²⁹ 3rd Vatican Mythog., 5. 2.

Concerning this zodiacal sign of Taurus, Ovid explains what occurs under its influence:

deposita sequitur taurus feritate iuvencam,
quem toti saltus, quem nemus omne tremit.

hoc alii signum Phariam dixere iuvencam,
quae bos ex homine est, ex bove facta dea.¹³⁰

("having put aside its wildness, the bull follows the heifer, he ~~whom~~ all the marshes and every grove fears.

Others say that this sign is the Pharian heifer, who instead of a human being is a cow, and from a cow became a goddess.")

All of this recalls Aeschylus, Suppl., 300-1:

*οὐκ ὄνι πελάζει Ζεὺς ἐπ' εὐκράϊω βοῖ;
φαίν, πρέποντα βοὺλόφω τείρω δέμας.*

("and when a horned cow [sc. Io] did not Zeus approach her? That is what they say, in form like a bull eager for its mate.")

Now from this union emerged Epaphos, whom Herodotus¹³¹ identified with Apis, the Egyptian divine Bull, and whom Kerényi styles "the Dionysos-like son of Zeus and the cow-shaped Io."¹³² The symbolic direction which all of this would appear to be taking is that by the divine "caress" (i.e. Epaphos) of his verse, Propertius will immortalize Cynthia and from their union will emerge the Dionysos-like figure of pure poetry, eternal and everlasting.

¹³⁰ Ovid, Fasti, iv. 103-4 and v. 619-20.

¹³¹ Herod. 2. 153.

¹³² Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 254 and see Diod. Sic., 3. 74. 1.

All of the foregoing, of course, wants clarification. Io was a priestess of Hera¹³³ at Argos, and is usually said to be the daughter of Inachus. Zeus loved her and to conceal her from Hera he changed her into a heifer. Hera asked for the heifer, which Zeus could hardly refuse, and she set Argus to watch over it. On his being killed by Hermes, Hera plagued Io with a gadfly, which drove her out of the country. After long wanderings she came to Egypt, where Zeus restored her.¹³⁴

The Argives worshipped the moon as a cow, because of the horned new moon, and associated three colours with it: white for the new moon, red for the full moon, and black for the waning moon. U. Pestalozza says:

Nè si dimentichi la tipica apparente affinità tra la Luna e la donna, suggerita dal loro comune carattere corporeo di rigonfiamento e di rilassamento legato nella donna ai fenomeni della gravidanza, del parto, della monata del latte, davanti ai quali il maschio intuì quella posizione di privilegio e di prestigio, in cui è da riconoscere la ragione e la giustificazione prima dell' assetto matriarcale.¹³⁵

Hera had much to do with cows. Fourteen times¹³⁶ in the Iliad occurs the phrase 'cow-eyed lady Hera.' One may also compare the Ovidian story that when the gods fled before

133 Cf. Apollod., ll. i. 3 *ταύτην ἑργαζόμενην τῆς Ἥρας ἔχουσαν.*

134 See also Ovid, *Metam.*, l. 588 sqq.

135 Pestalozza, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

136 See Cook, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 444.

Typhaeus into Egypt, Hera became a snow-white cow.¹³⁷ In Cos a choice heifer was sacrificed to Hera Argeia, Heleia, and Basileia.¹³⁸

Io kallithyessa is constantly described as a priestess of Hera, but Lycophron¹³⁹ calls her Boōpis, as if she were Hera.

137 Ovid, Metam., V. 330.

138 This of course suggests the triad nature of Hera-worship and Pausanias preserves an account of her threefold aspect of Maiden, Woman and Widow, much like the triple aspect of Demeter at Eleusis (see p. 85 above): In Paus. VIII. 22. 2 is found:

ἐν δὲ τῇ Στυμφάλῳ τῇ ἀρχαία Τημενὸν φασιν οἰκῆσαι τὸν Πελασγὸν καὶ Ἥραν ἐπὶ τοῦ Τημενὸν τραφῆναι τοῦτου καὶ αὐτὸν ἰερά τῇ θεᾷ τρία ἰδρύσασθαι καὶ ἐπικλήσεις τρεῖς ἐπὶ αὐτῇ θεοῦναι. Πάριθ' ἔτι οὕτῃ Παιδί, γημμένην δὲ τῷ Διὶ ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὴν Τελείαν, διενεχθεῖσαν δὲ ἐφ' ὅτῳ δὴ ἐς τὸν Δία καὶ ἐπανήκουσαν ἐς τὴν Στυμφάλον ὠνόμασεν ὁ Τημενος Χῆραν.

Since the ancients made the identification of Hera with Isis and that of Isis with Demeter (see below), it is not difficult to see here a probable progression of Propertius' thought, leading up to a linkage with Artemis in her guise of horned New Moon; this can best be seen from Pausanias VIII. 37. 4: τοῦ

Θρόνου δὲ ἐκατέρωθεν Ἄρτεμις μὲν παρὰ τὴν Δήμητρα ἐστήκεν ἑμπεχόμενη, δόρυμα ἐλάφου καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων φασγέτραν ἔχουσα, ἐν δὲ δράκοντα δυνό.

Notice here the symbolic representation of her triple aspect: the quiver with the arrows of Death, the torch and the snakes representing her chthonic character. A little farther on, Pausanias also states that the Arcadians claim the 'Mistress' (Δεσποίνα) was the daughter, not of Leto, but of Demeter and Horse Poseidon (VIII. 37. 9). Thus there is a definite linkage process at work here: Hera → Io → Isis → Demeter → Artemis.

139 Lyc. Alex., 1292.

The equation of Io with Isis, due to the cow-form common to them both, led to a further identification of Io with the Moon. For Isis, as queen of heaven and wife of the Sun, or Serapis, was by later Greeks regarded as the Egyptian counterpart of Hera. Hence Io, once identified with Hera, must be the Moon as well, and the Moon-goddess came to be described as Boōpis, like the Argive Hera, and was sometimes represented as actually bovine or horned.¹⁴⁰

Diodorus Siculus says that the Greeks transferred the origin of Isis to Argos by means of the myth of Io.¹⁴¹ The mating of Zeus as solar Bull with the lunar Cow is evidenced in the myths of Io, Europa and Pasiphaë, as well as in his union with Hera herself. It is to be noticed that Hera herself did not disdain the title Europa.¹⁴² The bull which ravished Europa was tricoloured, like the lunar Cow, and its breath smelt of crocus.¹⁴³ Identically, Io had been turned into a tricoloured cow, sometimes white, sometimes black, sometimes the colour of the violet (ion).¹⁴⁴ All of

¹⁴⁰ Cf., for example, Pausanias VI. 24. 6.

¹⁴¹ Diod. Sic. 1. 24. 8.

¹⁴² Hesychius, *Εὐρωπαϊκή Ἥρα*, quoted by Cook, vol. 1, p. 532, n. 9.

¹⁴³ Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 109.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 112.

this seems to indicate a relationship between Io, Europe, Isis and Artemis. This conjecture is further strengthened by a reference to Artemis as Tauropolos, i.e. "Bull-hunting"¹⁴⁵ and the fact that in the fifth century B.C. Heroditus learned from the Egyptians that Apollo (Horos) and Artemis (Boubastis) were children of Dionysos (Osiris) and Demeter (Isis), nursed and preserved by Leto. Accordingly Herodotus charges Aeschylus, who alone of the Greek poets had made Artemis a daughter of Demeter, with drawing from the same Egyptian source.¹⁴⁶ This, then, could be a way of stating that Demeter and Dionysos are older, prior aspects of Artemis and Apollo; that at first they were telluric deities before becoming astral ones.

One wonders, at the end of all this, whether Propertius might not be weaving a very subtle poetic metaphor throughout his first two books in which it is possible to see reflected his active attempts at making a clear distinction between his physical and spiritual conceptions of Cynthia. If indeed Io represents a prior chthonic manifestation of the later celestial Artemis, might not her appearance in the

¹⁴⁵ Cook, op. cit., vol. 11, part i, p. 729 in citing Dittenberger's Orient. Gr. Inscr., sel. no. 229, 69 ff.

¹⁴⁶ Herod. 2. 59. 156. Cf. Paus. VIII. 37. 6 and Aesch. Frag. 333. As for the association of Demeter with Isis, see Diod, Sic. 1. 13. 5; 25. 1-2; 96.5.

first two books be an indication of the progress of the poet in his realization of this ideal distinction? By contrast to the first two books, a completely different tone and mood is sensed in book three, in which Cynthia appears largely spiritual. The identification process, the transition from the physical to the purely poetic, seems almost complete here. And in the two instances where she does appear in book four (El. vii and viii), she is in the former seen in a dream, a spectre out of the past, a past which has died and been buried, while in the latter she is plainly a reminiscence, a fond and pleasant memory of a relationship which is no more.

It remains to consider perhaps the most obvious examples in Propertius' attempts to associate Cynthia with Artemis, and these are his several references to Diana. The first of these occurs at ll. xv. 15-16:

nudus et Endymion Phoebi cepisse sororem
dicitur et nudae concubisse deae.

("and it is said that the naked Endymion won
Apollo's sister and bedded with the goddess who
was likewise nude,")

Propertius is here celebrating the joys of love-making and attempts to persuade Cynthia that it is preferable to make love in the nude, as did the gods and goddesses. He then proceeds to link her with Helen and Artemis. Strictly speaking, the above-mention of the 'Phoebi sororem' refers to

Selene, and is one more confirmation of Propertius' attempt to identify Cynthia with Artemis and the Moon.¹⁴⁷ In

Pausanias V. i. 4 occurs the following:

τοῦ Ἐνδυμίωνος, Σελήνη φασὶν ἔφασκε ἦναι, καὶ
ὥς πεντήκοντες αὐτῇ γένοντο ἐκ τῆς πεντήκοντα.

("they say that Endymion loved Selene and that he had fifty daughters by her.")¹⁴⁸

Thus in a passage where he is clearly speaking to Cynthia, he compares her to Helen and to Selene, both of whom were manifestations of the Moon-goddess, with whom, as Ovid attests,¹⁴⁹ we are to identify Artemis. Again, on many occasions one is almost tempted to view the love-act in Propertius as symbolic of the creative process of poetry: in effect, to view him here as stating that he is engaged in re-shaping Cynthia into something more noble, into a goddess in fact, creating her anew in the image of a Helen or a Selene. He has not, as of ll. xv, yet fully succeeded, for she has to be completely denuded and then remoulded before final and complete identification with Artemis may

147 Cf. Homeric h. to Art., xxvii, ll. 13-14.

(sc. Ἀρτεμῖς) ἔρχεται ἐς μέγα δῶμα κασιγῆτι γαίῳ
φύλοιο, φάσκει Ἀπόλλωνος.

148 And cf. Apollod., l. i. 5-6: τοῦτον κάλλεα
δενεγκόντος ἡφασθη Σελήνη.

149 Ovid, Metam. XV. 196 'nec par aut eadem
nocturnae forma Dianae.'

be claimed.¹⁵⁰ Indeed the farther one goes in Propertius the more one comes to suspect that a great deal more of his work than has previously been remarked upon is in fact symbolic rather than autobiographical; indeed, J.P. Boucher¹⁵¹ warns against just such a too narrowly defined autobiographical interpretation of Propertius. His poetry seems to reflect not the successes and the reversals of some passionate Pilgrim's Progress so much as the journey of the soul of the artist, which leads inexorably to a kind of Joycean 'epiphany' of the creative spirit at the end of Book Three.

Further on, at ll. xxviii. 59-60, he has:

tu quoniam es, mea lux, magno dimissa periclo,
munera Dianae debita redde choros.

("and since you, my love, have escaped great danger,
give Diana a dance in payment of your vow.")

Cynthia has, ostensibly, just recuperated from an illness, and the poet is writing to thank Persephone for not having claimed Cynthia just yet. Perhaps too the poem might be seen as a symbolic statement made by the poet. Cynthia has passed the crisis, she has not died, she has survived the

¹⁵⁰ This "denuding" of Cynthia is, in fact, the subject of the whole of ll. xv.

¹⁵¹ J.P. Boucher, *op. cit.*, p. 402 sq. "Le roman de Properce et de Cynthia...n'existe donc que dans l'imagination du lecteur." Cf. also A.W. Allen, "Sunt qui Propertium Malint," in *Critical Essays on Roman Literature*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962, p. 121.

transition from the physical to the spiritual plane. Propertius includes a long list of goddesses--Iope, Tyro, Europa and Pasiphaë--¹⁵² all of whom are different manifestations of the Moon-goddess, and then concludes the list by commending Cynthia to Artemis, the final stage, it seems, in the list which he has presented. That the above names in the order given actually do seem to represent a graded list may be demonstrated: for the first named goddess, Iope, P.J. Enk notes:

Itali legunt Iole, quae fuit filia Euryti, regis Oechaliae quam Hercules amavit, sed Iope recte se habet.¹⁵³

and refers the reader to an article by U. Knoche, who writes:

...hat man den Namen Iope, der überliefert ist, beanstandet. Denn wen meint Properz damit? Gewiss nicht die Gemahlin des Theseus, sondern, indem er gang entlegene Gelehrsamkeit anklingen lässt, die des Aethiopenkönigs Kepheus, eine Schönheit aus dem Morgenlande.¹⁵⁴

Obviously, little is known of Iope; she is the daughter of Aeolus and the wife of Cepheus,¹⁵⁵ as well as probably being the eponymous heroine of Joppa.¹⁵⁶ Since she

152 ll. xxviii C, ll. 51-52.

153 P.J. Enk, Commentary on Book 2, p. 364.

154 U. Knoche, Miscellanea Properziana, 1957, pp. 55-56.

155 Cf. Stephanus Byzantius, sub voce, and see Conon, Narrat., 40.

156 Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. 241.

is the wife of the king of Ethiopia, in all possibility she is, as Knoche suggests, to be identified with the Dawn. This may be the more easily credited when it is remembered that Aeolus had seduced Thetis, who was Artemis' companion of the chase.¹⁵⁷

The identification is more sure in the case of Tyro.¹⁵⁸ She has been identified as the eponymous mother of the Tyrians and Tyrrhenians.¹⁵⁹ She was under the charge of her step-mother Sidero and was treated with great cruelty by her; in fact, her ill-treatment at the hands of Sidero recalls that of Antiope by Dirce, a myth which this one closely resembles.¹⁶⁰ When her twin sons Pelias and Neleus came to manhood, they avenged their mother's mistreatment by attacking Sidero. She, however, had taken refuge at Hera's altar, but Pelias cut her down in any event. It would not appear to be too much in error, therefore, to treat Tyro in much the same manner as Antiope, and see in her a type of New-Moon goddess, the bearer of the sacred astral twins.

157 Cf. Hyginus, Fab., 186.

158 For the legend, see Apollod. 1. 9. 8, as well as Diod. Sic., IV. 68.

159 Graves, Greek Myths, vol. 1, sec. 68, n. 2, p. 223.

160 See Chap. 2.10.

With the mention of Europa the identification with the Moon becomes much more definite, as does the progression of pictures Propertius is building up here. He has moved from a shadowy and probably pre-Hellenic attribute of the New-Moon goddess to a definite symbol of the Lunar Cow. This symbol, this connection is further enforced by the last-named member of his list, Pasiphaë--the Cretan Moon-goddess.¹⁶¹ Pausanias¹⁶² further adds that Pasiphaë was an epithet of Selene. From Pasiphaë equalling Moon it is but a short step in line 60 where he commends Cynthia into the care of Diana. Thus, here at the end of Book Two, Propertius seems to be indicating that Cynthia is ready for her final transformation into the Goddess of Light and Muse of poets.

The final reference to Diana per se occurs at ll. xxxii. The poem begins with the poet seemingly complaining about Cynthia's absence which he suspects really cloaks some amorous adventure. However, the poet ends up by praising Cynthia for acting like all the other goddesses and heroines of bygone times. In fact, one might say that he is praising her for finally becoming a goddess:

quod si tu Graias es tuque imitata Latinas
semper vive meo libera iudicio (ll. 61-62)

¹⁶¹ See Cook, vol. 1, pp. 521-22. Pasiphaë = 'she who gives light to all,' an obvious epithet of the Moon-goddess.

¹⁶² Pausanias, lll. 26. 1.

("but if you follow the ways of the Greek and Latin [goddesses], always be free of any disapproval of mine.")

He seems to be saying, here at the end of Book Two, that he has created her to be like a goddess, free of conventional restraints, and in his poetry and artistic judgment ('meo... iudicio') she will always remain so. Here then, when her apotheosis is nearing completion, he associates her with Diana Trivia, a goddess of Birth, Death and Resurrection, in order to effectively symbolize her transformation from mortal to divinity:

in nemus et Triviae lumina ferre deae. (l. 10)

("and carrying torches into the sacred grove in honour of Trivia.")

Propertius here makes a close association of Cynthia with Diana Trivia, representing her as actually involved in the worship of the goddess, presumably to offer thanks for her poetic rebirth. The ceremony to which Propertius makes reference is found in Ovid:

vallis Aricinae silva praecinctus opaca...
est lacus, antiqua religione sacer...etc.

("the vale of Aricia is surrounded by a shady wood... There is a lake there, held sacred through long-standing piety.")¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Ovid, Fasti, lll. 263-270 passim.

Near Aricia (about fifteen miles out of Rome, on the Via Appia) was a sacred spot which Servius¹⁶⁴ says was called the speculum Dianae and which is further defined by Strabo:

τὸ δ' Ἀρτεμίσιον ἔ' καλοῦσι νέμεσ' ἐκ τοῦ
ἐν Ἀριστερᾷ μέρους τῆς ὁδοῦ τοῦτ' ἐξ Ἀρκίας
ἀναβαίνουσιν.

("The grove on the part of the road to the left of those coming from Aricia is called the Artemisium.")¹⁶⁵

Hecate was often identified with Diana and Luna, as a dea triformis, and Artemis was also called Hecate.¹⁶⁶ A.B. Cook¹⁶⁷ describes a fresco in Pompeii, in the centre of which is a sacred tree with a gateway erected over it and a statue of Artemis (or Hecate) holding torches beneath it. He further states¹⁶⁸ that Diana's temple at Nemi was duplicated by her temple at Aricia, and Kerényi states¹⁶⁹ that

164 Servius ad Aen., VII. 516.

165 Strabo, V. 12 (239).

166 Cf. Orph. Frag. 188.

167 Cook, op. cit., vol. 11, part i, p. 184, n. 4.

168 Ibid., p. 420, n. 1.

169 Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 36; see also Aristoph. The Frogs, ll. 1361-4:

σὺ δ' αὖ Διὸς Διπύρους ἀνέχουσα
λαμπράσας ὀφρυγίας χερσὶν ἑκάτα παράφηνον
ἐς Γλύκῃς, ὅπως ἂν
εὐεχέμεσθαι φάρασιν.

Artemis and Hecate were identified in Attic cult as early as the 5th century B.C. Cf. Corp. Inscr. Att. 1. 208 and Aesch. Suppl., 675 sqq:

ἄλλους εὐχόμελλ' ἑαί,
Ἄρτεμιν δ' ἑκάταν θυναι-
κῶν λόχους ἐφορεύειν.

Hecate used to appear carrying her torches as Moon-goddess. The Trivia or Hecate being dealt with here is clearly no bogey who haunts lonely roads at night and to whom Shakespeare's three Weird Sisters do homage. Rather, this sacred goddess was the Titaness, the almighty threefold goddess described in Hesiod's Theogony as follows:

ἥ δ' ὑποκυσαμένη ἑκάλτη τέκε, τὴν περὶ πάντων
 Ζεὺς Κρονίδης τίμησε: πόρεν δὲ οἱ ἄγλαα δῶρα,
 μοῖραν ἔχειν γαίης τε καὶ ἀστερόεντος οὐρανόθεν, ἑμμορσε τιμῆς
 ἥ δ' ἐκάλει ἀστερόεντος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἑμμορσε τιμῆς
 ἀθανάτοισι τε θεοῖσι τετυμένη ἐστὶ μάλιστ' αἶσα.
 ("and she [sc. Asteria] conceived and bore Hecate,
 whom Zeus the son of Cronos honoured above all and
 gave her splendid gifts--to share the earth and
 barren sea, to have honour as well in the starry
 sky and to have great honour among the deathless
 gods.")

Hecate, it seems, being honoured in all three places--earth, sky and sea--would be the original Triple-goddess, so great that even Zeus himself honoured her as supreme. It would appear significant that Propertius casts Cynthia--with her torch in the sacred grove at Aricia--in the role of Hecate, the Threefold Goddess, as he approaches the end of Book Two and his identification process finally nears completion. Books Three and Four present an entirely different tone and approach. It would appear almost that Cynthia has

170 Hesiod, Theog., ll. 411-415.

ceased to be mortal and that Propertius has succeeded in rendering her entirely spiritual. Indeed, in ll. xxiv B, the final poem of Book Two, occur the lines:

Cynthia quin vivet¹⁷¹ versu laudata Properti,
hos inter si me ponere Fama volet. (ll. 93-94)

("and Cynthia too, praised in Propertian verse, shall be immortal should Fate consent to place me in their number.")

The poet is confident that Cynthia will achieve the immortality of Leucadia, Lesbia, Quintilia and Lycoris. The apotheosis is complete.

¹⁷¹ This is an emendation of the traditional quin etiam and is favoured by Camps (p. 23⁴ of his edition of Book Two) and Barber (Miscellanea Properziana 1957, p. 22) and see Enk, Commentary on Book 11, p. 466, for an excellent note on the emendation, toward which he leans very heavily: "Haec Barberi coniectura et ingeniosa et veri simillima," he says.

CHAPTER THREE

THE METHOD OF PROPERTIUS

3.1 The 'Ars Tenuis.'

The principles of poetic methodology, whereby Propertius adapts the form of his elegies to suit the content of his poetic credo, is aptly stated by Callimachus,¹ the man whose art form Propertius expressly claimed to admire and imitate:²

Ἀπόλλων εἶπεν ὁ μοι Λύκιος·
... ἄοιδε, τὸ μὲν υἱόος ὅτε πάχιστον
ἔρῃαι, τήν Μοῦσαν δ' ὡγαλὲς λεπταλέην.

("for Lycian Apollo said to me: '...singer, make your sacrificial victim grow as fat as you want but, my good fellow, keep your Muse slender.")

Prosaically, this means to avoid the over-blown rhetoric of the epic similies, to shy away from long and involved descriptions of scenes or emotions, and to discipline one's art until it achieved that perfect state of elegant simplicity; "ut pictura poesis," said Horace,³ "Poetry is like a painting," and Propertius constantly strived to so

1 Aetia i. 22-24.

2 Propertius mentions Callimachus by name or periphrasis six times in all (ll. i. 39-40; xxxiv. 31-32; lll. i. 1-2; ix. 43-44; IV. i. 63-64; vi. 3-4).

3 De Arte Poetica, l. 361.

select his words and structure his images that his poetry would have the immediate and visual effect of a rich canvas. This technique is the well-known "ars tenuis" of the elegists, and none used it to such felicitous effect as did Propertius. Boucher further elaborates:

Toutes ces métaphores et ces mythes que Callimaque a multipliés dans le prologue des Aitia et dans les divers passages doctrinaux que nous connaissons, sont la présentation artistique d'un ensemble d'idées que le poète n'avait pas voulu exposer didactiquement dans ses vers: cela même eût été en contradiction avec l'art callimachéen, soucieux d'une simplicité élégante et non d'explications... L'oeuvre de Callimaque est une tentative pour renouveler l'art à la fois par le choix des sujets et par la forme du récit... Cette doctrine de la *Μοῦσα λεπταλέη* qui préconise un style qui ait l'élégante simplicité d'un tissu très fin est acceptée par Properce lorsqu'il recommande à son ami Lynceus d'imiter 'non inflati somnia Callimachi' (ll. 34. 31-32).⁴

The "somnia" of Callimachus is a reference to the "Dream" prologue of the Aetia in which is contained that poet's literary credo and his attack against the 'Telchines,' his literary enemies at whom he scoffs for writing long-winded poems. The "non inflati" is, of course, a reference to the 'ars tenuis.' Propertius incorporates this dictum of Callimachus into his own work by illustrating his poetic statement, not by long and involved descriptions, but by the use of mythological or historical exempla, i.e. short references to a mythological or historical name or occurrence which

⁴ Boucher, op. cit., pp. 186-187.

would serve to highlight or set off the poet's main point. These generally afforded only the slightest hint to the poet's meaning: Propertius usually assumed that the reader was well-enough acquainted with the legend not to need it spelled out in verbose detail. In contrast to the Hellenistic epigrams and elegies, the exempla employed by Propertius were only rarely superfluous and irrelevant to their context. He used them with the eye of the artist, to add greater clarity to his theme, to expose a deep psychological truth, or to reveal a hidden, scarce-observed trait of human nature.⁵ This habit of illustrating his ideas by short, elliptic references to the world of myth and legend (oftentimes very obscure myths at that, sometimes suggested by the mere mention of a name) is disturbing to a modern reader.⁶ Gilbert Highet compares the verse technique of Propertius to that of T.S. Eliot and other modern poets, claiming that "the abrupt and angular movement of Propertius' thoughts...is one of his chief distinctions. He is the boldest and most original of the Latin elegists."⁷

5 Cf. Boucher, op. cit., p. 248: "Chez Properce, les exempla participent à la création artistique et visent à l'expression de la beauté, de la multiplicité de la vie, des sentiments, des beautés des hommes et du monde."

6 Cf. Highet's remarks in Poets in a Landscape, New York, Knopf, 1957, pp. 79-80.

7 Ibid., p. 82.

The principle of this "ars tenuis" is set forth by Servius in his commentary on Georgics lll. 258-263: Vergil wishes to describe the all-engulfing power of Love and so chooses as his example the legend of Hero and Leander, but he does so in such a fashion as not to once use any proper names: Servius thus explains: "Leandri nomen occultavit quia cognita erat fabula."⁸

Thus, by merely alluding to a particular myth or mythological name, Propertius is enabled to evoke all sorts of connotations and to verify his particular outlook on life by the authority of examples from the heroic past, thereby making a particular experience valid in the general context of the history of poetic thought. Yet Propertius does not seem to be unique in his use of exempla;⁹ rather, his originality lay in the manner in which he used them. An illuminating illustration of this would be his reference to Milanion in l. i.¹⁰ Propertius does not set forth the story of Milanion which, presumably, all of his readers are expected to know: rather, he alludes to several features of the myth, making use of it, as it were, indirectly and

8 See Boucher, op.laud., p. 311.

9 Cf. Quintilian, Orat. xii. 2. 29-30 "quantum enim Graeci praeceptis valent, tantum Romani quod est maius exemplis."

10 l. i. 9-16.

thereby heightening his art by throwing it open to several interpretations at once. We are told that Milanion did not flee the labours required of him; that he wandered "out of his senses" ('amens,' l. 11) on the mountain-tops, that he was wounded by the club of Hylas (but not who Hylas was nor why he should wish to wound him) and that he finally tamed the "swift-footed girl" ('velocem...puellam,' l. 15), but he neglects to tell us who she was. Thus Propertius compares his experience with that of Milanion and, in line 16, sums up the whole point of this mythological comparison of himself with Milanion, stating directly what he had alluded to in the distich of ll. 9-10, i.e. the devoted service of a lover is rewarded in the end. But Propertius leaves much unsaid; the reader must fill in the gaps, pursue the mythological exemplum to its conclusion, in order to grasp fully what the poet has stated.

The myth of Milanion and Atalanta is found in several sources.¹¹ The suitor who won the maiden by throwing down the golden apples is variously called Hippomenes by most authors (Theocritus, Hyginus, Ovid, Servius, First and Second Vatican Mythographers); elsewhere the lover is called Milanion

¹¹ Cf. Ovid, Ars Amat., ii. 185; Apollod. 111. ix. 2; Paus. 111. xii. 9; Hyg. Fab. 185; Theoc. iii. 40-42; Servius ad Verg. Aen. iii. 113; First Vatican Mythographer, 39; Second Vatican Mythographer, 47; and Ovid, Metam. x. 560 sqq.

(here by Propertius and by Ovid in Ars Amat. ii. 188); this nearly agrees with Apollodorus and Pausanias, who adopted the form Melanion. As was seen in Chapter 2,¹² the exemplum of Milanion is here intended by Propertius to stand as a mythological symbol of the poet as he strives to render devotion to his Muse. Yet Propertius provides but sparse references to the legend, leaving it up to the reader to fill in the missing details and to follow the myth through to its conclusion so as to unravel the poet's full meaning. It has already been shown in detail in Chapter 2 how Milanion wooed the virgin huntress Atalanta with the gift of golden apples bestowed upon him by Aphrodite, yet Propertius mentions as well a curious detail which is not alluded to by any other extant author, the story of Milanion's combat with the Centaurs. This account is found only in Propertius and in Ovid (Ars Amat. ii. 185) and Butler and Barber say that Ovid's passage is "an obvious imitation of Propertius."¹³ If this be the case, then it would appear that the introduction by Propertius of Milanion fighting with the Centaurs is unique.¹⁴ Elsewhere Atalanta herself either wounds (Callim. Hymn.

12 Cf. Chap. 2, pp. 46 ff.

13 Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. 154.

14 See Aelian (Var. Hist. xiii. 1) for a vivid description of the Centaurs' assault, with Atalanta finally killing them.

iii. 222-224) or kills (Apollod. loc. cit. supra) the two Centaurs. This then raises the question of why Propertius introduced this apparently unique version of the myth.

Perhaps Propertius wished to suggest that Atalanta (i.e. Artemis, i.e. his poetic Muse) was to be wooed and won, not by the vulgar, unrefined powers of unlettered passion, represented by the Centaurs,¹⁵ but rather by the determined, harmonious and erudite persuasion of the poetic art, represented by Milanion. As poetry is sure to overcome uncivilized ignorance, so Milanion bests the Centaur and wins Atalanta. As a final illustration of the aptness of the Milanion myth for Propertius' exemplum outlining his relationship to his Muse and the success he hopes he will have, we need but recall the ultimate outcome of the myth. Milanion and Atalanta, having transgressed the sacred precinct of Cybele (Zeus, according to Apollod. 111. ix. 2) are changed into lions and yoked to the chariot of the Great Mother of the Gods.¹⁶ Thus, to one who is familiar with the myth in its entirety, an impression is left of the two lovers,

15 Cf. G. Méautis, Mythes Inconnus de la Grèce Antique, Paris, Albin Michel, 1944, p. 18: "Les Centaures, moitié hommes, moitié chevaux, race violente, effrénée, dont la lutte contre les hommes, aux noces de Déidamie, symbolise la lutte de l'ordre et de la civilisation contre les puissances de l'instinct."

16 See Servius, ad Verg. Aen. 111. 113 and Ovid, Metam. x. 689 sqq., where the hero is called Hippomenes.

symbolically changed into lions¹⁷ and dutifully pulling the chariot of the 'mater deum.' Propertius would appear to be suggesting that, if he is as dutiful as Milanion, he will not only win Cynthia, but they will forever be yoked together in the service of the Great Mother.¹⁸ His poetry will render her as immortal as is Atalanta.

This then perfectly illustrates Propertius' method of using the exemplum: he introduces, by a mere allusion or two, the myth to which he wishes to refer, and allows the various elements so introduced to suggest to the reader the appropriateness of the myth to the personal experience which Propertius is describing. Boucher further defines the manner in which Propertius utilizes the exemplum:

...le nombre des indications et la clarté seront inversement proportionnels à la célébrité de la légende: plus elle est illustre, plus les éléments qui suffisent à la suggérer, peuvent être rares et particuliers.¹⁹

17 Lions were sacred to the Great Mother of the Gods, Rhea or Cybele, according to, among others, Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 82. He also states (op. cit., p. 145) that another name of the Great Mother in Asia Minor was Great Artemis.

18 According to the Third Vat. Mythog., ll. i. 1-2 and 2, 1-3, the Greeks called Cybele Berecynthia. The word is used in Callimachus, Hymns ll. 246 to mean 'Phrygian.' Cf. as well Servius ad Verg. Aen. VI, 784 "Berecynthos castellum est Phrygiae iuxta sagarium fluvium, ubi mater deum colitur." Is it mere wishful thinking to see in the coincidence of the name of the poet's mistress and this appellation of the Great Goddess something deliberate on the part of Propertius?

19 Boucher, op. cit., pp. 251 sq.

Further, Milanion is not merely presented to us as a single, unique and different example from the past with whom the poet compares himself, but rather as a universal principle through which is established and verified the validity of all human experience. Thus, on one level, the suffering lover's obedient service will eventually win him his lady, and on a more allegorical plane, the devoted poet's worship of his Muse will assure poetic Immortality, both for the poet and for the lady he so immortalizes.

3.2 'The Mythological Parallel.

A slightly different illustration of Propertius' method of using mythological exempla as a back-drop or frame to his poetic statement is furnished in ll. xviii B. Here, considerably more of the myth is narrated by the poet, but still with a unique twist which makes it all his own. Concerning this method of a considerably longer mythological narration, Boucher has this to say:

... l'art du récit mythologique chez notre poète est nettement apparanté à sa façon habituelle de traiter la mythologie qui est soit de l'utiliser sous forme d'exempla, soit de l'incorporer à l'expression, mais toujours d'en présenter seulement une indication allusive qui suppose du lecteur la même culture et la même forme d'esprit que le poète.²⁰

Thus, without using the method of exemplum per se, the poet will oftentimes select a myth appropriately suited to his thought and then structure his poem around the myth, making it by this process an integral part of the poem, without which the poem could not stand by itself. This is, of course, diametrically opposite to the Hellenistic epigramists and elegists for whom, as has been pointed out above,²¹ the narration of the myth was the sole reason for the poem. Not so Propertius: his inclusion of the myth is

²⁰ Ibid., p. 326.

²¹ See Chapter 1, p. 25 supra.

such that it serves as an indispensable aid in framing his statement, providing a link between his words and the image or experience he wishes to convey.

Elegy 11. xviii B consists of eighteen lines, twelve of which are directly concerned with the myth of Eos (Aurora) and Tithonus. "What if I were to turn grey," says the poet, "and my cheeks would crack with the wrinkles of age?"²² He then goes on to narrate most of the myth of Eos and Tithonus, claiming that Eos did not scorn the old age of Tithonus,²³ but rather cherished him, indeed feeling it no shame to sleep with an old man and to plant tender kisses on his white locks.²⁴ Now it so happens that this tender scene of connubial bliss, this ideal May-December union, is quite different from that painted in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, where Eos brutally tells Tithonus she is a laughing-stock of all the gods because of her grey-haired lover! (11. 241 sqq.). It is further stated:²⁵

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πρῶται πολὺ κατέχυντο ἔθειρκι
καλῆς ἐκ κεφαλῆς εὐγενέος τε γενείου,
τοῦ δ' ἣ τοι εἰνῆς μὲν ἀπείχετο πότνια Ἥως.

22 "quid mea si canis aetas candesceret annis,
et faceret scissas languida ruga genas?" (11. 5-6)

23 At non Tithoni spernens Aurora senectam (l. 7).

24 Cum sene non puduit talem dormire puellam
et canae totiens oscula ferre comae. (11. 17-18)

25 Hom. h. Aphrod., 228 sqq.

("but when the first grey hairs began to ripple from his comely head and noble chin, the Lady Eos kept him away from her bed.")

This same attitude is echoed in Ovid:

illum [sc. Tithonus] dum refugis, longo quia
grandior aevo.²⁶

("and while you flee Tithonus, since he is so much older than you.")

Here again it seems that Propertius has slightly altered the traditional version of the myth to suit his own literary purposes.²⁷ In marked contrast to Eos who cherishes an aged lover, Propertius presents Cynthia (presumably; he never names her in this poem) as scorning him (even in his youth), though she herself will one day be old like Tithonus.²⁸

Yet Propertius almost never includes all the symbolism which he expects an exemplum to carry. Like the excellent poet he is, he leaves parts of the myth to the reader's knowledge and expects him to complete or round off, as it were, the total symbolic content. The myth of Tithonus, as Propertius has so far narrated it, deals with the affection the goddess still nurtures for an aged mortal. Yet what

²⁶ Ovid, Ars Amat. xiii. 37. Of interest in this connection is Dante's reference in Purg. ix. 1-3: "La concubina di Titone antico / Già s'imbiancava al balco d'oriente, / Fuor delle braccia del suo dolce amico."

²⁷ See, however, Enk, Commentary to Book 2, p. 255 where he suggests the likelihood that Propertius is alluding to a different version of the myth.

²⁸ At tu etiam iuvenem odisti me, perfida, cum sis ipsa anus haud longa curva futura die. (ll. 19-20)

other element is present in the myth, where else must one look to complete the picture Propertius wants us to have? Tzetzes²⁹ provides a partial answer when it is remembered that in the Homeric Hymn Dawn has Tithonus enclosed in a chamber, leaving him there to babble eternally, or else she changed him into a grasshopper.³⁰ On this latter version, Tzetzes comments (loc. cit.) that "the grasshoppers, like the snakes, when they are old, slough their old age." Here then one approaches a little closer to the real intention of Propertius in recounting at length the myth of Eos and Tithonus; it is then remembered that Plato has an interesting discussion of the myth of the grasshoppers in his Phaedro.³¹ According to him, grasshoppers were once upon a time human beings. When the Muses appeared on Earth, the beauty of their song put the "men" into such an ecstasy that they quite forgot to care for their bodies or to feed themselves, such were their souls enchanted by these sacred melodies.

29 Tzetzes, Schol. on Lycophron, 18.

30 Scholiast on Hom. Il. XI. i:

τὴν δὲ ἰδυνάτουσαν εἰς τέττιγα λυτὸν
μεταβάλεν, ὅπως ἦδοιτο συνεχῶς τῆς φωνῆς
ἰκούοντα.

31 Plato, Phaedr. 259C. Cf. also Callim. Aetia, 11. 29-30. In Alexandrian poetry poets are compared to, or called after the grasshopper (e.g. Theoc. i. 148; Posidip. Anth. Pol. xii. 98).

They at last died, but Zeus gave them adequate recompense by changing them into grasshoppers who could live without food:

Ils sont maintenant des intermédiaires entre les dieux et les hommes. Ce sont les cigales qui passent leur vie sans avoir besoin de nourriture et--après leur mort--vont annoncer aux Muses, quels sont ceux d'entre les hommes qui les ont fidèlement servies.³²

Thus the poet's use of this particular exemplum is put into a whole new light; the figure of Tithonus, beloved of the Dawn-goddess (a figure of Artemis, as has been mentioned above), becomes a symbol of the poet who, in reward for his faithful service to the Muses, becomes immortal and stands as the special intermediary or envoy between the gods and men. The poem then takes on a very singular shade of meaning: unless you treat me as Dawn treated Tithonus, I shall report to the Muses your shameful handling of their favourite and you shall not become immortal with me. Beware of treating me lightly, for my power is a special one and comes from the gods.

Thus it can be seen that the Tithonus myth was an essential part of Elegy 11. xviii B and not a mere decorative element. The poet sets up a contrast between the world of myth and his own real world, and in the ensuing conflict a

p. 84. ³² Méautis, Mythes Inconnus de la Grèce Antique,

poem is born, with the exemplum being nearly always essential to the creation of that poem, and serving as an exemplary enlargement of the poetic experience conveyed in the remainder of the poem.

A. La Penna³³ describes the ways in which Propertius uses his mythological exempla under three main headings:

i) the exemplary link, wherein an obscure allusion is bound to the lyric theme as an example to clarify a sentence;
ii) the analogical link, which presents a situation parallel to that of the elegy; iii) the antithetical link, which presents a situation contrary to that of the elegy. In the final analysis, then, the whole of the Propertian method can be seen in the application he makes of these three main divisions of the exemplum. At times, it must be admitted, the inclusion of certain mythic allusions are nothing but learned intrusions, a sort of mythological padding, as it were, in which Propertius displays his thorough knowledge of mythological matters. Such literary frosting on the poetic cake has little or nothing to do with the poem itself. An example of this type of mythological allusion can be found at ll. xxx. 13 sq. in his mention of Athene and the flute, a mention which is totally irrelevant to the aesthetic continuity of the poem. Similarly, a good case could be

33 La Penna, op. cit., p. 99, n. 1.

made for the mythological embellishments at the beginning of ll. xx.³⁴ Generally, however, this embellishment is a rare exception: the exemplum is usually fused to the elegiac tone by the poet's use of one of the three methods outlined above.

³⁴ See, for instance, La Penna, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

3.3. The Exemplary Link.

An example of Propertius' use of method one, the exemplary link, is illustrated in ll. iii B in a passage where he is referring to the bondage of love, and in illustration of which he mentions the story of Melampus, about whom there were two versions in the Odyssey (xi. 281 sqq. and xv. 225-238).³⁵ In the first Bias is not mentioned and no suggestion that Melampus was not the lover of Pero occurs, while the cattle belong to Iphiclus. In the second, Bias enters into the story and the cattle belong to Phylacus, the father of Iphiclus.³⁶ Propertius here uses the legend of Melampus stealing the cattle as illustrative of the bondage of love, thus inferring that Melampus was the lover of Pero. But in Apollodorus it is Bias who loved her and who suggested the aid of his brother Melampus in the stealing of the cattle. E. D'Arbela further remarks:

Properzio, interpretando arbitrariamente il primo passo di Omero, o seguendo una versione alessandrina ignota, suppone che Melampo sia stato spinto a operare per amore di Pero.³⁷

35 See also Pausanias IV. 36. 3.

36 As is the case in Apollod. 1. ix. 12.

37 Properzio, Elegie, vol. secondo, edizione critica a cura di Edmondo N. D'Arbela, Milano, Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1965, p. 45.

So it may be seen how by making a rather obscure allusion to the Melampus myth and using it as an example of the bondage of love, Propertius effected the exemplary link.³⁸ Another example of this procedure would be at 1. ii. 15-24 where he gives many examples from the world of myth in support of his contention that the early heroines placed no reliance on artificial beauty. "Not thus," he says, "did Phoebe, the daughter of Leucippus, arouse the love of Castor, nor did her sister Hilaira inflame Pollux with adornment."³⁹ The usual tradition has Idas and Lynceus, the sons of Aphareus, engaged to the daughters of Leucippus. They invited the Dioscuri to the wedding, but once there Castor and Pollux carried off the brides and wedded them.⁴⁰ The rape of the daughters of Leucippus by Castor and Pollux seems to have been a favourite subject in art,⁴¹ and indeed this whole passage is illustrated by examples which aptly reveal what Boucher calls the 'tempérament visuel' of Propertius: by this he means that process of poetic expression whereby Propertius calls on the impressions produced by

³⁸ As well as managing to include at the same time the Hellenistic touch of the rare mythological variant.

³⁹ non sic Leucippis succendit Castore Phoebe,
Pollucem cultu non Hilaira soror.

⁴⁰ See Hyginus, *Fab.* 80; Ovid, *Fasti* V. 699 sqq.

⁴¹ Cf. Pausanias 1. 18. 1; 111. 17. 3, 18. 11;
IV. 31. 9.

works of art in order to communicate his own poetic ideas. In fact, in line 22 of this passage he makes reference to Apelles, a famous painter who flourished circa 332 B.C.. His other two examples of beauty unadorned are Marpessa, wooed by Apollo and carried off by Idas, and Pelops carrying off Hippodamia after his victorious chariot race with her father Oenomaus, both of which were doubtless frequent subjects for paintings and sculpture.

3.4 The Analogical Link.

Propertius' treatment of method number two, the analogical link, whereby he presents a situation via the exemplum which is parallel to that outlined in the elegy, is witnessed in l. xiii. Propertius is stating how his friend Gallus, who had often mocked Propertius' own love-affairs, has now fallen hopelessly in love himself; in fact, Propertius saw love-scenes so ardent between Gallus and his lady that he blushes to reveal them. He goes on to state that no love-affair was more passionate, not even that of Poseidon with Tyro, nor was Hercules so consumed for love of Hebe after his literally flaming death on Mount Oeta.⁴² Thus it may be seen how Propertius, when utilizing the analogical link, first makes a poetic statement (i.e. no love-affair is more passionate than that of Gallus), and then makes reference to an exemplum which reinforces and drives home the analogy: not infrequently in Propertius such comparisons contain a hint of humour, as for example at l. iv where he remonstrates with Bassus who wants to separate him from Cynthia. "You may praise the beauty of Antiope, daughter of Nycteus, and the charms of Spartan Hermione," he claims,

⁴² non sic Haemonio Salmonida mixtus Enipeo
 Taenarius facili pressit amore deus,
 nec sic caelestem flagrans amor Herculis Heben
 sensit ab Oetaeis gaudia prima iugis. (ll. 21-24)

"and whatever others the age of loveliness has produced: Cynthia will not let them be famous."⁴³ Here the exemplum seems spontaneous and light, and lacks the heavy touch of forced erudition. The suggestion that Bassus has attempted to dissuade Propertius from love of Cynthia by mention of the praises of all the lovely women of legend even has its humorous tone and ever so lightly enforces the poet's point that no one could be as lovely as Cynthia. It also, in a rather backhanded and indirect manner, serves to underscore the poet's wish to have Cynthia identified with these very heroines and goddesses of legend and mythology.

Yet another example of the analogical link is found at ll. i. 65-70. This elegy, like l. i., is a prologue poem in which Propertius sets forth his reasons to Maecenas as to why he cannot write epic. If he were to write epic, he would not treat of the well-known themes, but rather would sing of the military accomplishments of Augustus,⁴⁴ and the fidelity of Maecenas. But he is afflicted by a 'Liebeskrankheit',⁴⁵ which is impossible to cure, and he must therefore continue to

⁴³ tu licet Antiopae formam Nycteidōs, et tu
Spartanae referas laudibus Hermionae,
et quascumque tulit formosi temporis aetas;
Cynthia non illas nomen habere sinat. (ll. 5-8)

⁴⁴ bellaque resque tui memorarem Caesaris. (l. 25)

⁴⁵ l. 65 'vitium.'

write elegies. "For every human ailment there is a cure," he says: "Love alone knows no anecdote."⁴⁶ To relieve his sufferings would be both as impossible and as unthinkable as relieving the well-known tortures of the damned:

Hoc si quis vitium poterit mihi demere, solus
Tantaleae poterit tradere poma manu;
dolia virgineis idem ille repleverit urnis,
ne tenera assidua colla graventur aqua;
idem Caucasias solvet de rupe Promethei
bracchia et a medio pectore pellet avem.⁴⁷

("If anyone could cure me of this disease, he alone could hand the fruit to Tantalus; he too could fill the casks with the jars of the Danaids so that their tender necks be not continually laden with the jugs: he could even loosen the arms of Prometheus from the Caucasian cliff and drive off the vulture from his liver.")

All of these are obviously impossible tasks and the skill with which this exemplum is woven into the fabric of the poem aptly illustrates Propertius' thorough-going mastery of the use of this method. It serves to underscore his main point, has immediate relevance to what is being stated as a whole and has assumed, not the recondite irrelativity of an esoteric reference of the Alexandrian type, but rather all the smoothness of a simile which has been infused with new life and vigor. This is, in fact, the magic of the Propertian

⁴⁶ omnes humanos sanat medicina dolores:
solus Amor morbi non amat artificem. (ll. 57-58)

⁴⁷ ll. 65-70.

exempla, that they are not at all dry and musty allusions tossed in for the sake of poetic convention, but rather that they assume a vitality and freshness all their own for being managed in such a way as to be (generally speaking) absolutely vital to the esthetic 'oneness' of the poem.

3.5 The Antithetical Link.

In addition to examples which point up the similarity of the matter being discussed, Propertius will often use an example contrary to the situation of the poem, and thus heighten its effect through the contrast produced. This is the antithetical link and is used to good effect in ll. viii B. 21-24. In this poem Propertius bitterly recalls how shamefully he has been treated by Cynthia: "Have I ever been anything but your chattel?" he cries desperately.⁴⁸ He then predicts that he will die young as a result of such treatment (ll. 17-18) and then, in a jealous rage, he conjures up a truly horrible sight: "She would rejoice to see me dead: she would haunt my spirit, ever pursue my shade, dance on my pyre and trample upon my bones!"⁴⁹ Now the thought of such sacrilege leads him to recall the myth of Antigone and Haemon and, by mentioning such a grinding contrast in fidelity after death, to point up the really inconceivable manner in which he deems himself treated. In the Antigone of Sophocles Haemon, the son of Creon and fiancé of Antigone, kills himself in the tomb in which Antigone has been walled

⁴⁸ *ecquandone tibi liber sum visus?* (l. 15)

⁴⁹ *interitu gaudeat illo tuo!
exagitet nostros Manes, sectetur et umbras,
insultetque rogis, calcet et ossa mea!* (ll. 18-20)

up. Perhaps here Propertius follows this version and if so, his tumulo (l. 21) would correspond to the $\kappa\alpha\tau\eta\rho\epsilon\rho\eta\varsigma$ $\tau\acute{\upsilon}\mu\beta\omicron\varsigma$ of the Antigone (l. 885).⁵⁰ In the face of such loyalty between lovers, a loyalty by which the surviving lover will follow the departed into death, Propertius pictures a half-demented Cynthia exulting upon his tomb and desecrating his remains. In this light it is interesting to read Butler and Barber's remarks on the aptness of such a parallel:

The illustration with which he justifies his proposed suicide (21-4) is peculiarly inept. Antigone was no faithless mistress;⁵¹

and further:

...the parallel is inept.⁵²

Yet it would appear that Propertius chose this particular exemplum precisely because the contrast between the two pairs of lovers is so great and thus, by the principle of antithesis, it would enable him to outline his poetic statement that much more forcefully. The poet does not compare Cynthia with Antigone but rather, if indeed there is any comparison intended at all, he is comparing himself with Haemon, who could not bear to live without his mistress.

⁵⁰ However, according to Hyginus, Fab. 72, Haemon, having heard that Antigone was going to be buried alive by order of Creon, killed her and then himself.

⁵¹ Butler and Barber, op. cit., p. 204.

⁵² Ibid., p. 205.

3.6 Mutatio Gratia Artis.

In addition to the three principal uses of mythological exempla outlined above, Propertius was not above slightly altering a myth in order to suit his own particular poetic purposes. This is done on several occasions, among which can be mentioned his treatment of the Ulysses-Calypso episode in l. xv. 9-14. As the premise of this poem, Propertius faces some peril (real or imagined) and Cynthia shows her concern in a light-hearted, even callous manner by taking a new lover. He then compares her attitude with that of other, more faithful women of mythology, mentioning Calypso first of all:

multos illa dies incomptis maesta capillis
sederat, iniusto multa locuta salo,
et quamvis numquam post haec visura, dolebat
illa tamen, longae conscia laetitiae.⁵³

("For many days had she sadly sat there, her hair let down and talking to the cruel sea, and though destined never again to see her loved one, she grieved all the same for memories of blissful yesterdays.")

For this romantic scene, Homer gives no support at all; in fact, it is Calypso who urges Ulysses to leave Ogygia.⁵⁴ Some attribute this apparent discrepancy to the "tempérament visuel" of Propertius⁵⁵ and trace it to a

⁵³ l. xv. 11-14.

⁵⁴ Cf. Hom. Od. vii. 244 sqq. and especially 262:
καὶ τότε δῆ μ' ἐκέλευσεν ἑποτρύνουσα νέεσθαι.

⁵⁵ Cf. for instance Boucher, op. cit., p. 263.

connection between the mythological tales and their representation in the visual arts. Along this line of reasoning, there will have existed paintings or murals depicting a forelorn Calypso gazing longingly out to sea after the fast-disappearing sail of Ulysses. There is little reason to doubt that this was indeed the case and the "grief of Calypso" would almost certainly have been a motif treated by the Alexandrian poets, since even Ovid alludes to it,⁵⁶ though perhaps here, as well as in so many other places, taking his cue from Propertius. At any rate, Propertius appears to be not at all hesitant about breaking from the orthodox upon occasion, whenever it fits his poetic purpose to do so.

The poet's unique treatment of the Tithonus-Eos myth has already been noticed above,⁵⁷ but a further example of his 'factual' freedom can be illustrated from lll. xii. In this poem, while Propertius is enumerating the wanderings of Ulysses to his friend Postumus, he relates many episodes out of place, ignoring the chronological occurrences as laid down in the Odyssey. For example, in line 25 Propertius mentions Calpe (i.e. Gibralter). This is not named in the Odyssey,

56 Cf. Ars Amat. 11, 125 sqq.

57 See pp. 91-94 supra.

but according to some⁵⁸ Odysseus was transported by a storm beyond the pillars of Hercules. In the next line (l. 26) Propertius mentions the 'exustae...genae' of Polyphemus, apparently forgetting that the monster had but one eye (one could hardly dub it "reduplication for poetic effect"); then at line 27 the position of 'lotos' violates the Homeric order. The Lotus-eaters come between Ismaros (l. 25) and Polyphemus.⁵⁹ Then concerning line 31, Butler and Barber comment:

Aeaeae...puellae must refer to Calypso; Circe has already been mentioned, and it was after leaving Calypso that Odysseus swam so many nights and days. But Aeaea is in Homer the Isle of Circe, Ogygia that of Calypso (Od. x. 135; xii. 448). Propertius has followed a different legend, of which a trace is found in Hyg. Fab. 125 and Mela ii. 120 Aeaeae quam Calypso habitasse dicitur.⁶⁰

Lastly, at lines 33-34, Propertius makes reference to the Nekyia and the Sirens; but in the Odyssey they precede Scylla and Charybdis.⁶¹ From all of the above may be seen the highly individual treatment which Propertius is capable of administering to a poem, his ability to utilize facts and legends common to all and yet make of them something unique, or at the least arresting.

⁵⁸ Cf. Strabo i. 25 and see Butler and Barber, op. cit., p. 294.

⁵⁹ Cf. Ody. ix. 91 sqq.

⁶⁰ Butler and Barber, op. cit., p. 294.

⁶¹ Cf. Ody. xi and Ody. xii. 165.

3. 7 Catalogue of EXEMPLA.

Another of the methods which Propertius uses to good effect is the catalogue of exempla borrowed in part from Hellenistic poetry. Examples of this method would include the already discussed l. iii, where it is used to create a hauntingly beautiful mood. In another elegy, ll. xiv, may be seen the way in which the poet employs the cataloguing effect to build to a climax through a series of exempla all related to his particular theme. Propertius has overcome the resistance of his mistress and is once more in full favour. He lists examples from legend illustrative of supreme joy and concludes that none of them can equal the joy he feels now. The first in his list of exempla typifying supreme joy are the Atrides (ll. 1-2):

non ita Dardanio gavisus Atrida triumpho est,
cum caderent magnae Laomedontis opes;

("Not so did the son of Atreus rejoice over his
triumph at Troy when the mighty wealth of
Laomedon came tumbling down.")

He continues with mention of Ulysses' joyful arrival home after his long wanderings (ll. 3-4):

nec sic errore exacto laetatus Ulixes,
cum tetigit carae litora Dulichiae;

("Nor was Ulysses so joyful, his wanderings over,
when he reached the shores of his dear Ithaca.")

Nor can his joy be compared with that of Electra upon seeing her brother safe (ll. 5-6):

nec sic Electra, saluum cum aspexit Oresten,
cuius falsa tenens fleuerat ossa soror;

("And not such was Electra, when she saw Orestes unharmed, over whose pretended ashes she had wept as she held them--she, his sister.")

Nor finally to that of Ariadne as she beheld Theseus emerging from the Labyrinth (ll. 7-8):

nec sic incolumem Minois Thesea vidit,
Daedalium lino cum duce rexit iter;

("Nor thus did Minos' daughter see Theseus untouched when guided by the thread he directed his way through the maze of Daedalus.")

Nothing, not even those famous examples listed, can equal the poet's joy at having reconquered his mistress: one more night like the last one, the poet states, and he will be immortal (ll. 9-10).⁶² Here Propertius is referring to the immortalizing power of love and also, it would appear, hinting at the divinity of Cynthia, for who else can make the poet immortal but a goddess? Through the mystical union of the poet with Cynthia he can surpass the joys experienced by the famous heroes of old.

Another excellent example of the poet's use of the cataloguing effect can be seen in ll. xx. Cynthia is fearful

⁶² Cf. ll. xv. 39-40:

si dabit haec multas, fiam immortalis in illis:
nocte una quivis vel deus esse potest.

lest Propertius prove unfaithful to her and the poet chides her apprehension and protests his fidelity by citing examples taken from mythology:

Quid fles abducta gravius Briseide? quid fles
anxia captiva tristius Andromacha? (ll. 1-2)

("Why do you weep more grievously than the stolen Briseis? why in your concern weep more sadly than the captive Andromache?")⁶³

Then, from a comparison with the grieving heroines of legend, Propertius is moved to sheer lyrical hyperbole (ll. 5-8):

non tam nocturna volucris funestra querela
Attica Cecropiis obstrepit in foliis,
nec tantum Niobae bis sex ad busta superbae
lacrima sollicito defluit a Sipylo.

("Not with such nightly complaint does the ill-omened Attic bird sing aloud in the Athenian trees, nor do the tears of Niobe, whose arrogance netted her twelve tombs, flow so from troubled Sipyron.")

There is no need for all these tearful recriminations, the poet protests: I will be true to you even unto death (ll. 15-17). If he is ever forgetful of her favours, the poet then calls down upon his head all the tortures of the damned:

tum me vel tragicae vexetis Erinyes, et me
inferno damnes, Aeace, iudicio,
atque inter Tityi volucres mea poena vagetur,
tumque ego Sisypheo saxa labore geram! (ll. 29-32)

63 Cf. Enk, Comment. to Bk. 2, p. 271: "Une accumulation de a peut évoquer les pleurs d'une captive angoissée: quid fles abducta / gravius Briseide? Quid fles / anxia captiva / tristius Andromacha? (n. 1, Herescu, La Poesie Latine, Paris, 1960, p. 111).

("In that case may the Erinyes of the tragic poets indeed harass me and may you, Aeacus, condemn me with your deadly verdict: let my doom be to range among Tityus' vultures and let me carry stones with the trouble of a Sisyphus.")

Thus it can be seen how the cataloguing effect is used by Propertius, either in support of or in contrast to his statement, to create a climactic impression and to better enforce his statement. To quote Boucher:

On a depuis longtemps déjà montré que l'art du récit mythologique chez notre poète est nettement apparenté à sa façon habituelle de traiter la mythologie qui est soit de l'incorporer à l'expression, mais toujours d'en présenter seulement une indication allusive qui suppose du lecteur la même culture et la même forme d'esprit que le poète.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Boucher, op. cit., p. 326.

3.8 The Independence of the EXEMPLA.

As a final consideration of Propertius' method, it would be well to consider what Boucher calls⁶⁵ "l'indépendance et non-coïncidence" of the exempla. He indeed insists upon the fact that at times the development of an exemplum in Propertius is less tied to the logic of his exposition than to the necessities of an art which wishes to be suggestive. It does seem to be true that on entering the world of myth Propertius is at times captivated by its moral and aesthetic reality and actually becomes involved in the ideal world which he so clearly favours to his own. At such times as these the exemplum ceases to have a strict pertinence to the poet's theme: new elements are allowed to creep in, merely on their own merits, with the poet even indulging in a 'jeu-verbal' with proper names and giving full vent to his marvellously musical ear in an excess of joy at his own creativity. Some of the flavour of this exuberance can be caught, for instance, in ll. xxviA, l. 16:

candida Nesaeae, caerula Cymothoe.

Kenneth Quinn,⁶⁶ calling this "a serenely mellifluous line," goes on to describe it as a formal Hellenistic line, balanced

⁶⁵ Cf. Boucher, op. cit., pp. 256-260.

⁶⁶ Latin Explorations, London, Routledge, 1963, p. 195.

at the caesura around four words--two exotic proper names (in Greek they would mean "island-dweller" and "wave-swift" respectively)⁶⁷ and two contrasting colour words, each a dactyl and each beginning with the same letter.

Another and more copious example of this tendency is afforded by l. xx, a poem which is highly stylistic, replete with Hellenisms and at times with quite obtruse and pedantic patronymics. For these reasons the poem probably belongs to an early period when Propertius was much more fully under the influence of his Greek sources and had not yet found his own style. He quite obviously had a very developed and musical ear which even at this early period was quite noticeable. L.C. Curran⁶⁸ has done some excellent research on this elegy and among some of the many tours-de-force upon which he elaborates may be singled out Propertius' especially effective use of words containing sounds not native to Latin, such as PH and TH: Theiodamanteo (l. 6), Nympharum (l. 11), Phasidos (l. 18), Thyniasin (l. 34), Orithyiae (l. 31) To be noticed as well in all of this is

67 "Sie sind candida und caerula, entsprechend der Farbe der Welle und des Wellenschaumes": Enk, Comment. to Bk. 2, p. 333, quoting Rothstein. Both are names of Nereids taken from Homer Il. xviii. 40, 41. Cymothoe also appears in Vergil, Aen. l. 144.

68 "Greek Words and Myth in Propertius l. 20," GRBS, v, 1964, p. 281-293.

the preponderance of the Greek vowel Y, a vowel which does not occur in Latin and the strangeness of which continued to charm the Roman ear even down to Quintilian.⁶⁹ Other examples from the poem are Minyis (l. 4), Adryasin (l. 12), Dryades (l. 45), and Hylas (passim).

Curran is also quite good at detecting the verbal and acoustic games Propertius plays with the name Hylas; in fact the meaning of the name Hylas--real and pretended--is central to the whole poem. For instance, the Greek root $\psi\lambda\alpha-$ means "howl" or "shout" and Propertius alludes to this when describing the shouting of the name by Hercules in line 49.⁷⁰ The poem also becomes an intellectual exercise in mythological identification; Hylas is, for example, Narcissus lost in fatal contemplation of himself reflected in the spring (ll. 40-41), or his name also becomes an Echo (l. 49 sq.). The poem is seen to be a reflection of the poet revelling in the exuberance of his newly blossoming talents which burst forth in nearly uncontrollable fecundity. What has begun as an aetiological poem rapidly becomes a jeu-d'esprit and intellectual punning match in which the youthful

69 Orat. 12. 10. 27 sq.

70 Cf. Curran, art. cit., p. 287.

poet flexes his metrical muscles.⁷¹ The exempla are here independent creations with no link to the real world outside the poet's imagination and in effect the power of the poet's imagination is such that instead of being an expression of the link between his poetic situation and his mythological thought processes, the exempla have become "une sorte de refuge, de lieu d'évasion où le poète transfère dans une vision esthétique la violence de ses sentiments."⁷²

Fortunately, the poet quickly learned how to control these outbursts, and to discipline his exempla, requiring them to provide the link (one is almost tempted here to write 'vital' link) between his circumstances and his imagery. The many and varied links which the poet forged and his methods in so doing have been the focus of this chapter.

⁷¹ The poem is important though in revealing the poet's skill at handling a given theme and in giving a foretaste of his future virtuosity in the manipulation of the sounds of his language, a consideration of which is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this work.

⁷² Boucher, op. cit., p. 257.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PURPOSE AND SUCCESS OF THE IDENTIFICATION

4.1 Book III - Changing Directions.

When one turns to Book Three it soon becomes quite apparent that whatever it was Propertius wanted to accomplish through his treatment of Cynthia has by now been effected. The poet's whole style has changed, along with his artistic credo; Cynthia, whenever she does appear, is spiritually conceived and lacks the fire and sensuousness of the two preceding Books. Clearly, Propertius has wearied of her. He is much more concerned with his reputation as a poet and the mark he will make on posterity.¹ He is more serious, more attuned to the subtle problems of his genre, more willing to consider literary questions--in a word, more mature.²

1 E. D'Arbela, Properzio, Elegie, p. 15 "Spera tuttavia di acquistare anche in tal modo una gloria duratura, poichè quello che l'invidia dell' età presente può togliere alla sua fama, gli sarà tributato largamente dai posteri."

2 Cf. Postgate, in the Intro. to his edition, p. xxiii: "Besides Propertius was awakening to a sense of the turpitude of a connexion which, though excusable in a youth, was entirely out of keeping with a more advanced age." And see Enk in his edition of Book Two, prima pars, p. 21: "In libro tertio non iam eosdem animi tumultus invenimus qui per totum librum secundum saeviunt. Propertii amor refrixisse videtur."

The first two Books appear to represent the poet's attempts at firstly defining that principle within Cynthia which links her to all women and which is symbolically externalized and anthropomorphized as Artemis-Cynthia and, secondly, to identify this externalized principle with his own inspirational Muse--Artemis Phosphoros, the Maid of the Silver Bow and Bringer of Illumination. This process involves a lot of straining and purifying of the grosser elements contained in Cynthia's mortal nature, and throughout the first two Books Cynthia becomes progressively more and more spiritual and less and less a living human being. This schizophrenic dichotomy, as it were, is of primary importance in an understanding of the history of Cynthia's identification process, for she very early assumes a dual nature:

- i) the mortal Cynthia who provided the original impetus and
- ii) the spiritual conception of the divine element within her and its symbolic identification with Artemis. As has been pointed out above,³ this distinction occurs comparatively early in the Elegies, as for instance in ll. ii where already Cynthia is presented as an almost pure symbol.

The poem which appears to grapple most obviously with this duality and at the same time to represent a real climax in the history of Cynthia's identification with Artemis is

3 Cf. Chap. II, pp. 77-81.

11. xix.⁴ Here the poet has symbolically conceived of his dilemma in terms of a distinction between Venus and Diana.⁵ Here can be seen most clearly the effect which this dual nature of Cynthia has on the poet. Propertius has come to a spiritual crossroads--he must now separate the divine from the mortal Cynthia. Cynthia the woman has succeeded in giving wings to his song and he must now devote himself entirely to the contemplation of pure poetry, a contemplation of Artemis Phosphoros herself. On the one hand he looks back at the physicality of his mistress (i.e. Venus) and admittedly with difficulty makes the break, thereby identifying solely with the pure Muse (i.e. Diana). The fact that Propertius chose to portray his dilemma through symbolic poetry effectively argues that he was aware of the spiritual struggle waging within himself and in this attempt to discover a viable manner in which he might render articulate his particular vision lies part of his contribution to elegy in particular and to literature in general: for on the one hand he seeks to base his poetic statements in an authentic literary tradition and to ennoble his passion through symbolic mythological comparisons, while on the other he

⁴ See Chap. II, pp.67-76 for a brief consideration of this question.

⁵ 11. 19. 11. 17-18: ipse ego venabor: iam nunc sacra Dianae
suscipere et Veneris ponere vota iuvat.

succeeds in making of all of this no mere academic diversion, as had the Alexandrians before him, but rather he infuses into his poetry a very real and vital spark of truth--he succeeded in creating art out of human emotion. To quote La Penna:

Questa idealizzazione mitica della donna non trova riscontro, credo, nell'antichità...Solo forse Catullo in un momento di ricordo sognante, sentì la donna come dea, con la leggerezza della dea (68, 68 sqq.):...'*cur haec in terris facies humana moratur*' (ll. ii. 3) è pronunciato in un momento di incantata meraviglia.⁶

When one then looks at ll. xxx. it is realized how far the poet has come in his aim, for here Cynthia has been totally spiritualized and is placed by the poet in the company of Bacchus and the Muses with him on Helicon:

libeat tibi, Cynthia, mecum
rorida muscosis antra tenere iugis.
illic aspicias scopulis haerere Sorores
et canere antiqui dulcia furta Iovis. (ll. 25-28)

("You would be delighted, Cynthia, to dwell with me in dewy grottos on the mossy heights: there you will see the Sisters sitting on the cliffs and singing of the stolen sweetness of Jove who reigns for ever.")⁷

Cynthia has here become pure poetry and joins the other Muses in their time-honoured roles as the divine afflatus of the poetic art, though Propertius in this poem

6 La Penna, op. cit., p. 65.

7 Cf. Verg. Bucol. 2. 28 "*Ut tantum libeat mecum tibi sordida rura / atque humilis habitare casas.*"

makes of her something more than a tenth Muse: she has become for him the unique and impelling cause of his verse, as he states in line 40:

nam sine te nostrum non valet ingenium

("for lacking your inspiration my talent is worthless").

Concerning this last line, P.J. Enk quotes E. Maass in stating:

Der letzte Satz nam sine te nostrum nil valet ingenium (l. 40) soll das Mitkommen der Cynthia auf den Musenberg motiviren; sie begeistert ihn dort, wie Kalliope den Orpheus, wie Apollon seinen Sohn Linos (Verg. Ecl. 4. 56), durch ihre Gegenwart; sie ist ihm eine Muse, die zehnte. (Italics are this author's.)⁸

It would appear to be even more than that, for the absolute necessity of Cynthia to the poet's genius is stressed so that for the poet she is all of the Muses in one: he so much as says so in lines 37-40:

hic ubi te prima statuent in parte choreae,
et medius docta cuspide Bacchus erit,
tum capiti sacros patiar pendere corymbos:
nam sine te nostrum non valet ingenium.

("And here when they [sc. Musae] shall place you in the place of honour in their chorus, with Bacchus in the middle with his art-inspiring thyrsus, then will I suffer the ivy-wreath to hang from my head, for lacking your inspiration my talent is worthless.")

⁸ E. Maass, "Untersuchungen zu Properz," Hermes 31, 1896, p. 386, quoted by Enk, Comm. to Bk. 2, p. 393.

It is only when Cynthia herself takes the primary role of the Muses ("prima...in parte choreae") that the poet may be truly said to be inspired.⁹ So it may be seen that for Propertius Cynthia is finally all Muse--the muse, in fact--and the identification-process is complete. From this point on she no longer exists in the flesh-and-blood sense of the first two Books. The difficult task of isolating these two aspects of Cynthia and of effecting an apotheosis of the spiritual one into a viable symbol of the poet's own impetus has evidently been accomplished by Book Three, for there in the *proem* (in contrast to l. i and ll. i) occurs no mention of Cynthia: rather a proud proclamation of his uniqueness and a confident assumption of the recognition of his poetic achievements:

Callimachi Manes et Coi sacra Philitae,
 in vestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus.
 primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos
 Italia per Graios orgia ferre choros. (ll. 1-4)

("O shades of Callimachus and blessed rites of Coan Philetas! I ask to be permitted entry into your consecrated precincts: for I am the first duly lustrated poet to commence the translation of Greek song into Italian form.")¹⁰

9 Cf. Camps, *Lib.* 11, p. 204 "The point of tum (answering ubi in line 37) is that only when Cynthia accompanies him to the Muses' haunts will inspiration come to him: he cannot receive it from the Muses alone."

10 Cf. the *Third Vatican Mythog.* 11. 12. 5 "ὁρῶσα, sicut apud Latinos caerimoniae sunt appellata." The translation, unfortunately, bears out the truth of 'traduttore-traditore.'

Indeed, if one looks at the number of times Cynthia appears in the whole of Book Three, an amazing statistic emerges. Out of twenty-five elegies only ten have anything to do with Cynthia, and of those one is doubtful (xxiii), one is a prelude to Hellenistic-like mythological narrative (xv) and two deal with the poet's final rejection of her (xxiv and xxv). Thus only six out of twenty-five elegies are anything like the poet's previous love-poems in honour of his mistress: this would mean that mathematically only 24% of Book Three deals amorously with Cynthia. Compared with this, Book One affords twenty-two poems, sixteen of which deal with Cynthia, for an average of 73%, while in Book Two an even greater percentage is attained: out of thirty-four poems there, no less than thirty-one deal directly with Cynthia, for an average of 91%. Clearly, the poet is on to a different track after Book Two. La Penna¹¹ defines this new development as "lo svolgimento ampio di temi morali" and later (p. 59) remarks that the third Book "si tratta di una decadenza dell'esperienza lirica ed umana dell'autore." Whether or not that is the case, it is certainly true that the poet has passed some sort of spiritual crisis with regard to Cynthia. That the poet feels himself released from a dilemma is best seen in lll. xvii, which is a prayer to Bacchus as the Liberator from the cares of love:

¹¹ La Penna, op. cit., p. 57.

nunc, O Bacche, tuis humiles advolvitur aris:
 da mihi pacato vela secunda, pater.
 tu potes insanae Veneris compescere fastus,
 curarumque tuo fit medicina mero. (ll. 1-4)

("Now, O Bacchus, in my humility I prostrate myself
 at your altar: grant me peace and a fair voyage,
 Father, for you can curb the pride of a wasting
 Love and through your pure draughts heal my cares.")

Bacchus is here being appealed to on two counts:
 firstly as the Liberator from the cares of love¹² and
 secondly as the symbol of the poet.¹³ Since Bacchus is
 indeed a symbol of the poet and lll. xvii is a poem expres-
 sing relief at the release from the cares of love, it would
 appear to be a viable conclusion that amatory elegy served
 as a catharsis for Propertius. Mere adulation of the joys
 of the flesh is at best a limited pursuit and soon loses
 its appeal--one is not always a youthful romantic idealist.
 Propertius has realized that this has to be so. To a man
 of his temperament, mere passion was ignoble, base: he had
 to ennoble it, seek to find in it something timeless,
 spiritual, elevated. When he at last discovered that no one
 woman could possibly fulfill this ambition, he experienced
 first disillusionment (cf. the two rejection poems of

12 Cf. the Third Vatican Mythog. 12. 1 "nam per
 Iunonem feminae, per Liberum mares liberari dicuntur et
 purgari."

13 Cf. in addition to the references cited passim
 in this paper, Enk, Comm. to Bk. 2, p. 394 "poetae enim
 in tutela Bacchi sunt, qui eos inspirare solet, cf. Horat.
 Epist. 11. 2. 77...[et] Propertius IV. 1. 62."

lll. xxiv and xxv) and then relief. His passions purged, he then went on in Book Three to explore the more fully poetic themes of moral development (e.g. lll. v; vii; xiii; xviii) and to more perfectly develop his style, while in Book Four he devotes almost all his energy to the working out of a specifically Roman treatment of the Aetia-motif as outlined by Callimachus. La Penna explains:

...nel secondo libro, il tentativo di un'elegia che avesse più larghezza e complessità psicologica e, nel terzo e nel quarto, il tentativo di dare alla sua poesia forza e contenuto di esperienza morale, civile, politica.¹⁴

Indeed, what else was there for him to do? Propertius had taken Cynthia and the amatory elegy as far as they could go--the immortalization of the beloved, the creation of a pure spirit and its identification with the inspirational Moon-goddess, the virginal Maid of the Silver Bow who renders the poet's face paler than her own through contemplation of her.¹⁵ In the final analysis, for Propertius poetry was primarily a recreation of the timeless, and the poet dwelt

¹⁴ La Penna, op. cit., p. 125.

¹⁵ Indeed, the passionate love-lyric has scarce progressed beyond the point at which Propertius left it: cf. for instance, Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci":

O What can ail thee Knight at arms,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 ...I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist & fever dew
 And on thy cheeks a fading rose
 Fast Withereth too --.

in his own world, symbolized by Helicon, where he was free to converse with the Muses and to surround himself with his own ideal world:

at Musae comites et carmina cara legenti
et defessa choris Calliopea meis. (lll. ii. 15-16)

("But with the Muses as my companions and my songs
dear to the reader and Callipe weary with tireless
song.")

Through the medium of his elegies the poet is enabled to surpass or overcome, as it were, the humanity of Cynthia and to make of her instead the symbol of all that is enchanting and divine in love. Mythology serves to demonstrate man's link with the gods and to effectively symbolize the power of the poetic spirit which fills the world. The poet then captures that spirit and through the medium of his poetry distills it in such a way that it communicates to the reader the poet's own sense of wonderment and mystery. Boucher elaborates:

L'elegie de Properce est aussi une vision de l'homme: dans cette conception élégiaque, l'homme se définit comme un individu, à partir de ses sentiments personnels, à l'écart des contraintes sociales, parfois contre elles, au milieu de souffrances proprement individuelles, entre le desir, le refus et la satisfaction, la fidélité et la trahison, face à la maladie, à la mort, aux amitiés, aux beautés de l'art et du monde.¹⁶

16 Boucher, op. cit., p. 480.

4. 2 11. 26A - The Dream Vision.

By identifying Cynthia with the spiritual force through which man is inspired to render articulate his own divinity and by expressing his faith in the immortality of that force, Propertius is in reality expressing his faith in man's own immortality and godhead. The universality of mythological exempla, expressing as they do the timeless psychological and spiritual truths of the human condition, are for Propertius a guarantee of his faith in the immortality of man. Nowhere is this belief more beautifully nor more poetically expressed than in 11. xxviA. The poem is presented as a dream vision, which is of itself an important factor.¹⁷ The dream which Propertius had terrified him ("quam timui," l. 7), for he saw Cynthia drowning in the sea and heard her in her death-throes calling upon his name. Suddenly, out of the waves appeared a dolphin, the same one which bore Arion so long ago, and saved the sinking Cynthia.

17 Cf. Nilsson, op. cit., p. 131: "In early times the greatest attention was paid to dreams, which seemed to be a message from the other world...". It might be added that this attention is by no means confined to the ancients. See, for example, Freud, "The Psychology of the Dream Process," The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, New York, Modern Library, 1938, p. 512: "Of the dream we know as yet only that it expresses a wish-fulfilment of the unconscious: and apparently the dominant preconscious system permits this fulfilment when it has compelled the wish to undergo certain distortions." Apparently the other world (i.e. 'dominant preconscious') has not yet left off sending us messages via the Somni portae.

At that precise moment, the poet was set to hurl himself into the waves after Cynthia, but fear suddenly awoke him from his dream:

iamque ego conabar summo me mittere saxo,
cum mihi discussit talia visa metus. (ll. 19-20)

("and I was just on the point of hurling myself from the top of the rock, when my fear dispelled such sights.")

What does it all mean? It is obviously a brilliant piece of symbolic poetry tantalizing in its interpretive possibilities. The divine intervention of the dolphin of Arion is of especial significance: Arion was under the tutelage of Apollo and the story of his rescue by the dolphin and his subsequent metamorphosis (along with the dolphin) is symbolic of resurrection and immortal life.¹⁸ Thus the rescue of Cynthia can be seen as due to the saving effect of poetry: as Arion was immortalized by Apollo, so Cynthia will be by the verses of Propertius.¹⁹ But there is more to

18 See Hyginus, *Fab.* 194 for this interpretation and cf. P. Grimal, "Les Intentions de Properce et la Composition du livre IV des 'Elegies'," *Latomus* XI, 1952, p. 441: "Le dauphin d'Arion est évidemment...le symbole du 'voyage' vers l'au-delà." (In a footnote at this point, Grimal adds: "On notera que le dauphin, animal apollinien, exprime ici la puissance salvatrice de la poésie: Cynthia sera sauvée des eaux orageuses de la vie par la puissance du poète.").

19 The dolphin also appears in connection with Dionysos, another symbol of the poet. This is related in the Seventh Homeric Hymn (to Dionysos): certain Tyrrhenian pirates seized the god, *νιδὸν γὰρ μιν ἔφαντο δλοτρεφείων βασιλῆων εἶναι* (ll. 11-12). Dionysos caused a vine to

it than that. In line 10 Propertius equates the soon-to-drown Cynthia with Leucothoe, the "White Goddess."²⁰

Leucothoe was the name given to Ino after her transformation into a sea-goddess. She was the sister of Semele, the mother of Dionysos by Zeus. After Zeus had released the infant Dionysos from his thigh, he sent the child to Ino and her husband Athamas.²¹ Thus Ino became the nursemaid of the divine Dionysos-child. But Hera, jealous of Zeus' indiscretion with Semele, caused Ino to go mad and to hurl herself along with her son Melicertes into the sea. A dolphin brought Melicertes to Corinth.²² "The rider on the dolphin, the divine boy of the sea, is familiar...from many pictures. He was called both Melikertes and Palaimon, and appeared as a second Dionysos."²³ The symbolism thus becomes even more involved, since there now appears Dionysos who, for the Augustans, is the divine symbol of the poet and who, as a child, was nursed by Ino who, after her metamorphosis,

grow up the mast and he himself turned into a lion, which so frightened the pirates that they jumped overboard and were turned into dolphins. Cf. also Apollod. 111. 37-38, and Ovid, Metam. 111. 597 sqq.

20 Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 184.

21 Apollod., The Library, 111. 4. 3.

22 Cf. Pausanias, 1. 44. 8.

23 Kerényi, Gods of the Greeks, p. 265.

was called Leucothoe and with whom Propertius has already identified Cynthia. Nor does the symbolism end here, for Leucothoe was transported to Rome, where she was known as Mater Matuta,²⁴ who is identified with the Dawn, or Aurora, the Heavenly Nurse,²⁵ and as such is identified with Artemis-

²⁴ Cf. Hyginus, Fab. 11. 5 "at Ino cum Melicerte filio suo in mare se praecipitavit: quam Liber Leucotheam voluit appellari, nos Matrem Matutam dicimus."

²⁵ Cf. A. Ernout, Recueil de Textes Latins Archaïques, Paris, Klincksieck, 1957, p. 42: "Matuta: déesse du matin, et aussi de la maturité; cf. maturus, matutinus; même racine *ma-, avec un autre suffixe, dans mane, manus." Cf. Ovid, Fasti 5. 160 'equi matutini' = 'the steeds of Aurora.' Cf. also C.I.L. 12 379, XI 6301:

Matre Matuta dono dedro matrona M. Curia Pola
Livia deda.

where deda = Τελήνη from root *dhei - "to suck" (whence felare, femina, τελὴν). Thus Mater Matuta is the "Dawn-Nurse"; cf. the illuminating note by Christinger and Borgeaud, Mythologie de la Suisse ancienne, Geneve, Librairie de l'Université Georg, 1963, n. 133, p. 123: "Plutarque, Isis et Osiris 35, signale que Dionysos, là, était nommé bougènes, 'fils de la vache': cela veut dire 'fils de la vache Sêmele' (la Terre, en thrace) et du taureau céleste Zeus. Dionysos naissant est donc un veau ayant pour nourrice l'Aurore-Inô-Leukothea: nécessairement une vache aussi. Les deux soeurs Sêmele et Inô sont donc pour le veau naissant Dionysos exactement ce que sont les deux soeurs védiques et le veau solaire, G. Dumézil, Déesses latines et mythes védiques, Coll. Latomus, t. xxv, Bruxelles, 1956, pp. 22 sq. Dumézil souligne et corrobore les observations d'Abel Bergaigne. On voit donc paraître, dans son ensemble primitif et indo-européen, la vraie figure de Dionysos, ou du moins un de ses aspects fondamentaux: un soleil levant ou veau d'or entouré de nourrices (les Ménades: les Filles de Soleil telles que Circé, Ariadné, Médée, etc.: les Artémis aurorales et courotrophes, c'est-à-dire nourrices du couros-garçon Dionysos; les Iphigénée accoucheuses et artémisiennes/aurorales.) Les Ushas-Aurores védiques ont donc leurs correspondances grecques rigoureuses. Nous pensons que les

Phosphoros, as the myths of Cephalus and Orion aptly illustrate.²⁶ Thus, in one magnificent poem, Propertius manages to i) symbolize the death of the mortal Cynthia and her spiritual rebirth and immortality through the procreative process of poetry; ii) identify her in her new role as the nourishing Muse to his infant creative talents; and iii) establish her identification with Artemis-Phosphoros, goddess of the Dawn and divine patroness and nursemaid of his genius. There can scarcely be another poem equal to this one in richness of symbolic meaning and sustained mythological erudition.

Liberalia, fêtes de Liber et des liberi (enfants qui prennent la toge virile) sont quelque chose d'authentiquement romaine, donc indo-européen, et que l'Aurore nourrice des garçons romains, Mater Matuta, est la nourrice à la fois de Liber et des Liberi, indépendamment d'Ino et de Dionysos, mais parallèlement, en vertu de l'origine commune indo-européen.

²⁶ For Cephalus, see Hesiod, Theog., 986 sqq.; Apollod., The Library, I. 9. 4; II. 4. 7; III. 14. 3; Paus. I. 37. 6; Ovid, Metam., VII, 661 sqq.; Hyg. Fab., 48; 160; 189; 241; 270. For Orion, see Homer, Il., XVIII, 486 sqq.; Apollod., The Library, I. 4. 2 sqq.; Hyg. Astr., II. 34; Servius, ad Verg. Aen., X. 763 sqq.

4.3 Again a Dream: The Final Apptheosis.

Having so admirably succeeded in creating a divine Muse out of a human passion and of resolving the conflict within himself concerning the dual meaning which Cynthia represented to him, the poet turned to other pursuits (such as, as have already been stated, the working out of the AETIA-motif in Book Four). For Books One and Two are essentially products of Propertius' youth, as Books Three and Four reflect a more mellowed existence and a cooled, calmed ardour. Yet Propertius was far more successful than possibly even he imagined in isolating that spark which animated his beloved and in fanning it into a divine fire. By thus affirming the immortality of Cynthia, Propertius has also expressed his faith in the ultimate sanctity of human life, that half-way house between beastliness and blessedness, and in the purgative power of poetry to burn away the dross outer shell of our mortality, as Demeter did with Demophoon, and to make us one again with the Immortals:

sunt aliquid Manes: letum non omnia finit

("the spirit does exist: death is not the end of everything." VI. vii. 1)

he says in a memorable poem in which Cynthia returns from the beyond in a dream. She is immortal after all! In lines 85-86 of IV. vii she instructs him as to the epithet he should affix to her tomb--he is to write AUREA CYNTHIA, the

common epithet of a goddess,²⁷ and she assures him that this dream is no mere fantasy:

nec tu sperne piis venientia somnia portis:
cum pia venerunt somnia, pondus habent (ll. 87-88).

("and don't ignore dreams coming from the Blessed Gates: when good dreams have come, they have weight.")²⁸

She then continues on and reveals that he will soon join her in immortality:

nunc te possideant aliae; mox sola tenebo:
mecum eris, et mixtis ossibus ossa teram. (ll. 93-94)

("Now let others possess you; soon I alone will hold you: you will be here with me and once our shades have been united I will crush your spirit in my embrace.")

In lines 58 sqq. we are told that she is already wrapped in that "lovely fragrance" which emanates from the gods,²⁹ the fragrance of the roses of Elysium:³⁰ she is

27 Cf. Od. 4. 14; Hesiod, Theog. 454; Hom. h. to Art., ix. 4; the list could be protracted almost endlessly.

28 Cf. Butler & Barber, op. cit., p. 365. "the central idea is that righteous spirits permitted to revisit the earth speak truth."

29 See the Homeric h. to Demeter, ll. 277-278.

30 Cf. Tibullus, l. iii. 57-62:
sed me, quod facilis tenero sum semper Amori,
ipsa Venus campos ducet in Elysios.
hic choreae cantusque vigent, passimque vagantes.
dulce sonant tenui gutture carmen aves;
fert casiam non culta seges, totosque per agros
floret odoratis terra benigna rosis;
and Pindar, fr. 95:

φανικρόδοις π' ἐν λεμάνεσσι πρόστιον αὐτῶν
καὶ λιβάνῳ σκλαφόν καὶ χρυσέοις καρποῖς βε-
βρυλλός.

already the companion of two legendary heroines whose great love had elevated them to the ranks of the gods--Hypermetre, the only one of the Danaides who spared her husband, and Andromeda, who accompanied Perseus to Argos and whose devotion gained her her immortality among the stars. Here, in one of the last glimpses one has of Cynthia, she is confidently presented by Propertius in the company of the other goddesses whose love had gained Elysium for them and she is swathed in the perfume of godhead. Cynthia then has been deified by Propertius and given all the attributes of divinity--final proof of her immortality and deathlessness.

Thus, having been assured by Cynthia herself of the success of his attempt to fashion an immortal goddess out of common clay through the magic of his verse, Propertius might well say with Pindar:

Χάρις δ' ἅπερ ἅπαντα τεύχει τὰ μέλιχα λινάτοῖς,
ἐπιφέρουσα τιμὴν καὶ ἅπτετον ἐμῆσ' αὖτο πωτόν
ἔμμεναι τὸ πολλάκις.
ἡμέραι δ' ἐπίλοιποι
μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι.

("But the Grace of song, that maketh for man all things that soothe him, by adding her spell, full often causeth even what is past belief to be indeed believed; but the days that are still to come are the wisest witnesses.")³¹

31 Oly. 1. 30-34, Sandys' trans.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the foregoing investigations, certain tentative conclusions may now be postulated. As J.P. Boucher has so wisely warned,¹ the "romance" between Propertius and Cynthia is not to be taken literally: his work is not an autobiography, arranged in a more or less chronological order, which details the many vicissitudes of a stormy and passionate relationship. From earliest times the dedication of verse to one's Muse served as a valuable reflection of the faithfulness of the poet's devotion to Her. But the world of Homer's mythos had long ago broken down, to be replaced by new beliefs, new theories, but above all, new realities. The realistic manner of dealing with Nature and with Man as set forth, for example, in Lucretius profoundly affected the poetic Weltanschauung of the poetae novi² and the experiments of Mimnermus, Philetas, Callimachus, Gallus and above all, Catullus, seemed to show Propertius the way. He was striving to establish a respected place in the elegiac tradition for love-poetry, and he finally hit upon a way in which he might be innovative within the limitations of the elegiac tradition. Taking his cue, then, from Lucretius and Catullus, he would write poetry dealing in a personal way

1 Boucher, op. cit., pp. 399 sqq.

2 See Quinn, op. cit., pp. 144 sqq.

with private emotion and by so doing he would at one and the same time be continuing on in the elegiac traditions established by Callimachus and Philetas while also be providing for his own reputation by producing something unique in his chosen field. Then, rather than dedicate his work to some impersonal Muse, who by that time had lost any really practical significance and poetic vitality, Propertius devised the novel ideal of converting the spiritual essence of his Cynthia into the poetic representation of the creative force which inspires men to conceptualize their emotions into symbols--in a word, the poetic Muse.

Intimately versed in poetic mythology, he sought for a connection with that world of traditional symbolism with which he might identify his idealized lady and decided upon Artemis, female principle and counterpart of Apollo, though in her aspect of goddess of Light and Heavenly Nursemaid. By this identification he thus secured a connection between Artemis Phosphoros and Aurora the Dawn-goddess, between Leucothea the "White Goddess" and Mater Matuta, a connection which stretched all the way back to Ushas, the Divine Nurse of the Rig-Veda, thereby firmly establishing himself in the mainstream of Indo-European poetic tradition.

However, his attempts at separating the spiritual element of Cynthia from her mortal one resolved into a grave spiritual struggle within the poet himself: unable (or

unwilling) to maintain a clear distinction between the two personalities of Cynthia, he was forced to reject her mortal aspect and to concentrate solely upon her symbolic importance to the development of his verse. As a result, she becomes less identifiable as a real person and more the idealized external symbol of the creative principle within Propertius himself. It is seen that this symbolic refinement of Cynthia becomes complete by the end of **Book Three**, at which time he renounces the mortal Cynthia altogether and in **Book Four** devotes most of his energy to questions of poetic style, subject-matter and his own place in the poetic Pantheon.

That Propertius succeeded admirably in all he set out to accomplish-- i) carrying on the elegiac tradition inherited from Callimachus and Philetas, ii) writing poetry dealing with personal emotion in the traditions of Gallus and Catullus, iii) and identifying his Muse with the mythic world of the past as personified in the living reality of his Cynthia--even Propertius himself appreciated. In one of the last glimpses we have of Cynthia (IV. vii) she herself appears to Propertius in a dream vision and assures him that she has indeed attained immortality through the divine power of his verse. "That he himself attained considerable respectability we know from Ovid, Tristia IV. x. 45:

saepe suos solitus recitare Propertius ignes,
iure sodalici, quo mihi iunctus erat.

where he is seen to have almost become a Roman poet-laureate of sorts, gathering around himself all the young poets in a literary circle and discoursing on his techniques for the writing of "ignes," i.e. love-poetry. The famous statement of Quintilian (Orat. X. i. 93) "sunt qui Propertium malint," indicates that among certain people he was the preferred writer of elegies. He is also mentioned with respect and honour by Pliny, Martial and Apuleius,³ and as an indication of his popularity among the people, there is even a humorous reference to his poetry among Pompeiian graffiti: "candida me docuit nigras odisse puellas."⁴

Secure, then, in his reputation and justifiably proud of his achievements, he turns his attention to a whole new type of elegy in **Book Four**, where he seizes upon the lead given by Callimachus and attempts to write a Roman Aetia. This is left incomplete for some reason (death? lack of motivation?) and it was given to Ovid to complete the work in his Fasti. Yet irrespective of this pioneer work in the fourth **Book**, any ultimate consideration of the contributions of Propertius must inevitably include a consideration of the creation which he expressed in the figure of Cynthia. "Cynthia

³ Pliny, Epist. VI. xv. i and IX. xxii. 1; Martial, Epig., VIII. lxxiii. 2 and XIV. clxxix. 1; Apuleius, Apologia x.

⁴ C.I.L.⁴ 1520; cf. Prop. 1. i. 5.

rara mea est!"⁵ he exclaimed, and indeed she was--his own unique creation, unmatched in depth of symbolic meaning and in brilliance of poetic expression. She was his and his alone, a pure spirit which served as his link to the wondrous world of legend and imagination, a world more real to him than the one in which he lived. She was the medium through which, for one brief instant, he could gaze at the Goddess with unblinking eyes and feel as one with that world of the imagination which manages to so effectively elude most men less fortunate than he.

Finally, as a recommendation for further research into the problems arising out of this paper, it seems worthwhile to re-state what was hinted at in the Introduction--namely, a very detailed and penetrating study into the Etrusco-Umbrian origins of Propertius, together with a thorough investigation of Etrusco-Italic mythology and religion, in order to ascertain as precisely as is possible what effect, if any, this background might have had in framing Propertius' mystical ideas regarding the poetical and symbolic importance which Woman plays in his verse. Dumézil has shown that this feminist outlook is a feature of Indian poetry, as well as of Teutonic and Celtic verse, but it does not seem to be a feature of the Roman outlook. Perhaps there

⁵ Prop. 1. viiiB, 42.

is no really effective way of ascertaining or determining just what can account for this attitude on the part of Propertius. But the attempt should be made.

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APPENDIX 1

ABSTRACT OF

Cynthia and Artemis: A Problem of Identification¹

The purpose of the paper is to suggest the hypothesis that Propertius intended to identify the Cynthia of his poetry with Artemis, both in her guise of Phosphoros, the Dawn-goddess to whom the poetic hunter offers worship, and of Moon-goddess, the youngest member of the Artemis-triad and inspiratrix of creativity.

In Chapter One a brief statement of the status of myth in poetry is prefaced to a broader consideration of the problem of the seeming subjectivity of Latin elegy as contradistinguished from the relative objectivity of Greek elegy: the theories of Leo and Jacoby, who began this controversy, are considered, along with the comments and conclusions of more recent scholars, in an attempt to see more clearly the contribution of Propertius in his personal use of myth throughout his poetry.

Chapter Two then proceeds from a consideration of the attempts of modern critics at elucidating this problem of

¹ E.C. Marquis, Master's thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ottawa, Canada, 1969, xi-177 pp.

identification and to this is added the use of the name 'Cynthia' among classical writers. It is then seen that Cynthia is used when referring to Artemis in her guise of huntress (agrotera) or of Moon-goddess (Selene).

It is then postulated that Propertius means the name Cynthia to be used in place of the epic dedication to the Mousa, that for him she represented the Muse of his poetic art. The rest of the chapter deals with the many identifications (though not with all) the poet makes between Cynthia and Artemis throughout his corpus, and ends by stating that by the end of the Second Book the poet had conceived of Cynthia as a duality--she is both human and divine--and in fact her human characteristics become less important as he proceeds through Book Three, where she becomes completely apotheosized.

Chapter Three deals with the poetic methodology of Propertius and Four considers the success of the identification process, where it is stated that the deification of the creative impulse within himself (i.e. Cynthia) really implies for Propertius a belief in the ultimate immortality of man.

In the Conclusion it is then postulated that Propertius was attempting to establish a respected place in the literary tradition for erotic elegy and for him the way seemed to consist, not in addressing one's creative efforts to the Muse of the epic and tragic poets, but rather to deify the very love-object which one celebrates in the elegy: in a word, to turn one's beloved into one's Muse and to strengthen the identification by means of mythological exempla.