# NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

## PROPERTIANA

### I. Propertius and Gallus

These notes deal with some problems, interpretative and textual, in *Monobiblos* 5 and 10, both addressed to Gallus.

"Invide, tu tandem voces compesce molestas / et sine nos cursu, quo sumus, ire pares" (1. 5. 1–2).[1] What does *pares* mean if *nos* is Propertius and Cynthia? They are not "well matched" or "equal," like the ideally happy lovers of 1. 1. 32 ("in tuto semper amore pares"). The misery against which Propertius warns Gallus if he seduces Cynthia is Propertius' own lot, inequality in love. P. J. Enk[2] settled for Paganelli's translation ("laissenous continuer notre course ensemble"), illustrating with Horace's *pariter* in *Odes* 1. 35. 26–28 ("diffugiunt cadis / cum faece siccatis amici / ferre iugum pariter dolosi"). L. A. Moritz[3] rightly complained that the illustration was scarcely cogent,[4] quoting against it lines from *Odes* 1. 33 (to Albius, author of *miserabiles elegi*): "sic visum Veneri, cui placet impares / formas atque animos sub iuga aenea / saevo mittere cum ioco" (10–12). Love elegy demands that lovers be *impares*.

Moritz' solution was to refer *nos* to Propertius and Gallus: they are friends, and Propertius is asking Gallus not to spoil their friendship, for by definition (Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca) friends must be *pares*, and *invidia* poses one of the greatest threats to that essential equality. It is a tempting explanation. It especially, as Moritz claimed, does justice to *nos*. The poem, after all, is addressed to Gallus. But the first line surely is a trifle strong to be uttered by friend to friend.

I suggest that clues to the meaning of *pares* lie in 1. 10, to be discussed below, and in 1. 13. Gallus, the flippant, casual lover who has exploited many girls (13. 5–6)[5] and who himself finally falls victim to real love (10, 13 *passim*), is a foil to the serious, committed Propertius. They are "well-matched" opponents,[6] not friends. Their opposing views on *amor* balance each other. In l. 5, however, Gallus' envy and his desire for Cynthia are upsetting that balance. Ultimately, if his prayers are answered (9), if Cynthia should be his lover, he and Propertius will be *pariter miseri* (29) and so, paradoxically, no longer *pares*.[7] Of course, since otherwise he may lose Cynthia, Propertius wants them to remain *pares* in the old way. Gallus should content himself with ordinary girls and leave Cynthia to Propertius.

"Non est illa vagis similis collata puellis: / molliter irasci non solet illa tibi" (1. 5. 7–8). Such is the reading of *O*. The problem is *tibi*. It makes no sense as direct object. As a generic

1. Quotations are from E. A. Barber's *Sexti Properti Carmina*[2] (Oxford, 1960).

2. P. J. Enk (ed.), *Sex. Propertii Elegiarum liber I (Monobiblos)*, II (Leyden, 1946), 55–56.

3. "Well-matched Lovers (Propertius 1. 5)," *CP*, LXII (1967), 106–108.

4. The same should be said for *eiusdem iugi pares* (Paul. Fest. 92. 22, *iuges*), added to Enk's note by D. R. Shackleton Bailey (*Propertiana* [Cambridge, 1956], p. 270, hereafter cited as Shackleton Bailey), and for *iunge pares* (Virg. *Georg.* 3. 169) and *pariter in bella ruebant* (Virg. *Aen.* 9. 182), both quoted by W. A. Camps in support of "the two of us together" (*Propertius: Elegies Book I* [Cambridge, 1961], p. 54, hereafter cited as Camps).

5. "Dum tibi deceptis augetur fama puellis, certus et in nullo quaeris amore moram." One always hesitates to explain a particular Elegy of Propertius by referring to others. But surely he intended 1. 13 to be read after 1. 5 and 1. 10.

6. So, e.g., Scipio thought himself and Hannibal to be *pares*: "Habebo, Q. Fabi, parem quem das Hannibalem . . ." (Liv. 28. 44. 9).

7. In detail, they will be *pariter miseri* if Gallus displays to Cynthia even *parva vestigia* of his old *culpa* (25). The *culpa* will be that *superbia* toward girls on which Gallus' reputation has been built (cf. 1. 13. 5 quoted in n. 5), and which Cynthia will not tolerate, insisting as she does on *grave servitium* (19). She will leave him, he will be *de tanto nomine rumor* (26), and Propertius will be unable to offer *solacia* (27). For more imaginative interpretations of *parva vestigia culpae* (insufficient signs of passion, indiscreet betrayal of the affair to others), see Camps, pp. 55–56; neither is immediately compelling. Finally, it might be worth considering that *priscis imaginibus* of 24 ("nescit amor priscis cedere imaginibus") may not refer to actual nobility of birth, but may rather be an ironic allusion to Gallus' well established *nomen* and *fama* as playboy. Real love makes no allowance for that kind of *nobilitas*.

it is feeble, and it is no better as an ethic, so emphatically placed.[8] Hence for *tibi*, *mihi* (*s*) or *viris* (Eichstadt), and for *solet*, *sciet* (*s*) or *volet* (Palmer). But since a general statement, expanding that of the hexameter, would seem to be most fitting, *solet* sounds too good not to be true. I should like to dismiss *tibi* as corrupt. Read *diu*: "molliter irasci non solet illa diu."[9]

1. 10 used to be a fairly easy poem. Propertius' delight in seeing Gallus and his girl making love and his words of warning and advice all appeared comprehensible enough. Then Anna S. Benjamin suggested that Propertius had not seen the lovers but rather had been reading a pretty vivid elegy by Gallus.[10] That brought a long reply from H. Akbar Khan who argued, in brief, that Propertius had seen them and that his joy, expressed with a good deal of irony, was joy in Gallus' first success, for he had shared too long, as weary confidant, in Gallus' sorrows.[11]

Benjamin's interpretation has its appeal, but it falls down hard when confronted by *affueram* (2) and *vidimus* (6). Some sort of qualification should be expected, even from a poet, if those verbs are not to be taken literally.[12] Khan's also has its difficulties. For Propertius' former role of confidant he points to *vestris conscius in lacrimis* in line 2 (Propertius had known the lovers' tears of strife), *quotiens . . . illa vocanda* in line 4 (he had prayed for their night of reconciliation), and *didici reticere dolores* in line 13 (he had learned to keep their troubles secret). But *conscius* stands squarely with *affueram* at the beginning of the line and cannot be stretched to mean *cum conscius fuissem*. Those tears were tears of pleasure.[13] With *vocanda* Khan understood *erat*. But the subject of *vocanda* is "that (night when I saw you)," for *illa* looks back to *noctem* (3) which is defined by *cum te . . . vidimus* (5–6). Its auxiliary, therefore, must be *est* or *erit*, not *erat*. As for *didici*, it may mean no more than "I know from my own experience" (cf. *has didici . . . notas* in 3. 8. 18).

For a simpler reading of the Latin I offer the following. Propertius is elated because Gallus finally has been swept off his feet by love. As noted above, Gallus had deceived many a girl, and had wanted even Cynthia, without stopping to think of the consequences. Now, at last, he will know what real love means. Propertius is justly happy. Gallus' boastful, selfish, casual style has been shattered. *O iucunda quies*—"O sweet relief!"

Propertius did see the lovers.[14] But no mere voyeur is he. Sleep tempted. Only that he was witnessing true *amor* kept him awake (7–10). He watched as a doctor in bedside vigil, observing the patient swoon (*morientem*, 5) and noting his broken speech (6). Gallus had not been afraid to place himself in Propertius' care and now may expect *munera* (11–12).[15] Propertius will not gossip about the sickness (13), but he has much more than a doctor's *fides* (14). He can join *diversos . . . amantis* (15), open a mistress' *tardas . . . fores* (16), and heal *curas . . . recentis* (17). There is no light *medicina* in his words (18). Cynthia herself trained him (19–20).[16] From this doctor of love Gallus gets a strong prescription (21–30).[17]

8. See H. E. Butler and E. A. Barber, *The Elegies of Propertius* (Oxford, 1933), p. 161, and, for generous discussion, Shackleton Bailey (pp. 18–19) who, however, favors removal of *solet*.

9. Cf. *non solet esse diu* (2. 25. 34), *neve tacere diu* (1. 10. 22). An early attempt to "improve" the line, prompted maybe by *quod si . . . non tibi* (9–12), might explain the intrusion of *tibi*.

10. "A Note on Propertius 1. 10: *O iucunda quies*," *CP*, LX (1965), 178.

11. "Irony in Propertius 1. 10," *CP*, LXIII (1968), 131–34.

12. And there is Khan's objection that *alternis vocibus* (10) scarcely connotes a subjective love elegy.

13. For discussion, see Shackleton Bailey, p. 30. It should be noted also that *vestris* here refers to Gallus and the girl. Did she too confide in Propertius? And do not love affairs generally deteriorate from good to bad rather than improve from bad to good?

14. In 1. 13 he repeats strongly: *vidi ego . . . vidi ego* (14–15).

15. The accepted reading in 11 now seems to be *concredere nobis* (*V2*); see its defense by Shackleton Bailey, p. 29. But the poem's medical imagery may recommend the better attested *concedere nobis* (*O*). Admittedly, we "entrust" ourselves to doctors, but "submit" or "yield" might be thought more appropriate. Cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 4. 29. 63: "ut magnitudini medicinae doloris magnitudo concederet."

16. Cf. Camps's note on "docuit . . . quaecumque petenda / quaeque cavenda": "the phrasing suggests a doctor's instructions to his patient for the good of his health."

17. Propertius' doctor pose perhaps throws light on the text of 28 also. Usually we read *effectu . . . fruare bono*, although *effectu* (*s*) is less well transmitted than *effecto* (*O*). Restore the latter and the line may be rendered: ". . . the more often are you likely to enjoy good health when it has been achieved," i.e., if Gallus obeys the imperatives of 21 ff. he will have good health, but (*at*) to enjoy it he must become ever more *humilis* and *subiectus amori* (27). In the context,

Poor Gallus. Will he ever pull through? And did any doctor ever revel so in his patient's distress? It does look very much like a nice case of Propertian irony.

## II. Cynthia's Poetry: Propertius 2. 3. 21–22

In 2. 3. 9 ff. Propertius insists that he was captured not so much by Cynthia's beauty as by her dancing, by her lyre-playing, "et sua cum antiquae committit scripta Corinnae, / carmina †quae quivis† non putat aequa suis" (2. 3. 21–22). This is Barber's note on the pentameter: "Carmina qu(a)e quivis *O*, *quo servato post* carmina *et* quivis *dist. Rothstein*: ł lyrines *in mg. V2 et similia pro* quivis *in versu habent* ς, *unde* carminaque Erinnes *Volscus*, *Beroaldus* carminaque haec quaevis (haec *sc. huius aetatis*) *Barber* (quaevis *iam Palmer*): carminaque illius *Otto*: carminaque ullius *Rossberg*. *An* carmina quod quaevis *legendum*?"

No good sense can be had from the line as it stands. Johnson took *non* with *aequa* ("poems which any poet thinks not equal, i.e. superior, to his own"), but Propertius' most extravagant word order could hardly support such litotes.[18] Punctuation helps little: "she does not allow your common anybody's verse to be a match for hers" (Phillimore, punctuating *Corinnae*, and *quivis*, with an awkward ellipse of *scribit*);[19] "she does not think poems, which anyone else thinks equal to his own, to be equal to hers" (Butler-Barber, punctuating, with Rothstein, *Corinnae*, and *carmina*, and *quivis*, and using lots of imagination).[20] And there was Postgate's desperate punctuation (quotation marks around *carmina . . . suis*, with *putet* for *putat*).[21]

Of conjectures, *carminaque Erinnes* is the least sound, inspired as it was by *lyrines*, probably a gloss on *Corinnae*.[22] Without his elucidation, Barber's *carminaque haec quaevis* is obscure.[23] Palmer's *quae quaevis* (with *quae* = *Corinna*) jars.[24] The *illius* (= *Corinnae*) in Otto's *carminaque illius* might be considered a shade strong.[25] Foster's *carminaque quoiusvis* may be preferable to Rossberg's weaker *carminaque ullius*, but with *quoiusvis* some trace of *cuius-* might have been expected in the MSS, and there is none.[26]

My own suggestion is prompted by syntax. The pentameter ends that long period which starts in 9 ("nec me tam facies, quamvis sit candida, cepit") and grows through 13 (*nec . . . comae*), 14 (*non oculi*), and 15 (*nec si qua . . . lucet*) to reach:

quantum quod posito formose saltat Iaccho,
egit ut euhantis dux Ariadna choros,
et quantum, Aeolio cum temptat carmina plectro,
par Aganippaeae ludere docta lyrae [17–20].

The closing couplet, no less than those last two, would seem to need a correlative. There is room for *quam*: "carmina quam quaevis non putat aequa suis" ("and . . . as much as she does not think any poems equal to her own").[27]

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*bonum* is readily synonymous with *valetudo*. As Cicero says, *bonum valetudo* (*Fin.* 5. 28. 84). And *effecto* will produce leonine rhyme, which Propertius likes; he has six other examples in this Elegy's fifteen pentameters (2, 4, 6, 12, 18, 26).

18. Johnson, "A Note on Propertius 2. 3. 22 f." (*CJ*, XLI [1945–46], 20–23). He earned guarded approval from Enk (*Sex. Propertii Elegiarum liber II* [Leyden, 1962]), who noticed that the same interpretation had been proposed by F. G. Barth in his edition of 1777. Johnson himself admitted some debt to G. G. Ramsay (*Selections from Tibullus and Propertius*[3] [New York, 1917]), who had rendered the line: "'poems which any author however famous cannot deem equal to his own,' i.e., only equal: he must deem them superior."

19. J. S. Phillimore, *Sexti Properti Carmina*[2] (Oxford, 1907); translation in his *Propertius* (Oxford, 1906).

20. Butler and Barber, *op. cit.* (n. 8). H. Tränkle has argued that the *carmina* of 22 should not be thought to be Corinna's: "Cynthia setzt ihre Gedichte dem Werken der Corinna an die Seite, nicht den Versuchen jedes beliebigen Dichterlings" (*Die Sprachkunst des Properz* [Wiesbaden, 1960], p. 163).

21. On this, see B. O. Foster, "On Some Passages in Propertius," *CP*, II (1907), 211–12.

22. See Shackleton Bailey, p. 66.

23. Cf. *carminaque aequaevis* (Scaliger) and *carminaque a vivis* (Baehrens).

24. Shackleton Bailey, p. 66, found it attractive, "if I knew of a parallel for the assonance."

25. Camps (*Propertius: Elegies Book II* [Cambridge, 1967]) brought this conjecture into his text. He gives no discussion.

26. Foster, *op. cit.* (n. 21), pp. 211–12. He points to the transmission of *quoius* (1. 20. 45), *quoius*, *quovis*, and *quoilibet* (2. 6. 26), *quoi* (2. 23. 1), and *quoi* (2. 24. 3). Respectively, *cuius*, *cuivis*, *cui*, and *cui* also are attested and preferred.

27. "Carmina quam quaevis non putat" = "quam quae carmina vis non putat" = "quam quod carmina ulla non putat." The *quam* will be a final seal on *nec tam* of 9. Barber's *carmina quod quaevis* gets the same idea, but is further removed from the reading of *O* and weakens the couplet by making it depend on *quantum* in 19.

The point of course is Cynthia's *superbia*, in poetry as in love. Corinna, so the sources say, had matched her poetry against Pindar's, criticizing his work and defeating him in competition, once or five times.[28] But Cynthia's *superbia* exceeds even Corinna's *superbia*, for Cynthia thinks her poetry superior to any poetry.

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28. Corinna's criticism of Pindar: Plut. *Glor. Ath.* 4. 347; schol. Ar. *Ach.* 720 (= Corinna 688 in D. L. Page's *Poetae Melici Graeci* [Oxford, 1962]). Pindar's defeat: Paus. 9. 22. 3 (once); Ael. *VH* 13. 25 and *Suda*, *s.v. Korinna* (five times).

## *XEIPIAN*: *AJAX* 494–95

μή μ' ἀξιώσῃς βάξιν ἀλγεινὴν λαβεῖν
τῶν σῶν ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν, χειρίαν ἀφείς τινι.

It is not immediately clear from the context just what "grievous report" or "painful rumor" Tecmessa fears. Yet since βάξεις usually have a specific content,[1] one wonders whether she may be hinting at something with her vague words. We learn from the following lines that her dread in Ajax' death is being given over to another man to be taken by force and subjected to servitude: "For... the day you die and by your death desert me, that day will see me outraged too, forcibly dragged by the Greeks, together with your boy, to lead a slave's life."[2] Her fears are much the same as those of Andromache in *Iliad* 6, and since Tecmessa's speech to Ajax is modeled upon Andromache's to Hector, perhaps a look at the familiar words of Andromache will help us anticipate how Sophocles' audience would interpret Tecmessa's emotions.

Andromache's central appeal to Hector is to his sense of duty to his φίλοι. Such also is Tecmessa's appeal to Ajax. The difference between the two women is that Tecmessa belongs to Ajax only from having shared his bed and having borne him a son. She is aware of this insecurity and so invokes memory of that bed in her supplication to him (493). A further indication of Tecmessa's insecurity in this regard is in the speech she imagines coming from the mouth of someone in the Greek camp after Ajax' death. She might be referred to mockingly as Ajax' former bedmate (ὁμευνέτιν); whereas in Hector's imagined scene Andromache's captors would at least refer to her as the wife of Hector.[3]

Andromache's fear has much the same basis as Tecmessa's. Hector's death would leave her a widow and her son an orphan. She begins and ends her speech with these thoughts (*Il.* 6. 407, 432). In both places she uses the word "widow" (χήρη) of herself. Her appeal to Hector's pity is largely based upon her bereavement in case of his death. He is everything to her; losing him is equivalent to her burial (410 ff.). Tecmessa's appeal is largely on the same grounds, giving more weight to the fate of the orphaned son owing, perhaps, to the insecurity of her own relationship with Ajax (469–99; 510–19). Yet, although she fears bereavement as much as Andromache does, nowhere does she use the word "widow." Could it be that since she is not truly Ajax' wife she feels that she cannot use that word of herself? Ajax is more certain of her place in his affections. She has touched him, and in his monologue he reveals how his firm intentions are being ruffled by pity for his family after his suicide: οἰκτίρω δέ νιν / χήραν παρ' ἐχθροῖς παῖδά τ' ὀρφανὸν λιπεῖν (652–53).

If my collation of her emotions with those of Andromache is justified, then Tecmessa's great fear is of news of Ajax' death and of her consequent widowhood; that may well be the unspecified βάξιν ἀλγεινήν of line

1. At *Aj.* 998 Teucer, upon seeing the dead Ajax, tells how he has hurried home after hearing the ὀξεῖα βάξις which is news of Ajax' death. At Soph. *El.* 637–42, Clytemnestra prays to Apollo that he hear from her the κεκρυμμένην βάξιν about her dream—hidden lest Electra broadcast the βάξιν ματαίαν about the whole city. She is concealing the specific content so that Electra cannot divulge it. At *Trach.* 87, Hyllus learns the βάξιν θεσφάτων which Jameson correctly translates "contents of the oracle." Compare Aesch. *PV* 663, *Ag.* 10; Eur. *Hel.* 350, etc.

2. John Moore's translation in *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Grene, II (Chicago, 1957).

3. See W. B. Stanford (ed.), *Ajax* (London, 1963), on lines 501–503.