

PROPERTIUS 1.18

J. N. GRANT

THIS ARTICLE is not intended to be a comprehensive treatment of Propertius 1.18, although it is hoped that two of the three topics to be discussed will illuminate to some extent the poem as a whole. In the first section the function of the poem's *mise-en-scène* will be examined. The second will be concerned with the interpretation of lines 11–16 and of line 15 in particular (*ut tibi sim merito semper furor*). The topic of the third part is the text of line 23 where the MSS offer *an tua quod* or *ah tua quot*.

The setting

*haec certe deserta loca et taciturna querenti,
et vacuum Zephyri possidet aura nemus.
hic licet occultos proferre impune dolores—
si modo sola queant saxa tenere fidem!*

Solmsen suggested that “the physical surroundings symbolize his [i.e., the poet’s] inner condition and his present relation to Cynthia” and that “the scenery accords with Propertius’ emotional condition.”¹ These sentiments are echoed by Ross: “The desolation corresponds to the lover’s abandoned solitude.”² There is truth in these comments, but the setting plays a more varied and significant role than the one described by these two critics.

Even a cursory reading of the first four verses immediately evokes the well-known motif of the lover who seeks the solitude of the countryside to give voice to and thus to assuage his unhappiness over misfortune in love. Commentators refer to Orpheus, as described in the fragment of Phanocles, to Corydon in Virgil’s second *Eclogue*, and to Gallus in the tenth. Acontius too was an ill-starred lover who had recourse to the countryside and Francis Cairns has recently strengthened the case for regarding the Callimachean treatment of the Acontius-Cydippe story as a strong influence on Propertius in the composition of this poem.³

¹F. Solmsen, “Three Elegies of Propertius’ First Book,” *CPh* 57 (1962) 74, 80.

²D. O. Ross, Jr, *Backgrounds to Augustan Poetry: Gallus, Elegy and Rome* (Cambridge 1975) 71.

³“Propertius i.18 and Callimachus, *Acontius and Cydippe*,” *CR* n.s. 19 (1969) 131–134. Cairns convincingly pointed out a number of correspondences between 1.18 and Aristaenetus 1.10, which appears to paraphrase the Callimachean version of the story in the *Actia*, to confirm and expand upon what fr. 73 (Pfeiffer) suggests, that Propertius drew on Callimachus for this poem.

From the first verse we are to imagine that the speaker⁴ has finally found the secluded spot he has been looking for. This is the implication of the emphatic *haec* in line 1 and the equally emphatic *hic* in line 3. The description in the opening verses suggests a pastoral setting, though hardly the *locus amoenus*. There are rocks and a *nemus*, but the rocks are *sola* and the *nemus* is *vacuum*. What is stressed is the remoteness of the place and the complete absence of other human beings. That is not an uncommon feature of the *topos*. More unusual is the other characteristic of the setting. It is *taciturna querenti*; the place will make no verbal response to the lover's complaints. The juxtaposition of the two words and their close semantic relationship make this meaning clear, though in many translations the verse is often translated to mean "this certainly is a deserted and quiet spot for a *querens*." The reason that the poet has made this particular point about the setting is clarified by the implications of line 3: "*Here* I can express my secret anguish with impunity." These words prompt the obvious questions of where would the lover voice his complaint without impunity and of what would be the nature of the punishment. The answer to the first, as has long been recognized,⁵ is "face to face with Cynthia" and the answer to the second lies in the *persona* of that lady. In the *Monobiblos* the first indication of the pertinent aspect of her character appears at 1.3.17-18:

*non tamen ausus eram dominae turbare quietem,
expertae metuens iurgia saevitiae.*

Propertius leaves us in no doubt that she is not a woman to be trifled with or crossed. Particularly relevant to 1.18 is a couplet in 1.4, the poem in which Propertius warns Bassus to give up trying to separate Cynthia and him. If he does not do so, he will suffer the consequences:

*non impune feres: sciet haec insana puella
et tibi non tacitis vocibus hostis erit. (17-18)*

Just as Bassus' punishment will consist of *non tacitis vocibus*, so in 1.18 Propertius' impunity rests on the *taciturnitas* of the place.⁶ The reason then that Propertius chooses this place and describes it as *taciturna querenti* is that he fears the punishment of a verbal lashing from Cynthia which a complaint from him might arouse.⁷ Thus the manner in which

⁴Subsequent references to the speaker of the poem as Propertius are for convenience only and are not meant to imply any historical reality in the circumstances evoked by the poem.

⁵Vulpianus' note on *impune*, for example, reads *etenim si hoc fieret praesente Cynthia, omnino periculosum foret*.

⁶For Cynthia's temperament cf. also 1.6.13-16; 3.8.1-4.

⁷The motivation for the sorties of both Acontius and Propertius is the same—fear. Acontius fears his father (cf. Aristaenetos 1.10.50 ff. Mazel), while Propertius fears

Propertius describes the setting in the first verse evokes by contrast the character of Cynthia.

What has been said so far reflects what may be found in the better commentaries. The final verse of the introduction, however, deserves more explanation than most commentators give. In this verse the two notions of remoteness and silence in the first verse are repeated; *sola* echoes *deserta*, while *tenere fidem* develops further the meaning of *taciturna querenti*. In this context *fides* means *fidele silentium* or *taciturnitas*, as Fraenkel defined the word in the *Thesaurus*.⁸ In the first verse the lover says his surroundings will hear his complaints in silence. In the fourth verse he expresses the wish that the rocks will keep secret or remain silent about what he will say: *si modo sola queant saxa tenere fidem!* Such a wish seems strange.⁹ What could be more dead and more incapable of speech than rocks, solitary or otherwise?¹⁰ It is true of course that inanimate objects in the pastoral landscape are often endowed with human characteristics and are thought to show feelings that are in sympathy with those of the speaker.¹¹ There would therefore be nothing surprising in the conceit of the lover's surroundings hearing his words and keeping them secret. Two points may be made here, however. First, the very fact that what would be a commonplace in pastoral is here expressed as if it were something unusual and not easily attainable casts doubts upon the conceit. If Propertius had said, for example, "since the woods will keep secret what

Cynthia. Cairns ([above, note 3] 133) faults Propertius to some extent on this point, saying that "the sentiments Propertius claims in this respect are slightly unbecoming even to his own poetic *persona*," but the lover's motivation in 1.18 seems to me to suit perfectly the *persona* of Cynthia and the nature of the relationship between her and Propertius.

⁸*ThLL* 6.2.681.78. Cf. also Prop. 1.10.14–15 *non solum vestros didici reticere dolores; / est quiddam in nobis maius, amice, fide*.

⁹The use of the subjunctive indicates that the optative force is strong ("if only . . .!"); cf. Kühner-Stegmann, 2.2.428 f. I punctuate with a dash between lines 3 and 4 to bring this out, although syntactically line 4 is still a subordinate conditional clause. Camps suggests (not very plausibly, I think) that line 4 may be taken as a separate sentence ("oh that . . . may . . ."). The alternative that he offers, that *si modo* means "if perchance," weakens the optative force.

¹⁰The only detailed attempt to explain line 4 known to me is that of H.-P. Stahl, "Doppeldeutigkeit bei Properz (Elegie I, 18)," *Poetica* 2 (1968) 438–450 (see especially 442, 449). He suggests that the verse is explained by line 24, which refers to the lover's *curae* uttered before Cynthia's door. According to Stahl we are to imagine as part of the hypothesis that his complaints have been overheard by Cynthia, although they were not meant to be. Therefore, even in the solitude of the countryside, Propertius is not sure whether the rocks can be trusted. The weakness in Stahl's argument is that *solum . . . cognita sunt foribus* (24) must show that Cynthia did not overhear his complaints to the door.

¹¹Cf. Virg. *Ecl.* 1.38–39; 10.13–15 and see Robert Coleman (ed.), *Virgil. Eclogues* (Cambridge 1977) 9, 21.

I say," we would recognize that the poet was invoking the sympathetic bonds between surroundings and speaker that are frequently alluded to in pastoral. The second point relates to the particular objects of the landscape which are designated as the speaker's confidants in line four—the *saxa*. For the Greeks and Romans rocks and crags were proverbially insensible and/or inexorable: cf. Soph. *OT* 334 ff. καὶ γὰρ ἂν πέτρων / φύσιν σύ γ' ὀργάνειας; Eur. *Med.* 28–29 ὡς δὲ πέτρος ἢ θαλάσσιος / κλύδων ἀκούει νοουθετούμενη φίλων.¹² A rock or stone exemplified something that lacked any feelings, as the explanation of the proverb λίθω λαλεῖς in the *Paroemiographi* shows—ἐπὶ τῶν ἀναισθήτων.¹³ A common situation where this proverbial aspect of rocks is referred to is when a person being addressed or supplicated is likened to a rock. This suggests that rocks may have been thought of as lacking one particular sense, that of hearing, as well as being generally insensible. There is evidence of this in Latin poetry. In Horace *Odes* 3.7 Gyges stands firm against the persuasion of the go-between: *nam scopulis surdior Icari / voces audit adhuc integer* (21 f.). In Epode 17 Canidia dismisses Horace's pleas:

quid obsecratis auribus fundis preces?

non saxa nudis surdiora navitis

Neptunus alto tundit hibernus salo.

(53–55)

These passages presuppose a proverbial phrase *scopulis / saxis surdior*.¹⁴ Thus, whether *surdior* refers to an inability of the rocks to hear, i.e., their deafness, or a supposed unwillingness to listen, to tell one's thoughts to rocks would have seemed to the ancients as safe as sharing a secret with a corpse (νεκρῷ λέγων μῦθον).

If this proverbial background is kept in mind, it is easier to catch the tone of line four. The verse is in a sense ironic; the lover wishes for something which cannot fail to happen. The rocks will keep his words secret for the simple reason that they will not hear or listen to him. The tone is sardonic, and is tinged with bitterness and disillusionment. The reason for this is explained by the implication of the verse. It is generally recognized, as has been pointed out, that the content of the third verse evokes a contrast between one aspect of the setting (*taciturna querenti*) and what Propertius would expect if he uttered his complaints face to face with Cynthia. This function of the setting is also relevant to a full understanding of the fourth verse. Here *tenere fidem* refer to the *fidele silentium* of the rocks, but the words can have a much wider connotation, that of being loyal and of keeping one's side of a pledge or agreement. The use

¹²See D. L. Page (ed.), *Euripides. Medea* (Oxford 1938) *ad loc.*

¹³*CPG* 1.430.

¹⁴See A. Otto, *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer* (Leipzig 1890), s.v. *scopulis*.

of the words here suggests a contrast between the *saxa*, who by their nature and proverbial characteristics can be expected *tenere fidem* (in the restricted sense) and Cynthia, who has not "kept faith" in the broader sense. She has betrayed Propertius.¹⁵ The wish in line four makes better sense if this betrayal is alluded to. Cynthia has been unfaithful. She has, one presumes, taken another lover. In his disillusionment Propertius wonders whether even rocks, well-known for not listening (or not hearing), can be trusted to keep secret what he has to say.¹⁶

In support of this interpretation of line 4 the tenth *Eclogue* may be adduced. That poem has already been mentioned with respect to the similarity between the action of Gallus in that poem and of Propertius in 1.18. Both seek solace in the countryside. Another common element is the motif of cutting the name of one's lover on the bark of trees (*Ecl.* 10.53-54; Prop. 1.18.22). There is another point of contact between the two poems, on this occasion one of contrast. The introductory section of *Eclogue* 10 ends thus:

... sollicitos Galli dicamus amores,
dum tenera attendent simae virgulta capellae.
non canimus surdis, respondent omnia silvae. (6-8)

Here in line 8 appears a proverb similar in sense to that against the background of which the fourth verse of 1.18 has been interpreted. But while Virgil asserts that the woods will listen (he mentions the proverb only to deny its relevance in this context), the implications of the ironic wish in Propertius is that his words will be ignored, the *saxa* being proverbially *surda*. There is another, related difference. Virgil invokes the pathetic fallacy and refers to a sympathetic response from the *silvae*. In the first verse of 1.18 Propertius has described the setting as *taciturna querenti*; the lover there will receive no response. Although the setting suits his purposes, there is little hint of any bond of sympathy between the two. Indeed, if what has been said on line four is admitted, the lover is speaking to surroundings which are indifferent to him and his plight.¹⁷ This contrast between 1.18 and *Eclogue* 10 suggests that Virgil as well as Cal-

¹⁵The relationship between lovers in Roman love poetry is often of course described in terms of a *foedus*; see R. Reitzenstein, "Zur Sprache der lateinischen Erotik," *SB Heidelberg* 1912 Abhand. 12, 9-36.

¹⁶Richardson *ad loc.* links verse 4 with the capacity of rocks to echo sounds or words. The lover would then be expressing the wish that the rocks keep faith by not echoing his words. Although this characteristic of rocks is referred to in line 32, it is to me a less attractive explanation of the verse than the one offered above, since the setting has already been characterized as *taciturna querenti*. Moreover, the *si modo*-clause has much less point if it is connected with this aspect of rocks. One may also ask how the echoes from the rocks would destroy his impunity in this deserted place.

¹⁷Solmsen ([above, note 1] 74) believed, on the other hand, that "the surroundings . . . at the beginning of the poem seemed so friendly and sympathetic."

limachus was an influence on Propertius for this poem. It has also to be noted that the attitude of Propertius to the pastoral setting is similar to that which Gallus finally assumes in *Eclogue* 10. Gallus enters the pastoral world hopeful of its powers, but eventually rejects it: *tamquam haec sit nostri medicina furoris* . . . (60 ff.).¹⁸

The lack of any empathetic bond between Propertius and his surroundings is apparent throughout the poem. It is most obvious in the description of the landscape at 27–28: *frigida rupes / et datur inculto tramite dura quies*.¹⁹ It is also present at 19–20 where Propertius addresses the trees:

*vos eritis testes, si quos habet arbor amores,
fagus et Arcadio pinus amica deo.*

The conditional clause (“if a tree has any acquaintance with love”)²⁰ casts doubt on the mythological loves of the trees and thus on the pathetic fallacy. In this respect Propertius may well be following Callimachus, if Aristaenetus is based closely on Callimachus. At 1.10.74 ff. (Mazel) we read ὦ φίλτατα δένδρα τῶν ἡδυφώνων ὀρνίθων οἱ θῶκοι, ἀρα κὰν ὑμῖν ἔστιν οὗτος ὁ ἔρως καὶ πίτυος τυχόν ἡράσθη κυπαρίττος ἢ ἄλλο φυτὸν ἐτέρου φυτοῦ; The use of the interrogative form and the presence of τυχόν in these words of Acontius belie any blind acceptance of a sympathetic bond between the speaker and the trees. There is an even more significant passage: εἴθε ὦ δένδρα, καὶ νοῦς ὑμῖν γένοιτο καὶ φωνή, ὅπως ἂν εἴποιτε “Κυδίππη καλή” (58 ff.). These words are related by Cairns to lines 21 and 31 of Propertius’

¹⁸Because of certain similarities (a) between the Gallan parts of *Eclogue* 10 and 1.18 and (b) between 1.18 and the Callimachean treatment of the Acontius and Cydippe story Ross ([above, note 2] 71–74, 88 f.) postulated a poem by Gallus which treated the Acontius and Cydippe story and which was strongly influenced by Callimachus. According to Ross Propertius drew his inspiration primarily from Gallus and thus only indirectly from Callimachus. My own view is that Callimachus has been a much stronger influence on Propertius than Gallus for 1.18. The similarities between 1.18 and *Eclogue* 10.46–54 are less striking than Ross (88, note 2) suggests, and indeed the assumption of an Acontius-Cydippe poem of Gallus rests primarily on the presence in both of a *topos* (the cutting of one’s lover’s name on the bark of trees). Moreover, if *Ecl.* 10.52–54 is very close to Gallus’ actual words in such a poem, as Ross states, the attitude of Acontius to the setting in that poem must have been very different from that of Propertius in 1.18 (cf. *crescent illae, crescetis amores*, 54). On the other hand, as will be pointed out below, the relationship between the speaker and the setting seems to have been very similar in 1.18 and in Callimachus.

¹⁹On the difficult *divini fontes*, a phrase which makes a strange bedfellow for *frigida rupes* and *dura quies*, I have little to say. Possibly it is a figurative reference to poetry, the *fons Musarum*; cf. *Lucr.* 1. 927, *Virg. G.* 2.175; *Prop.* 2.10.25; 3.1.3; 3.3.5. For poetry as a balm for the disappointed lover cf. *Theocr.* 11. 1–3; *Virg. Ecl.* 10. 62 and see Coleman (above, note 11) 295.

²⁰Camps says that *si quos* . . . *amores* means either “trees that are acquainted with love” or “trees that have tokens of love carved upon them.” Both of these renderings, however, translate not *si quos habet arbor amores* but *si quae arbores habent amores*.

poem.²¹ Equally important is that Acontius' wish denies to the trees the human characteristics that underlie the pathetic fallacy. In both these passages the relationship between Acontius and the trees resembles that between Propertius and his surroundings in 1.18.²²

In line 30 Propertius says that he is compelled to speak alone *ad argutas . . . aves*. The adjective, as Enk says, may describe a sound that is either *iucundus* or *ingratus*. Cairns argued again from Aristaenetus (τῶν ἡδυφώνων ὀρνίθων) that *argutas* here means "tuneful." If this is right, a gulf between the lover with his *dolor* and the birds with their sweet song is emphasized. Yet it is difficult to avoid seeing some connection between *arguto . . . dolore* of line 26 and the repetition of the adjective in line 30. However, even if *argutas* denotes a less pleasant sound and means "noisy," "chattering," "piping," or "shrill," Propertius' complaints will still apparently go unheard by the birds.²³

This relationship between Propertius and the setting reflects the lack of communication between him and Cynthia which is clearly demonstrated in the poem. The lover is frightened to voice his complaints to Cynthia (3, 25–26), his protestations of love are made not to her but in the countryside (19 ff.), and his troubles are known only to the doors (24). Even in the last couplet where Propertius reaffirms his love for Cynthia the evocation of the *mise-en-scène* as described in lines 1–4 suggests that no change is possible. The woods may resound with the lover's cry of "Cynthia" but the *nemus* is *vacuum*. The rocks too are *deserta*. His cries then are in vain and will not be heard. Propertius has used the pastoral setting to convey the lover's despair and his feeling that Cynthia will never love him as he loves her.²⁴

Lines 11–16

*sic mihi te referas, levis, ut non altera nostro
limine formosos intulit ulla pedes.
quamvis multa tibi dolor hic meus aspera debet,
non ita saeva tamen venerit ira mea,
ut tibi sim merito semper furor, et tua flendo
lumina deiectis turpia sint lacrimis.*

²¹Cairns (above, note 3) 133.

²²A hint of the pathetic fallacy has been seen in *teneras* in 21 by Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana* (Cambridge 1956) 54, and Camps. In the absence of any other indication of the surroundings being sympathetic and in view of the implications of the conditional clause in line 19 I find this doubtful. Perhaps the point of the adjective is to suggest by contrast the *duritia* of Cynthia.

²³Cf. also Richardson *ad loc.*: "The *ad* construction suggests that the birds are not a willing audience."

²⁴I cannot see that in 1.18 Propertius uses the pastoral motif to show that he is trying to escape from the complexities of love; so E. W. Leach, "Propertius 1.17; The Experimental Voyage," *YCS* 19 (1966) 212.

After the description of the setting comes the *dubitatio* in lines 5 and 6, followed by an explanation of the situation. Once Propertius was lucky in love; now Cynthia has rejected him. In line 9 he asks in general terms what he has done to cause his rejection and in the next verse brings forward in specific terms the first possible reason: *an nova tristitiae causa puella tuae?*²⁵

Propertius answers this in 11–12: “You can come back to me, unfaithful creature; I swear no other girl has crossed my threshold.” I have translated *levis*, which must surely be vocative, more forcefully than some, who give it the meaning “capricious.”²⁶ In the context of the poem, however, the most natural meaning of the word is “unfaithful.” Cynthia’s infidelity has already been established in line 4 as part of the hypothesis of the poem. The vocative *levis* makes more explicit what was implied by *tenere fide*.

The transition in thought at 13 ff. is somewhat abrupt. Basically what the poet is saying in 13–16 is this: “If our present roles were reversed, I would not treat you in the way you are treating me.” Propertius is complaining that Cynthia is treating him in a cruel and unjustifiable manner. In line 13 the notion of reciprocity is present in *debet*. The sense is therefore “although many cruelties are owed to you by me for this *dolor* of mine,” in other words “although I would be justified in inflicting many cruelties on you in return for what you have done to me.” The *multa aspera* must refer to Cynthia’s constant rejection of him for someone else, the phrase picking up *levis* of line 11.²⁷

My prime concern here is with the meaning of the first part of line 15: *ut tibi sim merito semper furor*. If these words are excluded, the gist of 13–16 is “although I owe you many cruelties, *my* anger will not be so savage that *your* eyes be for ever disfigured by tears.” *ira mea* in 14 is balanced by *tua . . . lumina* in 15–16 and the two pronouns are emphatic. This hypothetical situation reverses the “real” situation of the poem, where it is Propertius who is weeping (cf. *flendi*, 6) and Cynthia who is angry (cf. *tristitiae*, 10).²⁸ How does the first part of line 15 fit in with this? *furor* must be equivalent to a predicative dative, meaning “cause or object of *furor*.” Most editors and translators have taken *furor* in the sense

²⁵I prefer *crimina* in line 9. If *carmina* is read, line 10 does not introduce the first specific cause of Cynthia’s *tristitia*, though it is the first to be dealt with at any length.

²⁶So G. Luck in *Die römische Liebeselegie* (Heidelberg 1961) and Richardson *ad loc.* For discussion of the syntactical relationship of *levis* see K. Prinz, “Zu Properz I 18,” *WS* 50 (1932) 106 f. and Enk *ad loc.*

²⁷Cf. 1. 15. 1–2 *saepe ego multa tuae levitatis dura timebam, / hac tamen excepta, Cynthia, perfidia*; cf. also 2.16.31–32 *nullane sedabit nostros iniuria fletus? / an dolor hic vitiis nescit abesse tuis?*

²⁸For *tristis* in this sense cf. 1.10.21 and see R. Pichon, *De sermone amatorio apud Latinos elegiarum scriptores* (Paris 1902) 284.

of "insane rage" so that the *ut*-clause means "that I should for ever deservedly be the object of your fury." Such an interpretation, however, does not sit happily with the reversal of the "real" situation assumed in the rest of the section. The hypothetical picture of Cynthia as a raging fury in 15 should reflect the attitude and emotions of Propertius in the "real" situation. He, however, does not display *furor* in this sense. The tone of the poem is one of querulousness and self-pity rather than of anger, far less of insane anger. An alternative and preferable interpretation is that *furor* refers here not to anger but to the madness of unsatisfied or rejected love. This is similar to the meaning given in the *Thesaurus*, where *furor* in this line is paraphrased as *causa doloris*.²⁹ The sense of 14–15 is therefore "my anger will not be so savage that I will make you suffer the madness of unsatisfied love for ever (i.e., by rejecting you for ever)." This interpretation brings the content of the first *ut*-clause into line with the other features of the hypothetical situation in that an aspect of the "real" situation is reversed. In the "real" situation it is Cynthia who is the cause of *furor* to Propertius, since he loves her but has been rejected.

The adverb *merito* requires some comment. If *furor* means "object or cause of insane rage," *merito* picks up *saeva . . . ira mea* and means "as I would deserve (because of the savagery of my anger)." When *furor* has the sense "cause of madness," *merito* means "as you would deserve (because of the *multa aspera*)."

The text of line 23

The second alleged reason for Cynthia's rejection of Propertius is given in verses 17–18: "Or is it because I give too little indication of my love through change of colour and *fides* never shouts on my lips?" Propertius answers this charge by invoking the beech and the pine and by telling how often he has proclaimed his love in their shade and how often he has carved out the name of Cynthia on their bark (19–23). So far the logical structure of 17–22 is following that of lines 10–16. First appears the alleged reason (10 ~ 17–18), then there follows the denial of the charge (11–12 ~ 19–22). But with line 23, as it is printed in most editions (*an tua quod peperit nobis iniuria curas?*), the similarity stops. Now a third alleged reason is adduced: "Or is it because *tua iniuria* has produced *curae* in me?" What sense do these words make as a reason for Cynthia's rejection of Propertius? Enk paraphrases the line as *an irasceris quod tuam iniuriam aegre fero?* and says *per ironiam loquitur*. What he appears to be suggesting is that Propertius is trivializing Cynthia's case by looking

²⁹*ThLL* 6.1.1632.82 ff. For this sense of *furor* note in particular Prop. 1.5, where *furor*es (3) refers to the effect of rejection on the lover (cf. 13, 19–20) and where the *saeva ira* imputed by implication to Cynthia in 1.18.14 is echoed by *molliter irasci non sciet illa tibi* (8); cf. also Lucr. 4. 1063 ff., 1115 ff.

around for any reason which will explain her action. After rejecting two possible and plausible causes, Propertius adduces a third but absurd reason: "Are you angry because your *iniuria* upsets me?," as if he does not have every right to be upset and as if he does not thereby demonstrate his love. Camps takes Enk's interpretation further but says nothing of irony: "Or is it that your cruelty has moved me to bitter complaints?" After such an interpretation line 24 (*quae solum tacitis cognita sunt foribus*) makes good sense. The verse would deny the alleged accusation that he has publicized his woes. The meaning, however, given by Camps to *curae* is very doubtful.³⁰ The word must mean simply "anguish." So far from denying this charge, as he has denied the previous two charges, Propertius simply states that he has kept his anguish to himself and then proceeds in 25 ff. to elaborate upon the *curae*.

A different explanation goes back at least as far as Vulpus, whose note on the line reads *pudetne te mihi causam fuisse dolendi? et idcirco conscientia criminis territa, vereris ad me accedere?* This notion that Cynthia has rejected Propertius out of a bad conscience is espoused in two recent treatments of the poem,³¹ but it is not easy for this meaning to be extracted from the Latin. Even if such an interpretation is admitted, the connection of thought between line 23 and 24 ff. is strained and far from clear. Lines 24 ff. suggest, if anything, that Cynthia is justified in feeling guilty. Are we to see this as a devious way of winning back Cynthia by making her feel more guilty?

Consider now the reading of the *Itali*. They offer *ah tua quot*. If this reading is adopted, the third alleged cause is removed, as is the opaqueness in the sequence of thought between 23 and 24 ff. Verse 23 looks back to 17–18 as Propertius now turns from denying the alleged reason for Cynthia's reason given there to bringing in counter-charges against her: "Ah, how much anguish has *your iniuria* created for *me!*" She has (allegedly) accused him of not demonstrating his love and his *fides*. Propertius now accuses Cynthia of *iniuria*, of breaking *fides* and the *foedus amoris*, and of causing *him curae*.³² In 24 ff. he complains how he has had to keep these *curae* to himself. If *ah tua quot* is read, there are only two accusations but the sequence of thought is similar in both: (1) alleged charge; (2) denial; (3) countercharge and complaint:

³⁰He adduces Virg. *Aen.* 12. 801–802 *ne te tantus edit tacitam dolor, et mihi curae / saepe tuo dulci tristes ex ore recurrunt*. But the notion of utterance is not inherent in *curae*; it is conveyed by *ex ore recurrunt*.

³¹It is supported by R. A. Buttimore and R. I. Hodge (edd.), *The Monobiblos of Propertius* (Totowa, N. J. 1977) 192, and (in passing) by Ross (above, note 2) 71.

³²Elsewhere in Propertius *iniuria* refers to infidelity; cf. 1.3.35; 2.16.31; 2.24B.39; 3.25.7; 4.8.27. That too is the implication of the word in this line, though Reitzenstein ([above, note 15] 34) relates it in a more general way to conduct and attitudes which betray the *foedus amicitiae*, i.e., to Cynthia's treatment of Propertius as described in 25–26.

