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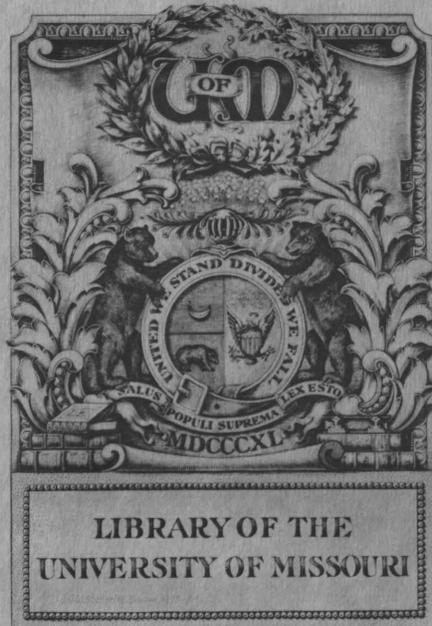
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THE MYTHOLOGY OF PROPERTIUS

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THE MYTHOLOGY OF PROPERTIUS

It is seldom that the mythology of the ancient Greeks and Romans is distinguished from their religion. This arises largely from the fact that the same supernatural beings figure in each. But mythology and religion represent the gods from quite different standpoints. In myth the gods become definite personal beings who do not inspire religious sentiment or suggest worship. But religion makes of them divine beings who must be revered and propitiated. Then in addition to the main divinities who figure in both mythology and religion, mythology includes many inferior beings, such as giants, centaurs, and satyrs, whom the ancients rarely or never worshiped. "The gods of myth and religion form two groups which overlap but are not identical, a fact which seems simple enough when the difference of standpoint is once fully grasped. If there were no other proof that myth is not the religious doctrine of the Greek gods, it would be sufficient to point out that these two groups of gods do not coincide." (Fairbanks, Greek Religion, P. 18 f.)

Propertius is not religious. He scarcely ever appeals to the divinities for help or speaks of them in a reverent tone. Bacchus and Apollo seem nearest to him as the divinities who inspire his song. But aside from these two gods there

are only two instances in which he appeals to the divinities. Upon the occasion of Cynthia's dangerous illness he prays to Jupiter, Persephone, and Pluto that they may have mercy upon her. (II 28). When Augustus is planning his expedition against the Parthians, the poet prays to Mars and Vesta that they may grant him success, and to Venus that she may give long life and safety to him as her descendant. But even in these instances the poet's appeal smacks of formality rather than of religious fervor. To be sure Propertius refers to the gods often but it is only to relate some myth about them and though sadly lacking in religion he is not wanting in mythology. So it is that we shall deal with his myths concerning the gods and heroes rather than with his conception of them as divinities.

Of all the Roman elegists Propertius is perhaps most afflicted with a love for displaying his mythological learning. He frequently professes himself a follower of the Alexandrian elegists, Philetas and Callimachus, and it is probably to these writers that he owes his mythological tendency. The Alexandrine poets had as their ideal a display of encyclopaedic learning. They had discarded the Greek mythology of classical times and followed obscure local legends. So we find the writings of Propertius weighted down with myths concerning the

gods and heroes, in most of which he follows the later traditions.

A close study of the mythological references in Propertius shows that they may be classified under several headings according to the purpose for which the author introduces them and the manner of their use. By far a majority of them are introduced as mythological parallels. Some incident, some theme of which he is singing leads the poet to recall similar instances from among the heroes and heroines of mythology. And since love is the theme of the erotic elegy it is only natural to expect that most of these stories will deal with love in its various phases. It would almost seem that Propertius had used that Syllabus to Greek mythology on the sufferings of love, *περὶ ἐρωτικῶν παθημάτων*, which had been prepared for his contemporary Gallus by Parthenius of Nicaea. For in truth the poet is so steeped in these stories of mythology that his every joy and sorrow finds its parallel in the legends of olden times.

I

MYTHOLOGICAL PARALLELS

Propertius feels that his passion for Cynthia is hopeless but recalls the story of Milanion who through ceaseless efforts was able to overcome the indifference of Atalanta. So the first mythological parallel which the poet introduces is a love story:

" Milanion nullos fugiendo, Tulle, labores
saevitiam durae contudit Iasidos.
nam modo Partheniis amens errabat in antris,
ibat et hirsutas ille videre feras;
ille etiam Hylaei percussus verbere rami
saucius Arcadiis rupibus ingemuit.
ergo velocem potuit domuisse puellam." (I 1,9-15)

Some writers identify the Arcadian and Boeotian Atalanta but common accounts distinguish between them. The Arcadian Atalanta, daughter of Iasus, was exposed by her father. She was found by hunters and grew up to be a huntress swift and beautiful. She slew the centaurs Hylaeus and Rhoetus who attacked her, took part in the Calydonian boar hunt, and was at last won by Milanion who had followed her persistently and suffered and struggled for her. The Boeotian Atalanta, daughter of Schoenus, was also distinguished for beauty and swiftness of foot. She compelled her suitors to contend with her in a foot race and they perished if she overtook them. She was at last defeated by Hippomenes who, during the race, dropped

three golden apples given him by Aphrodite. Atalanta stooped to gather the apples and thus the race was lost. Those who identify the two Atalantas consider Milanion and Hippomenes as identical. Propertius evidently refers to the Arcadian Atalanta. He calls her the daughter of Iasus. Mt. Parthenium, which he mentions as the scene of Milanion's wandering, was the mountain on which the Arcadian Atalanta was exposed. Than too, if Propertius had identified the two Atalantas he would certainly not have omitted the foot race in enumerating the trials by which Milanion won Atalanta.

In remonstrating with Cynthia upon the folly of artificial adornment Propertius cites the examples of four ancient heroines who won their lovers without such means:

"non sic Leucippis succendit Castora Phoebe,
Pollucem cultu non Hilaira soror;
non, Idae et cupido quondam discordia Phoebos,
Eueni patriis filia litoribus;
nec Phrygium falso traxit candore maritum
avecta externis Hippodamia rotis;" (I 2, 15-20)

When Castor and Pollux were invited to the wedding feast of their cousins, Idas and Lynceus, they became enamoured of the brides, Phoebe and Hilaira, and carried them off. Marpessa, daughter of Evenus, was beloved by Apollo but was carried off by another lover, Idas. Apollo pursued them and fought with Idas until separated by Jupiter who left the decision to

Marpessa. She chose Idas because he was mortal like herself. Homer refers to this struggle of Idas and Apollo for the possession of Marpessa in Il. IX 561:

“τὴν δὲ τότε ἐν μεγάροισι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
Ἀλκυόνην καλέεσκον ἐπώνυμον, οὐνεκ’ ἄρ’ αὐτῆς
μήτηρ Ἀλκυόνος πολυπενθέος οἶτον ἔχουσα
κλαῖ’, ὅτε μιν ἑκάεργος ἀνῆρπασε Φοῖβος
Ἀπόλλων.”

As a fourth parallel Propertius declares that Hippodamia did not win her Phrygian husband by a false beauty. Pelops carried away Hippodamia, daughter of Oenomaus, king of Elis, on a chariot drawn by the horses of Poseidon. Oenomaus had promised his daughter to the man that could defeat him in a chariot race. By means of a chariot and horses given him by Poseidon or, according to another version, by bribing the charioteer of Oenomaus, Pelops succeeded in winning the race and its reward, Hippodamia.

It is evident that these mythological stories are parallel in few of their details. The poet makes them parallel by declaring that the heroines did not win their lovers by artificial adornment. But presumably he could have made the same statement of any of the heroines of olden time. The one point of similarity in the four parallels is the fact that each of the brides was carried away by her lover; but Propertius brings out this detail only in the last parallel, "avecta externis Hippodamia rotis." It is interesting to note how Propertius in-

creates the parallelism of the stories by making them parallel in form and language. A verse each is given to the first two parallels, Phoebe and Hilaira, which formed as it were one story, and a couplet to each of the other two. The parallelism is also heightened by the negative placed at the beginning of each couplet.

The poet declares that his love for Cynthia will outlast death and as a mythological parallel he tells how Protesilaus, unable after death to forget his dear wife Laodamia, returned, shade as he was, to his ancient home:

"illic Phylacides iucundae coniugis heros

non potuit caecis immemor esse locis,

sed cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis

Thessalus antiquam uenerat umbra domum." (I 19, 7-10)

Protesilaus was the first of the Greeks to land at Troy and was at once slain. Thus the Iliad tells of his death:(II 698)

"τῶν αὖ Πρωτεσίλαος ἄρῆϊος ἠγεμόνευεν
ζωὸς ἑών. τότε δ' ἤδη ἔχεν κάτα γαῖα μέλαινα.

τοῦ δὲ καὶ ἀμφιδροφῆς ἄλοχος φυλάκῃ
ἔλελειπτο

καὶ δόμος ἠμικτελής. τὸν δ' ἔκτανε Δάρσανος ἀνὴρ
νήος ἀποθρώσκοντα πολὺ πρῶτιστον Ἀχαιῶν."

Protesilaus is most celebrated in ancient story for the strong affection existing between him and his wife Laodamia. Upon learning of his death she prayed to be allowed to converse with

him only for the space of three hours. Her prayer was granted and Hermes conducted Protesilaus to the upper world for a few hours. At the end of that time Laodamia expired from grief or, according to some accounts, killed herself that she might accompany her husband. Propertius might well have emphasized this latter phase of the story. It was only through the prayers of Laodamia that Protesilaus was allowed to return, but Propertius is comparing himself with Protesilaus and so emphasizes the fidelity of the husband more than that of the wife.

Propertius believed that women are swayed more by passion than men and in proof of this he cites a long list of famous women and the crimes that they committed for love:

"Testis, Cretaei fastus quae passa iuveni

Induit abiegnae cornua falsa bovis:

Testis Thessalico flagrans Salmonis Enipeo,

Quae voluit liquido tota subire deo.

Crimen et illa fuit patria succensa senecta

Arboris in frondes condita Myrrha novae.

Nam quid Medeae referam quo tempore matris

Iram natorum caede piavit amor?

Quidve Clytaemestram, propter quam tota Mycenis

Infamis stupro stat Pelopea domus?

Teque o Minoa venundata, Scylla, figura,

Tondens purpurea regna paterna coma?

Hanc igitur dotem virgo desponderat hosti!

Nise, tuas portas fraude reclusit Amor.

at vos, innuptae, felicius urite taedas;

pendet Cretætracta puella rate. (III 19, 13-26)

Pashiphae was the wife of king Minos of Crete. As a punishment for Minos who had failed to carry out a vow that he had made, Pasiphae was inspired by Poseidon with a violent passion for a bull and became the mother of the Minotaur. Tyro was the daughter of Salmoneus and was in love with the god of the river Enipeus. Poseidon assumed the form of the god of this river in order to obtain possession of Tyro. The third parallel story to which Propertius refers is that of Myrrha, daughter of Cinyras. Having offended Aphrodite she was inspired with a passion for her own father and became by him mother of Adonis. When her father in anger was pursuing her the gods at her entreaties changed her into a myrrh tree. Propertius brings out only the two salient points of the myth, that Myrrha was inspired with a guilty passion for her father and later changed into a myrrh tree. As similar to the stories of Pasiphae, Tyro, and Myrrha, the poet refers to the slaying by Medea of her own children. Medea and Jason lived happily together for ten years until Creon, king of Thebes, betrothed his daughter Creusa to Jason and thus led him to desert Medea. In order to take vengeance Medea killed her own children by Jason. But this is hardly parallel with the other stories told here, since it was a crime committed through wrath rather than love and Medea did not succeed by it in winning back her husband. The poet might have found a better parallel in the story of Medea

and Jason, had he recounted Medea's treachery to her father in helping Jason carry off the golden fleece and the manner in which she delayed pursuit by cutting up her younger brother and scattering the parts of his body upon the sea.

As still another parallel the poet recalls Clytaemnestra who, during the absence of her husband Agamemnon, was corrupted by Aegisthus. Lastly he tells the story of Scylla, daughter of king Nisus of Megara, whose life and kingdom depended on a lock of purple hair on the top of his head. When Minos was besieging the city Scylla fell in love with him and cut off her father's lock of hair in order that Minos might capture the city. But instead of rewarding the maiden Minos tied her by her feet to the stern of his vessel and dragged her thus until she was drowned. All these details are sketched briefly by the poet, who follows closely the account given by Apollodorus (III 15,8):

Ἰσχυρὸς ἀπέθανε δὲ καὶ Νίσος διὰ θυγατρὸς προδοσίαν.
ἔχοντι γὰρ αὐτῷ πορφυρέαν ἐν μέσῃ τῇ κεφαλῇ
τρίχα ταύτης ἀφαιρεθείσας ἦν χρησμός
τελευτήσας. ἢ δὲ θυγάτηρ αὐτοῦ Σκύλλα
ἔρασθεῖσα Μίνωσος ἐξεῖλε τὴν τρίχα. Μίνωσος
δὲ Μεγάρων κρατήσας καὶ τὴν κόρην
τῆς πρύμνης τῶν ποδῶν ἔκδησας
ὑποβρύχιον ἐποίησε."

So in order to prove his point Propertius has cited six stories of mythology. All of these, with the exception of that of Medea, deal with a guilty love. They are related in a re-

markably parallel manner. Only a couplet is given to each of them, except the last one, the story of Scylla, and this the poet emphasizes as the close of the poem. Then the first two couplets begin alike with "testis". The third parallel, that of Myrrha, begins with "Crimen" and this must also be supplied in the following one. The last two heroines named are in the accusative as objects of "referam". Thus the poet evidently wishes to add to the parallelism of his stories by giving them similar form and language.

Other mythological parallels relating to the power of love are found in IV, 4. Tarpeia's love for the enemy Tattius makes her say:

"quid mirum in patrios Scyllam saevisse capillos,
candidaque in saevos inguina versa canes?
prodita quid mirum fraterni cornua monstri,
cum patuit lecto stamine torta via?" (IV 4, 39-42)

Propertius here confounds the Scylla, daughter of king Nisus, who cut off the fateful lock of her father's hair that her lover might capture the town, with the other Scylla, the sea monster, daughter of Phorcys. The second parallel refers to Ariadne, daughter of king Minos of Crete. When Theseus was sent to convey the tribute of the Athenians to the Minotaur, Ariadne fell in love with him and gave him the clue by means of which he found his way out of the labyrinth. Thus, as Propertius says, she betrayed her brother monster the Minotaur. Again we may note how the poet makes these stories parallel in form by the fact that each reference consists of a

couplet and by the repetition of "quid mirum" in each.

Love is the only human ill which yields to no physician according to Propertius. He recalls four wonderful cures effected by medicine but declares it as impossible to cure himself of love as to place apples in the hands of Tantalus, fill the urns of the Danaides or release Prometheus:

"tarda Philoctetae Sanavit crura Machaon,
Phoenicis Chiron lumina Phillyrides,
et deus extinctum Cressis Epidaurius herbis
restituit patriis Androgeona focus,
Mysus et Haemonia iuvenis qua cuspede vulnus
senserat, hac ipsa cuspede sensit opem." (II 1,59-64)

On his way to Troy Philoctetes was wounded in the foot either by a snake or by the poisoned arrows of Hercules, bequeathed to him by that hero. In his wounded condition he was left at Lemnos until the tenth year of the war, when messengers were sent for him to help in taking Troy. Upon his arrival before Troy his wound was healed by Machaon, son of Aesculapius. Phoenix, the son of Amyntor, was blinded by his father for making improper overtures to his mistress. He fled to Peleus who persuaded the Centaur Chiron to restore his sight. Androgeos, son of king Minos, was murdered by the Athenians from jealousy at his excelling them in athletics. The Epidaurian god, by whom Propertius tells us he was restored to life, was Aesculapius, so called from his having a temple

at Epidaurus in Argolis. But Propertius is our only authority for this version of the myth. The last parallel, which the poet states in quite epigrammatic style, is the story of Telephus and Achilles. Telephus was wounded by Achilles and was informed by an oracle that the wound could only be healed by the wounder. By showing the Greeks the way to reach Troy he induced Achilles to heal him with the rust from the spear which had wounded him. Propertius does not relate any of the details of these myths but merely names the heroes, their illness, and the men who cured them. Though similar in few of their details, the myths form good parallel instances of wonderful healing. Machaon, Chiron, and Aesculapius were all eminent legendary physicians.

A large number of mythological parallels are mentioned by Propertius as examples of fidelity. When he is about to leave Cynthia and she treats him with indifference and perfidy, he recalls to her Calypso's grief at the departure of the Ithacan, the sorrow of Hypsipyle when the winds were bearing away Jason, Evadne who perished with her husband, and Alpheisiboea who avenged her husband's death upon her brothers:

"At, non sic Ithaci digressu mota Calypso
Desertis olim fleverat aequoribus;
Multos illa dies incomptis maesta capillis
Sederat iniusto multa locuta salo,
Et quamvis numquam posthaec visura, dolebat
Illa tamen longae conscia laetitiae.
Nec sic Aesoniden rapiensibus anxia ventis
Hypsipyle vacuo constitit in thalamo:

Hypsipyle nullos postilla sensit amores,

Ut semel Haemonio tabuit hospitio.

Coniugis Evadne miseros elata per ignes

Occidit, Argivae fama pudicitiae.

Alphesiboea suos ultra est pro coniuge fratres,

Sanguinis et cari vincula rupit amor." (I 15, 9-22)

Odysseus was shipwrecked and cast upon the island of Calypso. She detained him there seven years and only consented to aid in his departure upon a command from Zeus. The story of Hypsipyle and Jason is quite similar to that of Calypso and Odysseus. On their way to Colchis the Argonauts landed at Lemnos where Hypsipyle was queen. For a short time Hypsipyle enjoyed the love of Jason until the Argonauts were forced to proceed upon their journey. As a third parallel we find the story of Alphesiboea, wife of Alcmaeon. He put her away and married Callirhoe, for which her brothers killed him. According to the usual account the sons of Alcmaeon by Callirhoe took vengeance on the brothers of Alphesiboea. But Propertius declares that Alphesiboea took vengeance on her own brothers, which would indeed be a strong example of fidelity. Evadne, whom Propertius mentions as a fourth mythological parallel, was the wife of Capaneus, one of the Seven against Thebes. For his impiety Zeus struck him with a flash of lightning and while his body was burning his wife leaped into the flames and destroyed herself. Thus the myths of Calypso and Hypsipyle, who merely grieved over their departing lovers, are not such

strong examples of fidelity as those of Alphesiboea and Evadne. Yet Propertius pictures in some detail the desolation of Calypso and Hypsipyle while the references to Alphesiboea and Evadne are condensed and almost epigrammatic.

Penelope is of course a stock example of fidelity and Propertius mentions her often in his list of faithful women. He reproaches his fickle sweetheart with the virtuous women of ancient Greece and names Penelope and Briseis as parallel examples:

" Penelope poterat bis denos salva per annos
vivere, tam multis femina digna procis;
coniugium falsa poterat differre Minerva,
Nocturno solvens texta diurna dolo;
visura et quamvis numquam speraret Vlixen,
illum exspectando facta remansit anus.
nec non exanimem amplectens Briseis Achillen
candida vesana verberat ora manu;
et dominum lavit maerens captiva cruentum,
propositum fulvis in Simoenta vadis,
foedavitque comas, et tanti corpus Achilli
maximaque in parva sustulit ossa manu;
cum tibi nec Peleus aderat nec caerula mater,
Scyria nec viduo Deidamia toro." (II 9, 2-16)

In the story of Penelope Propertius merely brings out the salient details of the Homeric account, how she put off her many suitors by pretending to weave a shroud for Laertes and unravelled by night what she had woven by day. But the picture

of Briseis washing the bloody corpse of her master on the banks of the Simois is not found in any extant Homeric poem and Propertius may be following merely his own imagination in this. Fleisbher (Roscher Myth. Lex.) makes the supposition that the picture is derived from the lost Aithiopsis: "An die Aithiopsis lehnt sich wahrscheinlich Propertius an welcher schildert wie Briseis in tiefster Trauer den blutigen Leichnam im Simois wusch und die in einer Urne gesammelten Gebeine des grossen Helden in ihren kleinen Händen trug." (P 52)

As another story of great devotion the poet relates that of Aurora and Tithonus. He depicts the goddess' devotion to her aged husband and her reluctance to leave him for the duties of the day:

"at non Tithoni spernens Aurora senectam
desertum Eoa passa iacere domo est :
illum saepe suis decedens fovit in undis
quam prius adiunctos sedula lavit equos;
illum ad vicinos cum amplexa quiesceret Indos,
maturus iterum est questa redire dies;
illa deos currum conscendens dixit iniquos,
invitum et terris praestitit officium.
cui maiora senis Tithoni gaudia vivi,
quam gravis amisso Memnone luctus erat." (III 18, 3-16)

By the prayers of Aurora Tithonus obtained from the gods immortality but not eternal youth. The usual account is that when he grew old and decrepit she nursed him for a while but finally shut him up in his chamber or metamorphosed him into

a cricket. Thus the Homeric hymn to Venus tells the story:
" ἄλλ' ὅτε δὴ πᾶμπαν στυγερὸν κατὰ γῆρας ἔπειγεν,
οὔδ' ἔτι κινῆσαι μελέων δύνατ' οὔδ' ἀνεῖραι,
ἦδε δέ οἱ κατὰ θυμὸν ἀρίστη φαίνεται βουλή
ἐν θαλάμῳ κατέθηκε, θύρας δ' ἐπέθηκε
φαεινάς," (233).

Propertius does not touch upon this version of the myth but pictures the goddess as ever faithful and, as Homer describes her, "rising from the couch of the illustrious Tithonus to bear light to mortals and immortals." (Od. V, 1)

Cynthia's fickleness was a constant anxiety to the poet and so we find not a few mythological parallels on the subject of infidelity. He warns Cynthia of the fruits of infidelity by the fates of Eriphyle and Creusa:

"aspice quid donis Eriphyla invenit amaris,

arserit et quantis nupta Creusa malis." (II 16, 29-30)

Eriphyle, wife of Amphiaraus, was bribed by Polynices with a golden necklace to compel her husband to join in the expedition against Thebes. He consented though he knew he should never return, but enjoined his sons to avenge his death on their mother. So Eriphyle was slain by her son Alcmaeon. Creusa was the daughter of Creon, king of Corinth. Jason deserted Medea to marry her and in revenge Medea sent Creusa a poisoned robe which consumed her and her father with fire. Eriphyle and Creusa are not really parallel examples of infidelity, though

the poet makes them so, since Creusa was not the wrong-doer herself but paid the penalty for another's infidelity, that of Jason toward Medea. The two mythological stories are parallel in form since each consists of a single verse and has the form of an indirect question.

The desertion of Medea by Jason is with Propertius a favorite example of infidelity. Now it is made parallel with another instance of mythology, the desertion of Calypso by Odysseus:

"Colchida sic hospes quondam decepit Iason:

electa est (tenuit namque Creusa) domo.

sic a Dulichio iuvene est elusa Calypso:

vidit amatorem pandere vela suum." (II 21, 11-14)

Again the poet recalls, as parallel examples to the story of Jason and Medea, the desertion of Ariadne by Theseus and of Phyllis by Demophoon:

"Parvo dilexit spatio Minoida Theseus,

Phyllida Demophoon, hospes uterque malus.

iam tibi Iasonia nota est Medea carina

et modo servato sola relicta viro." (II 24, 43-6)

After Ariadne had helped Theseus to escape from the labyrinth, she fled with him from Crete. The oldest form of the myth tells us that when she arrived at Naxos she was killed by Artemis; (Od. XI, 324):

"Φαίδρην τε πρόκριν τε ἴσον καλήν τ' Ἀριάδην,
κούρην Μίνωος ὀλοόφρονος, ἣν ποτε Θησεὺς
ἐκ Κρήτης ἔς γουνὸν Ἀθηναίων ἱεράων

ἦχε μὲν, οὐδ' ἀπόνητο· πάρος δέ μιν Ἄρτεμις ἔκτα
Δίη ἐν ἀμφιρύτῃ Διονύσου μαρτυρήσιν."

But the later tradition was that Theseus left Ariadne in Naxos alive either through faithlessness or forced by Dionysus to leave her. Ariadne then became the wife of Dionysus who placed among the stars the crown which he had given her at marriage. As we have seen, the Homeric account omits the infidelity of Theseus and Ariadne's marriage to Dionysus. But it is the picture of the deserted Ariadne which Propertius and later writers dwell upon and place in the foreground. The story of the desertion of Phyllis was not such a common theme as that of Medea and Ariadne. When Demophoon, son of Theseus, was returning from Troy, Phyllis, daughter of the Thracian king, fell in love with him. Before marriage he went to Attica to settle his affairs at home. He stayed so long that Phyllis, thinking he had deserted her, hanged herself and was changed into an almond tree. Since Demophoon had not actually deserted Phyllis, his case is hardly parallel with that of Jason and Theseus but Propertius calls Demophoon and Theseus "each a treacherous guest."

When Propertius wishes to describe the beauty of Cynthia he can usually find no better way than by comparing her with the beautiful women of mythology. Upon returning from a revel late at night he comes upon Cynthia fast asleep and is so impressed with the beauty of the scene that he compares the

sleeping maid to Ariadne, as she lay on the beach deserted by Theseus, to Andromeda as she slept her first sleep freed from the hard rocks, and to a Bacchante who, tired by constant dancing, lay on the grassy banks of the Apidanus;

"Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina
 languida desertis Gnosia litoribus;
qualis et accubuit primo Cepheia somno
 libera iam duris cotibus Andromede;
nec minus assiduis Edonis fessa choreis
 qualis in herboso concidit Apidano:
talis visa mihi mollem spirare quietem
 Cynthia non certis nixa caput manibus,
ebria cum multo traherem vestigia Baccho,
 et quaterent sera nocte facem pueri." (I 3, 1-10)

Cassiopeia, the mother of Andromeda, had boasted that her beauty surpassed the Nereids. For this the country was inundated and a sea monster sent into the land. In order to deliver the country Andromeda was chained to a rock and exposed to the monster. She was rescued by Perseus who made her his wife. The Bacchantes were the priestesses of Bacchus who worshiped the god with frenzied dances and orgiastic rites. This orgiastic worship of Bacchus arose in Thrace and spread southward, and so Propertius pictures the Bacchante as on the banks of the Apidanus, a river in Thessaly.

It does not seem that Propertius' comparison is very apt in this instance. Ariadne was in great sorrow as she lay

exhausted on the beach, and Andromeda had just been rescued from a terrible monster; hence it does not seem suitable to compare them to the sleeping Cynthia as she breathed forth the spirit of gentle rest. The tired Bacchante lying on the banks of the Apidanus forms a better parallel perhaps than the other two. But Propertius probably has in mind the beauty of Ariadne and Andromeda rather than the hardships they had endured. A distich is given to the description of each of the parallels and each is introduced by the relative adjective.

Again Propertius compares his sweetheart to Antiope and Hermione as representing the beautiful women of old:

"tu licet Antiope formam Nycteidos, et tu
Spartanae referas laudibus Hermionae,
et quascumque tulit formosi temporis aetas;
Cynthia non illas nomen habere sinat." (I 4, 5-8)

Hermione was the daughter of Menelaus and Helen and was beautiful like the golden Aphrodite. (Od. IV 14) Antiope was the daughter of Nycteus and mother of Amphion and Zethus. She was not celebrated for her beauty, as was Hermione, but Propertius seems to consider all the heroines of olden times as women of great beauty. This is evident in another passage of Propertius where he compares Cynthia to Juno, Pallas, and Isomache:

"fulva coma est longaeque manus, et maxima toto
corpore, et incedit vel Iove digna soror,
aut cum Dulichias Pallas spatiat ad aras,
Gorgonis anguiferae pectus operta comis;

qualis et Ischomache Lapithae genus heroine,

Centauris medio grata rapina mero." (II 2,5-10)

Ischomache was the wife of Peirithous. At their wedding feast the Centaur Eurytion became intoxicated and carried off the bride, thus causing the fight between the Centaurs and Lapiths. Ischomache was not especially celebrated for beauty, and it seems rather strange that the poet should make her parallel with Pallas and Juno. Pallas was the protectress of Odysseus and Dulichium was an island of his kingdom, so Propertius pictures Pallas as frequenting the altars of Dulichium.

When Propertius finds his sweetheart in tears over his infidelity he asks her:

"Quid fles abducta gravius Briseide? quid fles

anxia captiva tristius Andromacha?

quidve mea de fraude deos, insana, fatigas?

quid quereris nostram sic cecidisse fidem?

non tam nocturna volucris funesta querela

Attica Cecropiis obstrepat in foliis,

nec tantum Niobe bis sex ad busta superba.

sollicito lacrimas defluit a Sipylo." (II 20, 1-8)

Thus the poet names four heroines who had each experienced a great sorrow. Briseis was the captive of Achilles but was taken from him by Agamemnon. It is her grief at this separation which Propertius pictures. Andromache was the wife of Hector and at the fall of Troy she fell to the share of Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, who took her to Epirus. Andromache grieved at being taken captive while the sorrow of

Briseis was at being parted from her captor. The mourning bird of Attica, to whom Propertius refers, is Philomela. Her sister Procne was the wife of Tereus and mother of Itys. Tereus concealed Procne in the country and married Philomela. When Procne learned of this she killed her son Itys and served his flesh to his father. She then fled with her sister and, when overtaken by Tereus, Philomela was changed into a nightingale, Procne to a swallow, and Tereus to a hoopoe.

Niobe, who had six sons and six daughters, ventured to exalt herself above Leto. As a punishment Apollo and Artemis slew all her children. Niobe was changed to stone on Mt. Sipylus. This stone which was supposed to be Niobe was washed by a stream in such a way that it appeared to be weeping. Homer refers to this when he says that "on Mt. Sipylus, now a stone, she broodeth still over her troubles from the gods." (Il. 24,612). So Propertius also declares that "Niobe streams tears down sorrowing Sipylus."

Of the four parallels the stories of Briseis and Andromache are most closely parallel to each other; while those of Philomela and Niobe are most similar, both ending in a metamorphosis. The poet also carries out this idea in the form in which he states the stories. The first two parallels, Briseis and Andromache, consists of a verse each and begin alike with "quid fles". The last two parallels, Philomela and Niobe, are given a distich each and begin in like manner with "non tam" and "non tantum."

Niobe is mentioned again with other parallels as an example

of great sorrow in III, 10. The occasion is Cynthia's' birthday and the poet, wishing it to be propitious, declares:

"aspiciam nullos hodierna luce dolentes,
et Niobae lacrimas supprimat ipse lapis,
alcyonum positis requiescant ora querelis,
increpet absumptum nec sua mater Ityn." (III 10,7-10)

The kingfishers were believed to be mortals, Alcyone and her husband Ceyx, changed into birds. Ceyx perished in a shipwreck and in her grief Alcyone cast herself into the sea. The gods in compassion changed them both into birds. The ancients considered the cry of the kingfishers as plaintive and the myth probably arose from this. Homer speaks of the "Ἀλκυόνας πολυπενθέος", (Il. IX 561). Ovid thus describes Alcyone after her metamorphosis:

"dumque volat, maestis similem plenumque querelae
ora dedere sonum tenui crepitantia rostro." (Met. XI 735)

So Propertius, referring to the kingfishers as sorrowers, asks that they may cease their complaints. Niobe weeping for her children, the plaintive kingfishers, and the swallow Procne meaning for her son Itys, form splendid mythological parallels.

The power of song is illustrated by the poet with three mythological parallels, Orpheus, Amphion, and Polyphemus:

"Orphea delenisse feras et concita dicunt
flumina Threicia sustinuisse lyra;
saxa Cithaeronis Thebas agitata per artem
sponte sua in muri membra coisse ferunt;
quin etiam, Polypheme, fera Galatea sub Aetna
ad tua rorantes carmina flexit equos." (III 2,3-8)

Orpheus, son of Oeagrus and Calliope, was presented with the lyre by Apollo and instructed by the Muses in its use. Aeschylus alludes to the fable of his leading after him trees charmed by his lyre. (Ag. 1612). Euripides speaks of him as related to the Muses and mentions the power of his song over rocks, trees, and wild beasts. Amphion was said to have been given the lyre by Hermes. He and his brother Zethus killed Lycus, king of Thebes, in order to avenge their mother and took possession of the city. They fortified the town by a wall and Amphion by playing on his lyre caused the stones to move into place. Amphion was not so celebrated as Orpheus and this is the only legendary incident in regard to his musical ability. Polyphemus, mentioned in the last mythological parallel, was little noted as a musician. Theocritus represents him as sitting by the sea and singing to the sea nymph Galatea as a solace for his hopeless passion for her. (Idyl XI). But Propertius is the first writer to represent Galatea as listening to the strains of Polyphemus and as favoring his suit. The more common version represents Galatea as scorning the uncouth monster. According to Ovid, Galatea was in love with the shepherd Acis, and Polyphemus, jealous of him, crushed him under a huge rock. But Propertius seems to be following the older folk form of the myth in which Galatea was represented as a protectress of flocks and as a sweetheart of the shepherd Polyphemus. Weicker (Paulys, Real-Encyclopädie) gives the following explanation of how Galatea came to be associated with the flocks:

"Der Name, vom milchweiszen Schaum des Meeres her-

zuleiten, musz schon ["]fruh dazu veranlaszt haben, in
folkstüml["]icher Etymologie die Nereide vom Meer zu Lösen
und in Beziehung zum Milchreichtum der Herden und zur
Viehzucht zu bringen."

According to Duris, Frg. 43 M., Polyphemus erected a sanctuary

to Galatea διὰ τὴν εὐβοσίαν τῶν θρεμμάτων
καὶ τοῦ γάλακτος πολυπλήθειαν."

So as a protectress of flocks and cattle it was natural that
Galatea should be represented as the sweetheart of the shepherd
Polyphemus.

Propertius is ordinarily an ardent champion of the vine,
but when Cynthia becomes too much occupied with wine and dice,
jealousy moves him to utter a tirade on the harmful effects of
wine. As usual he strengthens his assertion by mythological
parallels:

"Icare, Cecropiis merito iugulate colonis,
pampineus nosti quam sit amarus odor!
tuque o Eurytion vino Centaure peristi,
nec non Ismario tu, Polpheme, mero." (II 33, 31-34)

Icarus was the king of Attica who hospitably received Dionysus.
The god taught him the cultivation of the vine and gave him
bags of wine. These Icarus distributed and some shepherds,
who became intoxicated and thought they were poisoned, killed
him. The Centaur Eurytion was intoxicated by wine when he
attempted to carry off the bride of Peirithous and caused the
fight between the Centaurs and Lapiths. During the fight
Eurytion was killed by Theseus and thus, as Propertius says,

perished through the effects of wine. Odysseus made the Cyclops Polyphemus drunk on Thracian wine and then put out his eye. Thus the poet has chosen well his mythological parallels since each came to harm through effects of wine. They are told in similar form, each hero being directly addressed.

Even in deepest sorrow Propertius takes hope and comfort from the stories of olden time. When Cynthia lies at the point of death, he asks that Jupiter may have mercy upon her, and that peace may come to her as it did to the suffering heroines of old:

"Io versa caput primos mugiverat annos:

nunc dea, quae Nili flumina vacca bibit.

Ino etiam prima terris aetate vagata est:

hanc miser implorat navita Leucothoen.

Andromede monstris fuerat devota marinis:

haec eadem Persei nobilis uxor erat.

Callisto Arcadios erraverat ursa per agros:

haec nocturna suo sidere vela regit." (II 28,17-22)

Io was loved by Zeus and changed into a white heifer to protect her from the jealousy of Hera. But Hera sent a gadfly which persecuted her through the whole earth until at length she found rest on the banks of the Nile. Io was frequently identified with the Egyptian Isis who was represented with cow's horns. Propertius evidently identifies the two when he speaks of the deification of Io. Ino also wandered over the earth in her youth, the poet tells us. But the usual version of the myth does not relate any wandering and Propertius is probably confusing

Ino with Io. After the birth of Dionysus, Zeus entrusted him to Hermes who took the child to Ino and Athamas, and persuaded them to bring him up as a girl. Hera was now urged on by her jealousy to throw/^{Ino}and Athamas into a state of madness. Athamas killed one of their sons, Learchus; Ino threw herself with the other son, Melicertes, into the sea. After her death and apotheosis Ino was called Leucothoe and was worshiped as a sea goddess. These are the details of the myth as given by Apollodorus. (III 4, 3)

Callisto was a huntress and companion of Artemis. Like Io she was beloved by Zeus and changed into a bear to protect her from Hera. She was slain by Artemis during the chase, through the contrivance of Hera, but was placed among the stars as the constellation Arctos. Andromeda, who was rescued from the sea monster by Perseus and made his wife, is the only one of the four heroines who did not attain deification. Propertius relates these stories in a remarkably parallel manner, since a couplet is given to each, the first verse telling of the former condition of suffering and the last dealing with the present or later glorification. Furthermore each couplet is introduced by the name of the heroine whom it concerns.

So it is that for almost every theme that he touches upon the poet draws forth examples and parallels from the vast storehouse of mythology. And not only has he a great fondness for heaping up these parallel myths but with few exceptions he makes them parallel in form and language.

II

ILLUSTRATION

Another method of the poet for introducing mythological references is that of illustration. He makes a general statement and then, in order to illustrate and explain it more fully, he refers to incidents of mythology. One of his favorite subjects for this is the heroic poem. In order to compare the elegy and the epic he often sets forth at great length the myths which were the usual themes of heroic poetry. Concerning his own ability to write heroics he speaks as follows:

"quod mihi si tantum, Maecenas, fata dedissent,
ut possem heroas ducere in arma manus,
non ego Titanas canerem, non Ossan Olympo
impositam, ut caeli Pelion esset iter,
nec veteres Thebas, nec Pergama nomen Homeri,

belleque resque tui memorarem Caesaris, et tu

Caesare sub magno cura secunda fores." (II 1,17-26)

The Titans were the children of Uranus, first ruler of the world. They deposed their father and with Cronus as their king assumed control of the universe. Cronus and the Titans were in their turn ousted by the children of Cronus with Zeus as their leader, but only after a struggle of ten years. This war between the gods and the Titans was localized in Thessaly where the country bears the imprint of some great convulsion of nature.

The ancients imagined that the Titans hurled huge rocks, in the combat, and piled mountain upon mountain in order to reach the throne of Zeus. ^(Guerber) So Propertius speaks of Ossa piled on Olympus, and of Pelion topping the other two. This is the same arrangement of the mountains that Homer gives: (Od. XI 315)

“ Ὄσσαν ἐπ’ Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασεν θέμεν, αὐτὰρ ἐπ’ Ὄσῃ
πῆλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἔν’ οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἶη.”

But the order of the mountains varies much in different writers. In referring to ancient Thebes and Troy as the subjects of epic song, Propertius has in mind the war of the Seven against Thebes and the Trojan war. So he has used in illustration the three most common themes of epic song, the battle of the gods and Titans, the war of the Seven against Thebes, and the Trojan war.

As another illustration of the epic theme he refers to the battle of the gods and giants:

"sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus

intonet angusto pectore Callimachus." (II 1, 39-40)

The Gigantomachia in the Campi Phlegraei was a well known subject of epic song. In Homer the Gigantes are a wild race, kinsmen of the gods as are the Cyclopes. With their king Eurymedon they are destroyed for their wickedness. Neither Homer nor Hesiod speaks of their struggle with the gods, the story of which seems to be a reflection of the contest of the Titans and the gods. Led on by Alcyoneus they hurled rocks and burning tree trunks against heaven. The gods called Heracles to their help and he slew Alcyoneus. As the giant Enceladus was fleeing Athena threw the island of Sicily upon him. The place of con-

test was Phlegra, or place of burning; hence Phlegra was always localized in volcanic regions. In later times the region north of Naples was called the Phlegraeian plains.

The fight with the giants and gods was often confused with that of the Titans by later writers; and it is doubtful whether Propertius distinguishes between them. In another passage he says:

"te duce vel Iovis arma canam caeloque minantem

Coeum et Phlegraeis Eurymedonta iugis." (III 9, 47-48)

Coeus was one of the Titans and Eurymedon was leader of the giants. If the poet means that both threaten heaven from Phlegra's heights, he evidently confuses the battle of the giants and gods with that of the Titans. But the passage might be interpreted, "I will sing of Coeus threatening heaven and of Eurymedon on Phlegra's heights," thus keeping the two distinct.

When his friend Lynceus has fallen in love Propertius advises him to change the style of his writings, and illustrates at some length the heroic subjects:

"nam rursus licet Aetoli referas Achelœi

fluxerit ut magno fractus amore liquor,

atque etiam ut Phrygio fallax Maeandria campo

errat et ipsa suas decipit unda vias,

qualis et Adrasti fuerit vocalis Arion,

tristis ad Archemori funera victor equus:

Amphiarea tibi non prosint fata quadrigae

aut Capanei magno grata ruina Iovi." (II 34, 33-40)

Achelous was god of the river Achelous in Aetolia. He fought with Hercules for the possession of Deianira, daughter of Oineus, and was defeated. Propertius refers to this when he speaks of the river as overcome with a great love. The reference to Arion and the funeral games of Archemorus is also rather obscure. When the seven heroes marching against Thebes reached Nemea, the nurse of Archemorus, son of king Lycurgus, laid her charge down in order to lead the warriors to a spring. The child was killed by a serpent and funeral games were held in his honor. Adrastus won the chariot race with his winged steed Arion, offspring of Poseidon. Amphiaraus was also one of the Seven against Thebes. When he was being pursued by the enemy the earth opened and swallowed him up with his chariot. For his impiety Capaneus was destroyed by Zeus with lightning as he was scaling the wall of Thebes. So the stories of Adrastus, Amphiaraus, and Capaneus are all incidents of the march on Thebes. But instead of stating the subject in a general way the poet chooses to represent it by these smaller details which, mentioned briefly as they are, make the passage a rather obscure one.

From these examples it is evident that Propertius can hardly touch upon the subject of epic poetry without pouring forth his knowledge of mythology. But we also find mythological illustrations on various other subjects.

In a fit of despondency the poet declares that a long life is useless, and to illustrate this he refers to the aged Nestor who would have been spared the sight of his son's death, had he not lived so long:

"Nestoris est visus post tria saecula cinis:
cui si tam longae minuisset fata senectae
Gallicus Iliacis miles in aggeribus,
non ille Antilochi vidisset corpus humari,
diceret aut "O mors, cur mihi sera venis?" (II. 13,46-50)

Nestor was said to have ruled over three generations of men,
so that his advice and authority were deemed equal to that of
the immortal gods. (Hom. Od. III 245):

"Τρὶς γὰρ δὴ μὲν φασὶν ἀνάξασθαι γένε' ἀνδρῶν·
ὡς τέ μοι ἀθάνατος ἐνδάλλεται εἰσοράσθαι."

Nestor took part in the most important events before Troy and
there saw his son Antilochus slain by Memnon.

In lamenting the death of Paetus by drowning the poet de-
clares, "Nature has spread the sea as a snare for the greedy;
scarce ~~once~~ may success be thine." Then in illustration he
tells of the destruction of the Greek fleet on its return from
Troy:

"saxa triumphales fregere Capharea puppes,
naufraga cum vasto Graecia tracta salo est.
paulatim socium iacturam flevit Vlixes,
in mare cui solum non valuere doli." (III 7,39-42)

The Capharean rocks were^a headland of Euboea on which Nauplius
burned false beacons and caused the Greek fleet to be wrecked
on its return from Troy. This was done to avenge the death
of his son Palamedes whom the Greeks had put to death on a
false charge.

The death of Marcellus, nephew of Augustus, leads Propertius to reflect upon the universality of death, and to illustrate this fact with mythological examples:

"ille licet ferro cautus se condat et aere,

mors tamen inclusum protrahit inde caput.

Nireus non facies, non vis exemit Achillem,

Croesum aut, Pactoli quas parit umor opes."(III 18,25-28)

Nireus was the son of Charopus and Aglaia, and next to Achilles the handsomest among the Greeks at Troy. His beauty became proverbial. Achilles was most celebrated for his strength and prowess in war. Later writers relate that he was invulnerable except in the heel, but Homer mentions no such defense against death. His death does not occur in the Iliad but is hinted at in a few passages. Thus the dying Hector says to Achilles, "Take heed lest I draw upon thee wrath of the gods on the day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo slay thee, for all thy valor, at the Scaean gate." (Il. XXII, 358). All accounts of his death agree that it was brought about by the intervention of the god Apollo, who either assumed the form of Paris in killing him or else directed the weapon of Paris against him. As Nireus was celebrated for his beauty and Achilles for his might, so Croesus was the proverbial rich man of antiquity. Propertius could have found no better illustrations of the fact that death is universal and spares neither beauty, wealth, nor might.

III

ORNAMENTATION

Quite frequently Propertius uses mythological references with no especial purpose except that of ornamentation. To be sure they usually add interest and emphasis to his theme. Such an example is found in II 20, 9-12; where the poet vows that for Cynthia he would break from the brazen prison of Danae:

"me licet aeratis astringant bracchia nodis,
sint mea vel Danaes condita membra domo,
in te ego et aeratas rumpam, mea vita, catenas,
ferratam Danaes transiliamque domum."

Danae was the daughter of Acrisius, king of Argos. Acrisius shut her up in a brazen tower because an oracle had declared that she would bear a son who should kill him. So Propertius can find no stronger terms to express his devotion than by declaring that he would break from such a tower.

Again the poet emphasizes the strength of his devotion in other mythological terms:

"at me ab amore tuo deducet nulla senectus,
sive ego Tithonus sive ego Nestor ero." (II 25,9-10)

Another tribute he pays to Cynthia when he says:

"seu mihi sunt tangenda novercae pocula Phaedrae,
pocula privigno non nocitura suo,
seu mihi Circae opere undum est gramine, sive
Colchis Iolciacis urat aena focis,
una meos quoniam praedata est femina sensus,
ex hac ducentur funera nostra domo." (II 1, 51-56)

Phaedra, the wife of Theseus, fell in love with her stepson Hippolytus. Propertius implies that she tried to poison him or else tried to win his love with a potion of some sort. This is the only known allusion to such an attempt. The Colchian woman who heats cauldrons upon the fires of Iolcus, is, of course, Medea. She prevailed upon the daughters of Pelias to cut their father to pieces and boil the segments, pretending that thereby he would be restored to youth. Medea and Circe were both noted as magicians and evidently Propertius wishes to represent Phaedra also as attempting magic arts.

In order that he may emphasize the impossibility of escaping from love Propertius again falls back upon mythological terms:

"quo fugis a demens? nulla est fuga: tu licet usque
ad Tanain fugias, usque sequetur Amor.
non si Pegaseo vecteris in aere dorso,
nec tibi si Persei moverit ala pedes;
vel si te sectae rapiant talaribus aurae,
nil tibi Mercurii proderit alta via." (II 30,1-6)

Pegasus was the famous winged horse of the Muses. Perseus was furnished with winged sandals by Hermes on going to fight the Gorgons. Euripides refers to this in the *Electra*, 458-62:

"περιδρόμῳ μὲν ἵππου ἕδρα
περσέα λαιμοτόμον ὑπὲρ
ἄλῶς ποτανοῖσι πεδίλοισι φῶαν
Γοργόνος ἴσχειν, Διὸς ἀγγέλα σὺν Ἑρμῇ
τῷ Μαΐας ἀγροτῆρι Κούρω".

Another version is found in Apollodorus who says that Hermes

supplied Perseus with a knife of adamant, but that the sandals were obtained from certain nymphs. (II 4,2). One of the chief attributes of Mercury was his sandals which carried the god across land and sea with the rapidity of wind. Homer (V 49) implies that these sandals were provided with wings. And plastic and graphic art, requiring some outward sign to express this quality of the sandals, generally depicted the god with wings at his ankles. So Propertius and most writers speak of the god as having winged sandals. The poet could have found no better representatives of swift aerial flight than the three mythological characters whom he has named.

To his friend Tullus, who prefers to live abroad, Propertius declares that all the wonders of the East and West must yield to Italy:

"tu licet aspicias caelum omne Atlanta gerentem,
sectaque Persea Phorcidos ora manu,
Geryonis stabula et luctantum in pulvere signa
Herculis Antaeique, Hesperidumque choros;
tuque tuo Colchum propellas remige Phasim,
Peliacaeque trabis totum iter ipse legas,
qua rudis Argea natat inter saxa columba
in faciem prorae pinus adacta novae;

.
omnia Romanae cedent miracula terrae." (III 22, 7-17)

The common opinion was that the heaven-bearing Atlas was in northwestern Africa, and the range of mountains in that part of the world bears the name of Atlas to this day. The Gorgons

were conceived by Hesiod to live in the western ocean near the Hesperides, but later traditions placed them in Libya. Geryon was a king of the Hesperides whose oxen Hercules carried off; while Antaeus was a mighty giant of Libya overcome by Hercules. Thus all these myths were localized in the West and Propertius speaks of them as though their traces were still to be seen there. The Argonautic expedition to Colchis on the Euxine sea is the only myth of the East which he mentions. This enumeration is largely ornamental but also lends emphasis to Propertius' statement that Italy surpasses all these marvels. In farther pursuance of his theme, *Laus Italiae*, the poet contrasts Italy with Greece and tells of the monstrous deeds that have occurred in Greece. As is to be expected he does not relate actual deeds of history but stories of Greek mythology:

"non hic Andromedae resonant pro matre catenae,
nec tremis Ausonias, Phoebe fugate, dapes,
nec cuiquam absentes arserunt in caput ignes
exitium nato matre movente suo;

Pentheae non saevae venantur in arbore Bacchae,
nec solvit Danaas subdita cerva rates,
cornua nec valuit curvare in paelice Iuno
aut faciem turpi dedecorare bove;

.

arboreasque cruces Sinis, et non hospita Grais

saxa, et curvatas in sua fata trabes." (III 22, 29-38)

This passage is a good illustration of Propertius power of suggestive allusion. In ten verses he gives us a list of

mythological stories whose details would almost fill a book. His references are very brief but the words are so expressive that they suggest many of the details to the reader. Thus Propertius pictures the exposure of Andromeda to the sea monster by referring to the clanking of her chains:

"non hic Andromedae resonant pro matre catenae."

The banquet of Thyestes is referred to in the following words:

"nec tremis Ausonias, Phoebe fugate, dapes."

The poet does not tell how Atreus prepared the flesh of Thyestes' children for their father to eat, but suggests the nature of the dreadful banquet by the fact^{that} the sun turned back his chariot in horror. The story of how Althaea brought about the death of her son Meleager is indicated without mentioning the name of either:

"nec cuiquam absentes arserunt in caput ignes
exitium nato matre movente suo."

The life of Meleager depended on the preservation of a firebrand in the possession of his mother. In anger because he had slain her brothers, Althaea set fire to the brand and Meleager died at once. The death of Pentheus is described in the following suggestive words:

"Pentheia non saevae venantur in arbore Bacchae."

Pentheus resisted the introduction of the Bacchic worship. He concealed himself in a tree to witness the orgies of the Bacchantes. On being discovered he was taken for a wild beast and torn to pieces by his mother and other Bacchantes. This the poet suggests by the words, "venantur in arbore."

In place of naming the sacrifice of Iphigenia at Aulis, Propertius declares:

"nec solvit Danaas subdita cerva rates"

Thus he suggests the story by referring to the substitution of the hind as a sacrificial victim in place of Iphigenia. So also the poet refers indirectly to Io as the rival upon whose brow Juno placed curved horns:

"cornua nec valuit curvare in paelice Iuno
aut faciem turpi dedecorare bove."

As a final example of the monstrous deeds that have occurred in Greece Propertius pictures the robber Sinis who killed travelers by fastening them to the top of a tree, which he bent and then let spring up again. He himself was killed in this manner by Theseus, and Propertius suggests this in the words, "et curvatas in sua fata trabes."

Occasionally the poet's love for mythology leads him to tell such stories where they add neither emphasis nor interest, but rather weaken the effect. Such an instance is found in III 12, 23-36, where he enumerates almost all the adventures of the *Odyssey*:

"Postumus alter erit miranda coniuge Vlixes:

non illi longae tot nocuere morae,
castra decem annorum, et Ciconum mons Ismara, Calpe,
exustaeque tuae mox, Polypheme, genae,
et Circae fraudes, lotosque herbaeque tenaces,
Scyllaque et alternas scissa Charybdis aquas,
Lampeties Ithacis veribus mugisse iuencos

(paverat hos Phoebos filia Lampetie),
et thalamum Aeaëae flentis fugisse puellae,
totque hiemis noctes totque natasse dies,
nigrantesque domos animarum intrasse silentum,
Sirenum surdo remige adisse lacus,
et veteres arcus leto renovasse procorum,
errorisque sui sic statuisset modum."

The poet does not add a single new feature to the usual account and there is no necessity for such an enumeration. Though each event is mentioned as briefly as possible, the long list must have been tiresome to his readers, to whom the Odyssey was so familiar.

We find a few instances of mythological references used for purposes of description. These may be classed as ornamental since they are usually added unnecessarily and serve only for more complete identification. Baiae is described as, "qua iacet Herculeis semita litoribus," (I 11,2). The road between the Lucrine lake and the sea was said to have been built by Hercules when he was conveying away the oxen of Gerion.

Again when telling of the drowning of Marcellus, Propertius describes the same region as:

"qua iacet et Troiae tubicen Misenus harena,
et sonat Herculeo structa labore via;
hic, ubi, mortales dexter cum quaereret urbes,
cymbala Thebano concrepuere deo." (III 18, 3-6)

Misenus was the trumpeter of Aeneas, buried at Misenum. (Aen. VI 232)
"Thebano deo" would ordinarily refer to Dionysus for whom the
"cymbala" would be very suitable; but on account of the con-
text it is probable that the reference here is to Hercules who
was born at Thebes.

Cyzicus is identified as, "raptorisque tulit qua via
Ditis equos" (III 22, 4). The abduction of Proserpina by
Pluto was usually localized in Sicily but occasionally at Cyzicus
on the Propontis.

Hence it is evident that Propertius introduces a good many
mythological references which are not necessary to the course
of his argument, but which he uses merely to adorn and add in-
terest to his theme.

IV

CONVENTIONAL EPITHETS

A small proportion of the mythological references in
Propertius are introduced merely as conventional epithets.
Frequently the reference is made by an adjective formed from
the name of^a mythological character and then applied to some
article or thing closely associated with that character. A
good example of this is the "Orpheae lyrae" of I 3, 41-42:

"nam modo purpureo fallebam stamine somnum,
rursus et Orpheae carmine, fessa, lyrae."

Orpheus was celebrated for his musical ability and was said to

have tamed the wild beasts with his lyre and led after him the rocks and trees. A similar instance is the use of "Aoniam lyram" in I 2, 27-28:

"cum tibi praesertim Phoebus sua carmina donet
Aoniamque libens Calliopea lyram."

Aonia was a district round mount Helicon in Boeotia, so called after Aon, son of Poseidon. The Muses from frequenting mount Helicon are called Aoniae Sorores. Hence "Aoniam lyram" is equivalent to the lyre of the Muses.

A common mythological epithet applied to Thebes is that of Cadmean, an adjective derived from the name of its founder Cadmus:

"Dum tibi Cadmeae dicuntur, Pontice, Thebae." (I 7,1)

There is still another method of mythological reference which may be classed under that of conventional epithets. In mentioning a mythological character the poet often applies some epithet which relates to a well known myth concerning that character. Thus the poet addresses Aquilo as the, "Terror of the ravished Orithyia."

"infelix Aquilo, raptae timor Orithyiae." (III 7,13)

Orithyia was the daughter of Erechtheus. Once as she strayed beyond the river Ilissus, she was carried off by Boreas.

To the pine tree Propertius applies the epithet "Arcadio amica deo." (II 8,20) The Arcadian god was Pan and his mistress Pitys (Πίτυς, a pine tree) was changed into a pine by Boreas.

Vesta receives the conventional epithet of "Iliacae felix tutela favillae." (IV 4, 69). Aeneas was believed to have

brought the eternal fire of Vesta from Troy, along with the images of the Penates.

So by these brief epithets the poet recalls stories of mythology, but it is only those myths which are most familiar which may thus be condensed into conventional epithets.

V

MYTHOLOGICAL TERMS USED FOR GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Another distinct classification of Propertian mythology is the use of mythological terms for geographical ones. For instance the poet declares to his friend Tullus that with him he would not fear to ascend the Rhipaeae mountains and go beyond the abode of Memnon:

"Non ego nunc Hadriae vereor mare noscere tecum,
Tulle, neque Aegaeo ducere vela salo,
cum quo Rhipaeos possim conscendere montes
ulteriusque domos vadere Memnonias." (I 6, 1-4).

Aethiopia was the fabled home of Memnon, and "Memnonias domos" is used to represent the extreme east.

When Cynthia's love has grown cold Propertius disconsolately asks:

"invidiae fuimus: num me deus obruit? an quae
lecta Prometheis dividit herba iugis?" (I 12, -9-10)

"Prometheis iugis" is used of Mt. Caucasus where Prometheus was bound. The gathering of magic herbs there may refer to the Caucasus as the land of the sorceress Medea or perhaps to the *φάρμακον Προμηθέων* so called flower of Prometheus which grew

out of his vitals. (Apoll. Rhod. III 843).

"Gigantea ora" is used by Propertius for Cumae:

"sive Gigantea spatia bere litoris ora." (I 20,9)

This was the district known as the Phlegraean plains which was the scene of the battle between the gods and the giants.

The usual title of the Hellespont is varied by the poet who calls it, "Athamantidos undis". (I 20,19). The daughter of Athamas was Helle after whom the Hellespont was named.

Tusculum is referred to as, "Aeaei moenia Telegoni."

"quid petis Aeaei moenia Telegoni?" (II 32,4)

Tusculum was said to have been built by Telegonus, son of Odysseus and Circe, whence he received the epithet "Aeaeus". Ovid refers to Tusculum in a manner very similar to that of Propertius:

"inter Aricinos Albanae tempora constat

factaque Telegoni moenia celsa manu." (Fasti, III 91-92)

In praising the rivers and fountains of Italy Propertius refers to the Lacus Juturnus with the obscure mythological title of "potaque Pollucis lympha salubris equo." (III 22, 26). Castor and Pollux were said to have watered their horses at the Lacus Juturnus after the battle of lake Regillus. (B.C. 498)

In a similar fashion the Hippocrene is referred to as, "Bellerophontei equi umor." (III 3, 1-2). The Hippocrene was a spring on Mt. Helicon. It was fabled to have arisen where the hoof of Pegasus, Bellerophon's steed, struck the ground. Ovid speaks of the origin of the spring as follows: (Met. V 262)

"Vera tamen fama est, et Pegasus huius origo
fontis et ad latices deduxit Pallada sacros.
quae mirata diu factas pedis ictibus undas,

silvarum lucos circumspicit antiquarum

antraque et innumeris distinctas floribus herbas."

The same fountain is designated by Propertius in other terms as the "Gorgoneus lacus:"

"et Veneris dominae volucres, mea turba, columbae
tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu." (III 3,31-2)

It is so called because Pegasus, from the blow of whose hoof it arose, sprang from the neck of the Gorgon when Perseus beheaded her. So in this epithet the poet has gone back a step farther than when he designated the spring as, "Bellerophontei equi umor"; and the allusion becomes accordingly more obscure.

VI

MYTHS TOLD FOR THEIR OWN SAKE, AS THE SUBJECTS OF POEMS.

So far in our discussion we have dealt only with the references to mythology introduced for various purposes into the poems of Propertius. But we find several instances in which the whole poem is a myth told for its own sake. Especially is this true in the last book of Propertius where he seems to have grown weary of love as his theme and to have taken as his new subject the myths concerning the old sacred places of Rome.

In book I we find one instance of a myth made the subject of a whole poem. The poet tells the story of Hylas and Hercules as a warning to his friend Gallus. (I 20). Hylas was a youth beloved by Hercules who took him with him on the Argonautic expedition. When they landed at Mysia, Hylas went forth to seek

water from a distant spring. As he was drawing the water the nymphs of the spring were seized with love for him and drew him down into the water. Hercules searched long for the youth, crying out his name, but only an echo from the fountain answered him. Propertius' version of the myth is almost a replica of the Idyll of Theocritus on the same subject. (Idyll XIII). In certain passages Propertius' words seem an echo of those of Theocritus. Theocritus describes the landing of the Argonauts and Hylas' departure for the water as follows:

“ἐκβάντες δ' ἐπὶ θῆνα κατὰ ζυγὰ δαῖτα πένοντο
δεικελινά, πολλοὶ δὲ μίαν στορέσαντο χαμεύναν.
λειμῶν γάρ σφιν ἔκειτο, μέγα στιβάδεσσιν ὄνειρα,
ἔνθεν βούτομον ὄξυ βαθύν τ' ἐτάμοντο κύπειρον.
κῶκεθ' ὕλας ὁ ξανθὸς ὕδωρ ἐπισόρπιον οἰσῶν
αὐτῷ θ' Ἑρακλῆι καὶ ἄστεμφεζ Τελαμῶνι.” (32-7).

Propertius' description is quite similar:

"hic manus heroum, placidis ut constitit oris,
mollia composita litora fronde tegit.
at comes invicti iuvenis processerat ultra
raram sepositi quaerere fontis aquam." (I 20, 21-24)

In the following lines Propertius introduces one element which is not found in Theocritus:

"hunc duo sectati fratres, Aquilonia proles,
hunc super et Zetes, hunc super et Calais,
oscula suspensis instabant carpere palmis,
oscula et alterna ferre supina fuga.
ille sub extrema pendens secluditur ala
et volucres ramo summovet insidias.
iam Pandioniae cessit genus Orithyiae:
a dolor! ibat Hylas, ibat Hamadryasin." (25-32)

Zetes and Calais were the winged sons of Boreas and were members^{of} the Argonautic expedition. Theocritus says nothing of the fact that they followed Hylas in order to snatch kisses and were finally driven back. But both writers picture alike the flower-surrounded spring and the dancing water nymphs who draw the boy down into its depths. The search of Hercules for the youth and the echo from the fountain are told by Propertius in language which resembles that of Theocritus, as may be seen from the following comparison:

"Τρις μὲν Ἰγλαν αὔσειν, ὅσον βαθὺς ἤρυχε λαίμῳ.
τρις δ' ἄρ' ὁ παῖς ὑπάκουσεν, ἄρα δ' ἔθηκετο φωνά
ἐξ ὕδατος, παρεῶν δὲ μάλα σχεδὸν εἶδετο πόρρω." (154-60).

Propertius describes the scene more briefly:

"tum sonitum raptō corpore fecit Hylas;
cui procul Alcides iterat responsa, sed illi
nomen ab extremis fontibus aura refert." (48-50)

Thus it is evident that Propertius is following rather closely the Hylas Idyll of Theocritus.

An old image of Vertumnus in the Vicus Tuscus draws from the poet an aetiological poem on the god's origin. (IV 2). He puts the poem in the mouth of the god himself who thus declares himself of Etruscan origin:

"Tuscus ego Tuscis orior, nec paenitet inter
proelia Volsintios deseruisse focos." (2-4)

In reality Vertumnus was a genuine Roman deity and this idea seems to have arisen because his statue stood in the Vicus Tuscus. Propertius derives the god's name in three ways. First he

explains that it arose from the turning of the Tiber back into its channel:

" hac quondam Tiberinus iter faciebat, at aiunt
remorum auditos per vada pulsa sonos:
at postquam ille suis tantum concessit alumnis,
Vertumnus verso dicor ab amne deus." (7-10)

Again he explains it from the fact that Vertumnus received the first fruits of the changing seasons:

"seu, quia vertentis fructum praecepimus anni,
Vertumni rursus credis id esse sacrum.
prima mihi variat liventibus uva racemis,
et coma lactenti spicea fruge tumet;
hic dulces cerasos, hic autumnalia pruna
cernis et aestivo mora rubere die;
insitor hic solvit pomosa vota corona,
cum pirus invito stipite mala tulit." (11-18)

As a third derivation Propertius describes the god's ability to change himself into any form that he desires:

"opportuna mea est cunctis natura figuris:
in quamcumque voles verte, decorus ero." (21-22)

So the poet suggests three possible ways to explain the god Vertumnus, a vertendo amne, a vertente anno, deus qui vertitur. The god's name is evidently derived from *verto* and signifies the god who changes himself. As a divinity he was probably connected only with the transformation of plants from the time of Blossom to maturity, but from this he came to be associated with the changing of the seasons. This is symbolized in the myth

which represents him as changing himself into a number of different forms in order to win the affection of Pomona, goddess of the fruit harvest. He first appears to her as a ploughman, representing spring; then as a reaper, typifying the summer; again as a vine gatherer symbolizing the autumn; and finally as an old, gray haired woman, emblem of the winter's snows. When at last he assumed his true shape of a handsome youth he succeeded in his suit. Propertius, strangely enough, does not relate the myth which connected Vertumnus with Pomona, but he seems to recall it when he tells of the different shapes that the god can assume:

"da falcem et torto frontem mihi comprime faeno:
iurabis nostra gramina secta manu.

.

corbis at imposito pondere messor eram." (25-28)

Thus he seems to refer to the incident of Vertumnus as a reaper wooing Pomona.

In art Vertumnus appears as the beautiful youth having his head crowned with a garland of ears of corn and holding a cornucopia or dish of fruit in his hand.

Similar to the aetiological legend of Vertumnus is the poem on Jupiter Feretrius (IV 10), in which Propertius tries to account for the name Feretrius and thus explain the god's origin. He tells how Romulus overcame his foe the Caeninian Acron and dedicated to Jupiter the spoils which he won:

"imbuis exemplum primae tu, Romule, palmae
huius, et exuvio plenus ab hoste redis,
tempore quo portas Caeninum Acronta petentem

victor in eversum cuspide fundis equum.
Acron Herculeus Caenina ductor ab arce,
Roma, tuis quondam finibus horror erat.
hic spolia ex umeris ausus sperare Quirini
ipse dedit, sed non sanguine sicca suo.
hunc videt ante cavas librantem spicula turres
Romulus et votis occupat ante ratis:
'Iuppiter, haec hodie tibi victima corruet Acron'
voverat, et spolium corruit ille Iovi." (5-16)

After relating two more instances in which the spolia opima were consecrated to Jupiter Feretrius, Propertius explains the name as follows:

"nunc spolia in templo tria condita: causa Feretri,
omine quod certo dux ferit ense ducem;
seu quia victa suis umeris haec arma ferebant,
hinc Feretri dicta est ara superba Iovis." (45-48)

But though the name Feretrius is probably derived from ferire, it is not because Jupiter aids in striking the enemy, as Propertius says, but because Jupiter strikes with his lightning the guilty, especially perjurers. Upon the ratification of a treaty the Fetiales brought forth from the sanctuary of Jupiter Feretrius the sacred silex with which the pater patratus struck the sacrificial animal, while repeating the formula: "Si prior defexit (populus Romanus) publico consilio dolo malo, tum illo die, Juppiter, populum Romanum sic ferito ut ego hunc porcum hodie feriam." Hence this ceremony would seem to be the origin of the title rather than that which Propertius gives.

Many of such aetiological myths have been proved to be nothing more than popular explanations of names or places, the true origin of which had been forgotten.

In pursuance of his later literary ideals Propertius devotes a poem to the myth of Hercules at Rome. (IV,9). Hercules was regarded as the founder of one of the city's oldest shrines, The *Ara Maxima*, and the legend of his arrival at Rome was regarded as preceding even the legend of Romulus. According to the common account Hercules was conveying home the oxen of Geryon and stopped at the Tiber's side. Here his cattle were stolen from him by Cacus, a fight ensued, and Hercules erected the altar to commemorate the recovery of his oxen. Livy gives the first Latin version of the myth and from a comparison of his account with that of Propertius it is evident that Propertius is following Livy. Livy describes Hercules' arrival at the Tiber and the theft of the oxen in the following manner: "Herculem in ea loca Geryone interempto boves mira specie abegisse memorant ac prope Tiberim fluvium, quo prae se armentum agens nando traiecerat, loco herbido, ut quiete et pabulo laeto reficeret boves, et ipsum fessum via procubuisse. Ibi cum eum cibo vinoque gravatum sopor oppressisset, pastor accola eius loci, nomine Cacus, ferox viribus, captus pulchritudine boum cum avertere eam praedam vellet, quia, si agendo armentum in speluncam compulisset, ipsa vestigia quaerentem dominum eo deductura erant, aversos boves, exitium quemque pulchritudine, caudis in speluncam traxit."(I 7,4-6) Propertius' description is as follows:

"Amphitryoniades qua tempestate iuencos
egerat a stabulis, o Erythaea, tuis,

venit ad invictos pecorosa Palatia montes,
et statuit fessos fessus et ipse boves,
qua Velabra suo stagnabant flumine quaque
nauta per urbanas velificabat aquas.
sed non infido manserunt hospite Caco
incolumes: furto polluit ille Iovem.
incola Cacus erat, metuendo raptor ab antro,
per tria partitos qui dabat ora sonos.
hic, ne certa forent manifestae signa rapinae,
aversos cauda traxit in antra boves." (1-12)

It is evident that the accounts of Livy and Propertius resemble very much. Both represent Hercules as tired "fessus" when he reaches the Tiber's side. Livy speaks of Cacus as "pastor accola" while Propertius calls him "incola Cacus". Vergil, on the other hand, represents Cacus as a monster breathing forth flames:

"huic monstro Volcanus erat pater: illius atros
ore vomens ignis magno se mole ferebat." (Aen. VIII 198)

While Propertius follows Livy in representing Cacus as a neighboring shepherd, he has in part adopted the idea of Vergil that he was of unusual form. But instead of a monster breathing forth flames, Propertius portrays him as having three mouths. Livy and Propertius also agree in describing Hercules as dealing the death blow to Cacus with his club.

Livy I 7, 7: "quem cum ad speluncam vadentem Cacus
vi prohibere conatus esset, ictus clava fidem pastorum nequiquam invocans morte occubuit."

So also Propertius says:

"Maenaliō iacuit pulsus tria tempora ramo
Cacus." (15)

Thus it would seem that Propertius has followed closely one of the earliest Latin versions of the myth. But he combines the Hercules-Cacus myth with the story of the celebration of rites of Bona Dea. The connection between the two is brought about by the thirst of Hercules after slaying Cacus. In seeking water he comes upon the rites of Bona Dea, forbidden to men. When the priestess refuses his entrance in order to quench his thirst, he breaks his way into the sanctuary. Then in order to avenge his thirst he directs that the Ara Maxima, dedicated at the recovery of his oxen, never be open to the worship of women:

"Maxima quae gregibus devota est Ara repertis,
ara per has' inquit 'maxima facta manus,
haec nullis umquam pateat veneranda puellis,
Herculis aeternum ne sit inulta sitis.'" (67-70)

In this blending of two diverse myths Propertius stands alone.

One of the most interesting and artistic myths which Propertius relates to us is that of Tarpeia. (Iv 4). The earliest version of this myth is that of Fabius Pictor who relates that Tarpeia, daughter of the commander of the citadel, saw the Sabines and was seized with a longing for the golden ornaments on their arms. In order to obtain these she betrayed the citadel to them, but as a reward they threw their shields upon her and crushed her. Livy presents several additions to this earlier form of the myth: "Spurius Tarpeius Romanae praeerat arci; huius filiam virginem auro corrumpit Tatius, ut armatos in arcem

accipiat--aquam forte ea tum sacris extra moenia petitem ierat; accepti obrutam armis necavere, seu ut vi capta potius arx videretur seu prodendi exempli causa, ne quid usquam fidum proditori esset. Additur fabulae, quod vulgo Sabini aureas armillas magni ponderis brachia laevo gemmatosque magna specie anulos habuerint, pepigisse eam quod in sinistris manibus haberent; eo scuta illi pro aureis donis congesta."(I 11,6-8).

Livy is the first to represent Tarpeia as a Vestal virgin who meets Tattius, leader of the Sabines, when she has gone outside the walls to bring water for the sacrifices. While Livy does not call Tarpeia a vestal this is evidently the meaning of "virginem" which he places in apposition to "filiam." Then too the Vestals had to get the water for the sacrifices from a living spring, that of the Camenae, which was outside the walls. Propertius follows Livy in describing Tarpeia as a Vestal who beholds Tattius while drawing water from the fountain:

"hinc Tarpeia deae fontem libavit: at illi
urgebat medium fictilis urna caput.

.

vidit harenosis Tattium proludere campis
pictaque per flavas arma levare iugas:
obstipuit regis facie et regalibus armis,
interque oblitus excidit urna manus." (15-20)

But Propertius also introduces most striking changes in the myth. Tarpeia covets, not the golden ornaments of the Sabines, but the love of Tattius and promises him as her dowry the betrayal of Rome:

"dos tibi non humilis prodita Roma venit." (56)

This substitution of love as the motive for treachery is Propertius' own invention. But Propertius retains the usual account of Tarpeia's death, although when combined with the erotic motif it has lost its point. Thus he describes her reward:

"prodiderat portaeque fidem patriamque iacentem,

nubendique petit, quem velit, ipsa diem.

at Tatius (neque enim sceleri dedit hostis honorem)

'Nube' ait 'et regni scande cubile mei!'

dixit, et ingestis comitum super obruit armis." (87-91)

One other divergence of Propertius from the common form of the myth must be noted. In the last two verses of the poem all good manuscripts read:

"a duce Tarpeio mons est cognomen adeptus;

o vigil, iniuste praemia sortis habes."

To make this conform to the usual version of the myth most editors read, "a duce Tarpeia." But Propertius did not believe that the hill was named from the traitress Tarpeia. He evidently knew of the derivation of the hill's name given in Festus, according to which Tarpeius, commander of the citadel, attempted betrayal to the Sabines and was hurled from the Tarpeian rock. The latter story, however, was not romantic enough for Propertius to weave into a poem and he must even introduce an erotic motif into that of Tarpeia.

So we find that most of the mythological references of Propertius are introduced to heighten the effect of some definite theme, and that they may be classified under the headings of mythological parallels, illustration, ornamentation, and conventional epithets. Comparatively few are the myths which are told for their own sake and made the subjects of whole poems. Of these divisions that of mythological parallels embraces by far the largest number of references. A study of these parallel myths shows that, with few exceptions, the poet uses as parallels stories which have some main point of similarity. To be sure they do not resemble in all of their details, but in most instances the poet's comparison is well drawn.

In general the mythological references of Propertius are very brief and it is this brevity which clouds them in obscurity. The poet prefers to enumerate a number of myths in a brief and recondite fashion rather than to dwell upon the details of any one myth. But in considering this characteristic of Propertius we should remember that these myths were more familiar to the public for whom he wrote than they are to the modern public, and that by a few well chosen words the poet could suggest to his readers the whole story. Indeed it is in this power of suggestive allusion and of bold metaphorical language that Propertius excels. Thus as regards the character of his allusions he should not be too

severely criticized, but as regards the quantity of his allusions even the most partial critic must admit that he oversteps the bounds of good taste. Yet even this fault must be pardoned to a certain extent when we see with what impetuosity and wonderful power he pours forth the myths of antiquity as if to him they were ever present realities and not merely fables of the past.

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