

Propertius 1.21 notes

Bibliography e.g.: Du Quesnay, Ian. M. (1992). 'In Memoriam Galli Propertius 1.21', from *Author and Audience in Latin Poetry*, ed. Woodman and Powell; Roman, L. (2014), *Poetic autonomy in ancient Rome*, Oxford

Idea that the (dying or possibly dead: Nb parallels with epitaphs where as if dead man speaks) speaker wants wounded soldier (most likely traveller at time, given seige of Perusia) to convey news of his death to his family. Perusine war came out of Octavian evicting inhabitants to reward his soldiers: leader Lucius Antonius gathered his forces in Etruscan city of Perusia: this was besieged by Octavian (it surrendered).

Nb penultimate poem: part of closure? How does this rework names and topoi from previous poems?

"The following elegy, 1.21, also concerns a figure named Gallus, but effects an even more dramatic rupture with the foregoing tone and content. This Gallus, almost certainly distinct from the Gallus of the previous elegy, is a soldier killed in the Perusine war of 41 BC." (Roman 2014); "Many details are difficult to interpret, and the solutions proposed by scholars are too many and complicated to sift through here. To cite only one key issue: it is not clear whether or not the dead man and the soldier he addresses are related by marriage, and correspondingly, whether *soror* refers to Gallus' sister, or the passing soldier's sister and Gallus' wife or bride. Regardless of the precise interpretation, however, the shift in tone, from fictionalized *amor* in 1.1–19 and neoteric mythology in 1.20 to brutal death in one of the darkest episodes of the civil wars in 1.21, is startling, and is clearly meant to be. As Hutchinson observes, 'the change of feeling in 21 and 22 is heightened by the opposite change in the poem before', where the myth of Hylas 'puts love itself in a fantastic setting and alters its atmosphere'." (Roman 2014)

1 Tu, qui : Du Quesnay gives parallels from epitaphic inscriptions; he suggests we then think of epitaphs which commemorate individual's deeds and last words.

2 miles: addressee. No longer *militia amoris*? Wounded. Grim details.

3 lumina: Clarke (2012: 373) notes *lumina* (and *lacrimis* 6) are words that appear in the previous love elegy poems: "Such associations reinforce the impression that the environment that these love poets have created for themselves is entirely illusory, easily shattered by the intrusion of events from the "real world"."

5 te: implied contrast with the speaker who is doomed.

6 acta: Heyworth prints *Acca*.

7 Seemingly not the poet Gallus: but can we avoid thinking of Gallus?

10 ossa: morbidity reflection of death found previously in Propertius' poems but here real.

"...allusions to bones and burial (or lack of it) in both 1.21 and 22 are contrasted with those in Elegy 17 where Propertius envisages his death in two different landscapes. The suggestion in the last couplet of 1.21 that the sister should accept any bones scattered over the hills as Gallus' own (*et quicumque super dispersa invenerit ossa / montibus Etruscis, haec sciat esse mea*) and the accusation in 1.22.8 that the dust does not even bother to cover the bones of Propertius' wretched kinsman recall how Propertius' estrangement from Cynthia in Elegy 17 is represented by his exile in a harsh and lonely landscape. He envisages how his corpse would merely be covered by a small patch of sand (*haecine parva meum funus harena teget?*, 8) and Cynthia would not hold his bones to her bosom (*ossaeque nulla tuo nostra tenere sinu?*, 12). He contrasts this with the way in which his bones would have been treated at home, envisaging Cynthia lavishing her hair upon them and placing them on a soft bed of roses (*illa meo caros donasset funere crinis, / molliter et tenera poneret ossa rosa*, 21–22)." (Clarke 2012: 373); Clarke contrasts the dust.