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MAXIMA ROMA IN PROPERTIUS, VIRGIL AND GALLUS

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MAXIMA ROMA IN PROPERTIUS, VIRGIL AND GALLUS*

I. INTRODUCTION: ELEGIAC, PASTORAL AND EPIC POETICS IN PROPERTIUS 4.1

From its *incipit*, Propertius 4 constructs itself as an anomaly in the corpus of Roman love-elegy:

Hoc quodcumque uides, hospes, qua maxima Roma est,
ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit,
atque ubi Nauli stant sacra Palatia Phoeb,
Euandri profugae concubuere boues. (Propertius 4.1.1–4)

 Whatever you see here, stranger, where Rome the greatest is,
was hill and grass before Phrygian Aeneas,
and where the Palatine sacred to Phoebus of our Navy stands,
Evander’s fugitive cattle bedded together.2

Rather than putting Cynthia *prima*, as the *Monobiblos* so self-consciously does,3 Propertius 4 here turns its back on *amor* to pronounce newfound interest in *Roma*.4 With the conventional polarity of elegy thus reversed in favour of the epic themes hitherto presented as anathema to (Propertian) elegy, the ensuing lines make free with the subject matter of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, the *nescioquid maius* … *Iliade* (‘something greater than the *Iliad*’) famously anticipated at Propertius 2.34.66 having now been in circulation for upwards of three years.5 This article is concerned with how

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1 Citations from Propertius are taken from S.J. Heyworth, *Sexti Properti Elegi* (Oxford, 2007).

2 The translations in this article (in some sense original, though familiarity with/consultation of existing models may have led to some duplication) attempt to parallel in English the lexical sharing relevant to this discussion.


4 For similar reflections on the opening hexameter, see J.B. DeBrohun, *Roman Propertius and the Reinvention of Elegy* (Michigan, 2003), 37. For the sustained pretence of heroic diction and metrics until the *et* (the metrical ‘point of recognition’) in the pentameter, see L. Morgan, ‘Getting the measure of heroes: the daeclytic hexameter and its detractors’, in M.R. Gale (ed.), *Latin Epic and Didactic Poetry: Genre, Tradition and Individuality* (Swansea, 2004), 1–26, at 6, in an article which shows how non-heroic genres (including those written in dactylic hexameter) use metre self-consciously to construct themselves as not-epic; more generally on the same topic, see J.P. Sullivan, ‘Form opposed: elegy, epigram, and satire’, in A.J. Boyle (ed.), *Roman Epic* (London, 1993), 143–61.

5 Virgil having died in 19 B.C., and a *terminus post quem* of 16 B.C. for the publication of Propertius 4 being recommended by internal evidence at 4.1.95–6, 4.6.77–8, and 4.11.65–6: on
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echoes of Virgil and Gallus (for those who detect them) in these opening lines might push the book’s generic identity ‘upwards’ to and/or ‘downwards’ from the epic magnitude sounded by the phrase maxima Roma (4.1.1).

It has been recognized that Propertius’ sequence of temporal ‘Pendelschwung’ back and forth from Augustan Rome to the city’s pre-Trojan rusticity (there are up to twenty such ‘swings’, implicit or explicit, in the first 38 lines) is in dialogue with (and probably also mediated by Tibullus’ response to) Aeneas’ pastoral


And/or for those who find the ‘story’ here told about them compelling: see D.P. Fowler, ‘On the shoulders of giants: intertextuality and classical studies’, MD 39 (1997), 13–34, at 20 (n. 13, id., Roman Constructions [Oxford, 2000], 115–37, at 122–3); ‘a very obvious parallel will be accepted even if we cannot for the moment think of what to say about it, and a good story will make us sensitive to smaller correspondences which we might otherwise think lost in background noise.’ On the generation of an allusion by ‘sympathetic vibration’ in both the poet’s and reader’s ‘poetic memories’ of the literary tradition, see G.B. Conte, The Rhetoric of Initiation: Genre and Poetic Memory in Vergil and Other Latin Poets, tr. C.P. Segal (Ithaca and London, 1986), 32–9. On intentionality and interpretability, see S.E. Hinds, Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry (Cambridge, 1998), 17–51, with a solution to the critical impasse at p. 49.

There has been considerable debate as to whether the ‘now-versus-then’ topos is of Virgilian or Tibullan priority: the pendulum image is that of W. Wimmel, ‘Tibull II 5 und das elegische Rombild’, in Gedenkschrift G. Rhode (Tübingen, 1961), 239, who locates the origin of the topos in Tibullus 2.5, a view challenged by K. Weeber (n. 5), for whom the numerous echoes of Aeneid 8 (see n. 8 below) show that ‘Properz macht gleich zu Beginn der Elegie die Situation deutlich’ (490); for an agnostic position on the extent of Virgilian priority, see F. Cairns, Tibullus (Cambridge, 1979), 68. White (n. 5), 186, takes the (less usual) view that ‘there is little sign that the elegists borrowed anything from Vergil’s picture of early Rome’, and suggests (less unusually) that the catalyst for the topos was, ‘at least proximately’, Augustus’ urban renewal; on the topographical and political stimuli, see also C. Edwards, Writing Rome. Textual Approaches to the City (Cambridge, 1996), 3, 19, 31–2, 41–3. Varro and Livy also loom large in this context: see again Edwards, 82–5 and E. Fantham, ‘Images of the city: Propertius’ new-old Rome’, in T. Habinek and A. Schiesaro (edd.), The Roman Cultural Revolution (Cambridge, 1997), 122–35, esp. 124 and 129–32. Whatever its origin, it need not be doubted that the topos had been appro-
interlude on the future site of Rome in *Aeneid* 8, where anachronistic ‘voice-overs’ make similar past–present juxtapositions from the inverse temporal perspective (cf. *Aen*. 8.98–100, 330–2, 338–9, 347–8, 361). It has been suggested elsewhere that in focussing here and in two further elegies (4.6 and 4.9) on *Aeneid* 8, the most aetiological book of an aetiological epic, Propertius has shown where the Roman Homer is most akin to the Roman Callimachus. That Propertius 4 is a notional ‘Roman *Aetia*’ certainly offers one solution to the book’s generic conundrum, yet the presence of epic material in an elegiac context remains an incursion that cannot be explained away. Recent studies of Propertius 4 have explored the dynamic ways in which, on the level of metanarrative, the traditionally elegiac agenda and newly epic ambition of the book jostle for supremacy. In its own way, this incursion of Virgilian epic into Propertian elegy is equivalent to the incursions of epic into pastoral in *Eclogue* 4 and, inversely, of pastoral into epic in *Aeneid* 8: the *Aeneid* documents how the business of *arma* spills mercilessly on to the *pascua* and *rura* of pristine Italy, relentlessly reclaiming the epic as a martial text, or converting it


8 On ‘time and tense in the *Aeneid*’, see S. Mack, *Patterns of Time in Vergil* (Hamden, CT, 1978), 33–54, with pp. 49–54 on the past–present juxtapositions in *Aeneid* 8 as ‘occasions when, momentarily, the poet drops his mask of anonymity and speaks as an Augustan Roman’ (49). Aside from the past–present juxtapositions, 4.1.1–4 adduce other essentials of *Aeneid* 8: guest-friendship (hospes, 4.1.1; cf. *Aen*. 8.188, 364, 436, 532); the rusticity of the site as Aeneas found it (4.1.1–2; cf. e.g. *Aen*. 8.176, 348); Evander, resident on the Palatine (4.1.2–3; cf. *Aen*. 9.9) and an exile like Aeneas (4.1.4; cf. *Aen*. 8.51–4, 118–9); proto-Roman cattle occupying Roman landmarks (4.1.4; cf. *Aen*. 8.360–1). For assessments of these Virgilian echoes, see n. 7 above and (in isolation of Tibullus) DeBrohun (n. 4), 37–9, and (albeit rather unfavourably) Jenkyns (n. 5), 610–11.


10 It is for this feature, in particular, that Alfonsi (n. 5), 469, adjudged Propertius 4 ‘il libro che ben possiamo dire virgiliano dell’opera properziana’; J.F. Miller, ‘Callimachus and the Augustan aetiological elegy’, *ANRW* 2.30.1 (1982), 371–417, at 382–3, argues that Propertius challenged Virgilian aetiology by confining it to a smaller scale; see also La Penna, *L’Integrazione Difficile – Un Profilo di Properzio* (Turin, 1977), 51, 86, and 120; Fedeli (n. 5), 31; Jenkyns (n. 5), 606–7.


into one. However, the presence of (Virgilian) epic in (Propertian) elegy, as in Propertius 4.1, constitutes an even greater generic infraction than that of pastoral in the epic of *arma virumque*, for pastoral, unlike elegy, is already a ‘lower’ register of epos and can be defined as a derivative, or ‘subset’, of (Homerian) epic.

With this in view, the evocation of *Aeneid* 8 in Propertius 4.1 might be said to go further than a mere signal of generic ambition: rather than simply flagging Virgilio-Callimachean pretensions, Propertius identifies (with) precisely that part of the *Aeneid* where Virgil’s own generic ascent is clearly on display, such that the encapsulation of *Aeneas*, *collis* (‘hill’), and *herba* (‘grass’) in 4.1.2 looks ever more like a variant of the *pascua rura duces* (‘pastures, countryside, and leaders’, from Virgil’s epitaph) or *Tityrus et fruges Aeneiaque arma* (‘Tityrus and crops and *Aeneas*’ arms’, Ovid, *Am. 1.15.25*) which elsewhere denote the three phases of the Virgilian career.

Moreover, in so far as elegy finds its nearest hexametric counterpart in the erotic exploits of pastoral courtship, Propertius 4.1 might be said to have identified in *Aeneid* 8 a locus of Virgilian epic germane to the elegiac genre’s obsession with *amor* as well as to its aforementioned aetiological and epic aspirations. While it is the distinction between required pastoral *amor* (however elusive in practice) and unrequited elegiac *amor* that enables a coherent reading of Virgilian pastoral itself, the shared erotic interests of each genre nonetheless suggest a further reason why Paul Veyne’s conception of elegy as ‘pastoral in city clothes’ has much to commend it. Such ‘intergeneric’ affinity may have encouraged pastoral colouring in Gallus’ elegy no less than in Tibullus’, and is entertained by Propertius at

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15 For this suggestion (without the comparands), see DeBrohun (n. 4), 39 n. 14. At any rate, we may agree with C. Becker (n. 5), 453, that the reference to *Aeneas* at 4.1.2 can be read as a ‘Quellenangabe’; some may object that *collis et herba* maps less neatly on to the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* than either *pascua [et] rura* or *Tityrus et frages* (all the more so if Naugerius’ *segetes* (cf. *Geo*. 1.1) is correct; in favour of the MSS *frages*, however, see F. Cairns, ‘Ovid *Amores* 1.15 and the problematic *frages* of line 25’, *Ovid. Werk und Wirkung* (Frankfurt, 1998), 85–93 (= F. Cairns, *Papers on Roman Elegy 1969–2003* [Bologna, 2007], 414–22).

16 See Conte (n. 6), 100–29; the distinction between bucolic (happy) and non-bucolic (unhappy, tormented) love is also apparent in pre-Virgilian pastoral, perhaps as early as Theocritus: see M. Fantuzzi and R.L. Hunter, *Tradition and Innovation in Hellenistic Poetry* (Cambridge, 2004), 170–90, esp. at 176.


2.34.67–94, where the idea of classing Virgil’s Eclogues with Propertian elegy is at least countenanced. It might be objected here that there is not a lot of amor in Aen. 5.600–1 (where maxima Roma preserves the antique lusus of elegies?”, CQ 38.2 (1988), 454–8. Pre-Roman pastoral elegy has also been hypothesized by M. Fantuzzi, ‘Pastoral love and “elegiac” love, from Greece to Rome’, LICS 2.3 (2003), at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/classics/lics>; see also Fantuzzi and Hunter (n. 16), 170–90. On the literary continuum from Theocritus to Virgil to Propertius, see R.F. Thomas, ‘Genre through intertextuality: Theocritus to Virgil and Propertius’, Hellenistica Groningana 2 (1996), 227–44.

19 Potentially with greater emphasis for those who with Heyworth’s OCT transpose 2.34.77–80 (on the Georgics) to precede vv. 67ff. (on the Eclogues); the distich of vv. 83–4, a locus ualde uexatus, is isolated by Heyworth from the text.


uides would thus constitute a bookishly visual instance of ‘self-reflexive annotation’ (a.k.a. the ‘Alexandrian footnote’), for which technique see Hinds (n. 6), 1–16, and J. Wills, Repetition
Troiae – ‘game of Troy’ – introduced to Latium by Ascanius) and once more at Aen. 7.602–3 (where maxima Roma keeps the ancient Latin custom of the Gates of War). Occurring at almost the same line number in two separate books of the Aeneid, with maxima falling in the same sedes and with Roma in each case enjambed, and in both passages in connection with a pre-Roman institution renovated by Augustus, the previously unattested maxima Roma brings to the incipit of Propertius’ ‘Roman Aetia’ (where the superlative again falls in the same sedes) appropriately Virgilian and Roman aetiological associations. It also widens the intertextual focus of Propertius 4 beyond the single book of the Aeneid on which most scholars have concentrated. From the viewpoint of 4.1.1, the second Virgilian iteration of maxima Roma seems especially marked, not only as a repetition of the earlier phrase, but also because it too coincides with a beginning of sorts: the Gates of War that Virgil’s ecphrasis here describes are about to be opened by Juno on behalf of the indigenous Latins, as later by the Romans, in symbolic enactment of the ‘opening’ of hostilities:

Mos erat Hesperio in Latio, quem protinus urbes Albanae coluere sacrum, nunc *maxima rerum Roma colit, cum prima mouent in proelia Martem, siue Getis inferre manu lacrimabile bellum Hyrcanisque Arabisque parant, seu tendere ad Indos Auroramque sequi Parthosque reposcere signa: sunt geminae Belli portae (sic nomine dicunt) religione sacrae et saeui formidine Martis; (Virgil, Aen. 7.601–8)

There was a tradition in Hesperian Latium which ever after the Alban cities practised, which now Rome, the greatest of states, practises, when they urge Mars into the battle’s opening, be they preparing to carry tearful war in their hands against Getae or Hyrcanians or Arabians, or to march out to the Indians and pursue the Dawn and reclaim their standards from the Parthians: there are twin Gates of War (so they name them) hallowed with reverence and the dread of savage Mars.


Allowing for a maximum interval of nine words in a search of the LLT-A (accessed via http://www.brepolis.net on 9.7.2009), maxima Roma turns out to be a rare and loaded phrase in antiquity: the next occurrences after Propertius 4.1.1 are Manilius, Astron. 4.694 (on the Virgilian dimension of which, see P.R. Hardie, Virgil’s Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium [Oxford, 1986], 380), Sil. Pun. 3.584–5, and Mart. 7.96.2 and 10.58.6 (on the Virgilian dimension of which, see V. Rimell, Martial’s Rome: Empire and the Ideology of Epigram [Cambridge, 2008], 89). There is a suspicion of the phrase at Ov. Pont. 1.2.81–2 (maxima pars hominum nec te, pulcherrima, curat, | Roma, nec Ausonii militis arma timet) and ironic wordplay may be afoot at Luc. 2.227–8 (maxima merces | Roma recepta fuit) and 2.655–6 (ipsa, caput mundi, bellorum maxima merces, | Roma capi facitis), and at Sil. Pun. 15.547–8 (maxima Romae | spes Nero). However, Cic. Mar. 31.17.7 (maximum bellum populum Romanum cum Antiocho gessisse vide) and Livy 4.2.3 (maximum Romae praemium seditionum esse) seem more like chance echoes.


Citations from Virgil are taken from R.A.B. Mynors (ed.), P. Vergilii Maronis Opera (Oxford, 1969). An asterisk in the text denotes a word which occurs in the same sedes in Propertius 4.1.
Although not marking the opening of a book, Virgil’s Gates of War signal an ‘apertural’ moment nonetheless, and one which, like Propertius 4.1, establishes an aetiological (dis)connection between the maxima Roma of the Augustan age and its aboriginal prehistory.26 As Philip Hardie remarks on these lines, ‘literary openings and closings here enter the world of history’,27 for these are the selfsame Gates of War which (as the Virgilian ‘voice-over’ conspicuously fails to mention) Augustus symbolically closed after his victory at Actium (as Nauali … Phoeb at Propertius 4.1.3 might tacitly remind the reader). In the Aeneid, this is the point at which the Latin war is officially declared, thereby clearing the way for the catalogue of Italian forces with which the book culminates, and instigating the demise of the pastoral world glimpsed in its twilight in the following book and already in decline in this one.28 It seems appropriate, given the new, more epic beginning made by Propertius 4, and the evocation in its first poem of the doomed Arcadia visited by Aeneas in Aeneid 8, that it too should open with (an allusion to) the opening of the Gates of War in Aeneid 7.

Propertius’ incorporation into 4.1 of Virgil’s imploding pastoral world to signal his own explosion of elegy is not confined to a general evocation of Aeneid 8, therefore, and begins perhaps sooner than the more obvious signal in the first pentameter. The reciprocity of intertextuality is such that the incorporation of Aeneid 7 into Propertius 4.1 is also a move which throws the elegiac spotlight back on to the former as much as it highlights the epic ambition of the latter. There is indeed much in the Aeneid to hold the attention of an elegiac reader, and not just in Book 4.29 Not for nothing does Virgil invoke the aid of Erato (Aen. 7.37) when he turns to the maius opus (‘greater work’) of Aeneid 7–12, for the war which dominates this ‘Iliadic’ hexad turns out to have a variety of ‘erotic’ catalysts: Turnus’ amor for Lavinia (Aen. 7.56–7) becomes his amor ferri (‘love of the steel sword’, Aen. 7.461, a neat inversion of elegiac militia amoris), his cause is espoused by a would-be mother-in-law with a thematically apposite name, Amata (see Aen. 7.581), and amor laudis (‘love of praise’, Aen. 7.496) leads Ascanius inadvertently to enrage the locals; it is also a war which sees the simple love of country life perverted into bloodlust (omnis aratri | cessit amor, ‘all love for the plough was gone’, Aen. 7.635–6; cf. Aen. 7.550–1).31 If pastoral can be said to offer Propertian elegy an access point to epic themes (see § I above), the incipit of Propertius 4 might be said to have situated itself aptly in a book of the Aeneid in which pastoral is corrupted by amor into martial epic. Like Aeneid 7, Propertius 4 effects a transformation of amor potentially erotic and elegiac (Turnus’ for

26 On continuity and discontinuity as an underlying theme of Propertius 4, see Hutchinson (n. 5), 1–21. On this aspect of Hellenistic aetiology, see P. Bing, The Well-Read Muse: Present and Past in Callimachus and the Hellenistic Poets (Hypomnemata 90: Göttingen, 1988).
27 The comment ad loc. by N.M. Horsfall, Virgil, Aeneid 7. A Commentary (Leiden, Boston, Köln, 1999) on coluere … coluit (vv. 602–3) is equally applicable to the est … fuisset polyptoton in Propertius 4.1.1: ‘Repetition of the verb in altered tenses embodies linguistically the temporal continuity, laying marked emphasis on the present validity of an ancient usage’; Propertius 4.1.1 is also cited under the same lemma as a parallel for the phrase maxima … Roma.
29 See especially Aen. 7.513, 519–27, and n. 33 below.
30 On Dido as an elegiac lover, see F. Cairns, Virgil’s Augustan Epic (Cambridge, 1989), 129–50.
31 On the significance of Virgil’s appeal to Erato and on the erotic content of Aen. 7–12, see Nelis (n. 9), 267–9 (with extensive bibliography at nn. 5–6).
Lavinia, Propertius’ for Cynthia) into amor martial and epic (devotion to maxima Roma).32

As well as pointing to an affinity between the two texts, the connection between Propertius 4.1 and Aeneid 7 brings with it the possibility for antagonism too. Virgil records that the Gates of War were an institution indigenous to Latium, one among several indications of the martial temperament of the Latin natives.33 By contrast, Propertius 4.1.1–38 (cf. esp. vv. 1–18 and 27–8) emphasizes that no martial institutions existed amid the collis et herba (‘hill and grass’, 4.1.2) before the advent of Aeneas, a pivotal moment postponed until 4.1.39 (huc melius profugos misisti, Troia, Penates, ‘hither for the better, Troy, did you send your fugitive Penates’) and then held accountable for the Deci Brutique secures (‘axes of Decius and Brutus’, 4.1.45) and Caesaris arma (‘Caesar’s weapons’, 4.1.46). The arrival of the Trojans in Italy is consequently an event of dubious moral value for readers less prepared to accept Propertius’ celebration of Trojan arma at face value.34 Confronted with the allusion in 4.1 to the Gates of War in Aeneid 7, such a reader might go on to say that Propertius is implicitly correcting Virgil, given that in the Aeneid the Trojan arrival provokes a reopening of pre-existing Gates of War which owe their origin not to immigrant Trojans but to Latin natives among whom the martial impulse was already latent (as the acrostic lurking in vv. 601–4 might be taken to hint).35 In contrast to Virgil, therefore, Propertius seems to ascribe anti-pastoral bellicosity exclusively to Trojan influence. Accordingly, when Propertius’ primitive soldier is said to lack shiny weaponry (nec rudis infestis miles radiabat in armis, 4.1.27), it is in precise inversion of the resplendent equipment brought by Venus to Aeneas (arma sub adversa positus radiantia quercu, Aen. 8.616); radiare (‘to gleam’) is all the more conspicuous in that it occurs only here in Propertius and just once elsewhere in Virgil (Aen. 8.23). Again, the implication is that arma were introduced to Italy by the Trojans.

On the other hand, as J. O’Hara has shown, Virgil’s presentation of the arrival of the Trojans in Italy is itself not closed to competing interpretations:36 while some

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32 For Propertius reading Amata’s passion as erotic in elegy 4.4, see R.O.A.M. Lyne, Further Voices in Vergil’s Aeneid (Oxford, 1987), 16 n. 31.
33 Aen. 7.628–30 pointedly inverts the description of the Saturnian Age at Geo. 2.538–40 (when the clarion had not yet sounded nor the sword rung on the anvil), while Aen. 7.636 (where the Latins need merely rettemper patrios enses in their furnaces) modifies that of the civil war combatants at Geo. 1.506–8 (where pruning hooks are refashioned into swords); see also Aen. 7.162–5 (where the young Latins exercise in quasi-military fashion) with Horsfall (n. 27) ad loc., and 7.182–6 (where effigies of war heroes, weapons and spoils are on display in Latinus’ palace) with Horsfall (n. 27) ad v. 183.
34 A similarly abrupt transition from pre- to post-Trojan history occurs at a corresponding juncture in Tibullus 2.5 (intriguingly also at v. 39), on which R. Maltby, Tibullus: Elegies. Text, Introduction and Commentary (Leeds, 2002) ad loc. comments ‘the effect may be to suggest the disturbance of the pastoral idyll caused by Aeneas’ arrival’; for similar readings of Propertius 4.1, see DeBrohun (n. 4), 33–117, and Fantham (n. 7), esp. 135. Less sceptical of Propertius’ sincerity are van Sickle (n. 7), 125 and 130, and White (n. 5), 189.
36 Reconciling the opposing interpretations, J. O’Hara, ‘They might be giants: inconsistency and indeterminacy in Vergil’s war in Italy’, Colby Quarterly 30 (1994), 206–26, argues that Virgil’s presentation of pre-Roman Italy is intentionally (or ‘functionally’, if intentionalist discourse is to be avoided) indeterminate ‘in a way that is not surprising, given the strong likelihood that Romans of Vergil’s day may have been deeply ambivalent about the many changes
have followed the text’s implication that Italian innocence was already compromised before Trojan immigration, others have sympathized with a native Latin focalization, most vociferously articulated by Numanus Remulus at Aen. 9.598–620, which sees Italy’s Arcadian innocence as threatened and ultimately contaminated by a Phrygian invasion.37 A reader of this latter persuasion, then, might just as easily contend that the more clear-cut disjunction between pre- and post-Trojan Italy in Propertius 4.1 actually serves to endorse and amplify a reading of the Aeneid that is consistent with the dissident stance of (Propertian) elegy.38

Given the potential for competing readings of this Virgilian intertext, Propertius 4 can be seen to exploit what O’Hara terms the ‘functional indeterminacy’ of Virgil’s Aeneid. For readers who prefer to see this ambivalence, or ‘openness’, as a key dynamic also of the elegiac genre, Virgil’s Gates of War will make for a particularly apposite intertext in so far as they have been highlighted by no less a reader than Don Fowler as an example of a monument, like any of stone or text, that cannot shut out competing readings.39 By extension, readers of the previous paragraphs may or may not find that to reclaim the dissident Propertius of, for example, H.-P. Stahl, a ‘deep tissue’ and fairly wilful (mis)reading of Propertius 4.1 and/or Aeneid 7 is required. Others again may prefer not to politicize their discussion of Propertius’ generic negotiations, although they must contend with the fact that Propertius’ oscillation between epic and elegiac poetics was already politicized by the poet himself (as, for example, in the recusatio of 2.1). Ambivalent and open, therefore, is Propertius’ engagement with the Aeneid at the point where it formally renounces pastoral for epic (a form of epic, nevertheless, with erotic credentials, as shown), just as, at a similarly apertural moment, Propertius renounces amor for Roma (though, for their part, the Roman elegies do not – or cannot – ultimately exclude erotic themes either).40 Inescapably, it is all a question of what one sees (quodcumque uides).

III. MAXIMA ROMA IN PROPERTIUS AND GALLUS

The degree to which Propertius 4 is thought to invert the conventional love–war polarity of Roman erotic elegy will depend not only on the extent to which its

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37 On the ethnocentric Italian view of the Trojans, see R.F. Thomas, Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry: The Ethnographical Tradition (Cambridge, 1982), 91–107, esp. at 99 for Numanus’ point of view.

38 See the comparison (without discussion of the Gates of War) of the Propertian and Virgilian (and Tibullan) proto-Romes by Rothwell (n. 7), esp. 839: ‘Propertius has magnified the unhappy consequences of Aeneas’ visit in ways that Virgil only hinted at in Aeneid 8, for pastoral Rome was lost as soon as the Trojans arrived.’


40 See DeBrohun (n. 4), 22–4, on the collapse of aetiological and erotic categories, and passim for the combination/competition of these poles for ‘thirds’ such as arma, the patria, the limen, clothing/props and Actium. See also Wyke (n. 11), 83; ‘cross-references and overlaps abound’; G.P. Goold, Propertius. Elegies (Cambridge, MA and London, 1990), 307; J. Butrica, ‘The Amores of Propertius: unity and structure in books 2–4’, ICS 21 (1996), 87–158, at 146–7, 152, 156–7; Hutchinson (n. 5), 2.
elegies are felt to adhere to the project and ideology announced in 4.1.1–70, but more fundamentally on the extent to which the interests of Roma are thought to be anathema to the genre in the first place. Against the view of elegy as a dissident, protofeminist movement, it has stood accused of deploying a variety of stratagems which ultimately endorse the mainstream patriarchal ideology from which it hails. While ambivalence such as this can be ascribed to the imperatives of reader-reception theory, it has also been seen as a quality intrinsic to, and exploited by, the elegiac genre itself. Despite the paucity of his extant work, it is perhaps unsurprising that the same sociopolitical ambivalence operates in (our readings of) Cornelius Gallus, the canonical ‘founder’ of Roman elegy (cf. Ovid, Tr. 4.10.51–4, 2.445–68; Quintilian, Inst. 10.1.93). Interpretation of the so-called ‘New Gallus Fragment’ unearthed at Qaṣr Ibrīm in 1978 has presented the familiar ideological spectrum. Substantial lexical similarities between the Gallus fragment and Propertius 3.4, in which the poet sits with his mistress on the sidelines of an envisaged Parthian triumph, suggested to the papyrus’ first publishers and commentators that Gallus too had a Parthian triumph in view (under Julius Caesar rather than Augustus). For Michael Putnam, Gallus’ lines offer a less politically controversial take on this *historia* than the Propertian poem which reworks it.

Francis Cairns has shown that Ovid’s *propemptikon* for Gaius Caesar’s Armenian/Parthian expedition at *Ars amatoria* 1.177–228, which is dependent on Propertius 3.4, also contains traces of the Gallus fragment, such that the latter may itself have been a military *propemptikon*. Conversely, its similarities to Propertius 2.1 have suggested to other scholars that the fragment comes from a Gallan *recusatio*. These theories may or may not be as irreconcilable (sociopolitically or otherwise)

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44 Putnam (n. 43).


46 Cairns (n. 20), 420–34, 439–40.

as they seem, and cautious comparison with surviving literature still seems the most viable way of contemplating what has been lost.\footnote{Pace N. Holzberg, *CR* 57 (2007), 398–400, reviewing Cairns (n. 20): ‘Intertextuality is only of any use when we can explore the original context of the “quotation”, but in Gallus’ case that is impossible’ (399).}

According to D.O. Ross’ ambitious reconstruction (before the discovery at Qaṣr Ibrīm), Gallus elegy was receptive to non-erotic themes (hence, perhaps, Quintilian’s *durior Gallus*, ‘Gallus was harder’, i.e. less *mollis* (‘soft’) than his successors), at first encompassing, within a subjective Gallus–Lycoris framework, diverse poetic traditions such as aetiological and mythological narratives in a pastoral setting (glimpsed perhaps at Ecl. 6.64–73 where Virgil has Gallus invested on Helicon with Hesiodic/Orphic reeds on which to sing the *Grynei nemoris … origo, ‘origin of the Grynean Grove’*), and only latterly subordinating the mythological content to the Gallus–Lycoris framework that became the conventional form of subjective love elegy espoused by Propertius in the *Monobiblos*.\footnote{Ross (n. 18). Against Ross’ view that Gallus wrote elegies only, see J.E.G. Zetzel, ‘Gallus, elegy, and Ross’, *CPh* 72 (1977), 249–60. The (arguably more reasonable) hypothesis that Gallus’ poem on the Grynean Grove was a hexameter epyllion need not imply that his elegies were devoid of pastoral colouring or aetiological content; see R. Hunter, *The Shadow of Callimachus: Studies in the Reception of Hellenistic Poetry at Rome* (Cambridge, 2006), 32 n. 76, on the bucolic-pastoral imagery and allusion to the *Eclogues* in the sacred groves of Propertius’ poetic investiture as evidence that ‘metre is not the most important criterion for the mode of poetry in which Propertius sites himself’.}

On this view, elegy, as Propertius knew it, ‘afforded a means to integrate various poetic traditions and purposes’ and Propertius 4 represents not a generic anomaly but ‘a return to the spirit and manner of Gallan elegy’.\footnote{Ross (n. 18), 109 and 130.}

This narrative so neatly parallels Virgil’s ‘return’ in the *Aeneid* to a grander, more encompassing form of hexameter poetry (heroic *epos* being the ‘superset’ of pastoral/bucolic *epos*)\footnote{See n. 14 above.} that it is tempting to see in Propertius’ corresponding elegiac *nostos* to *maxima Roma* (4.1.1) an allusion to the third line of the Gallus fragment from Qaṣr Ibrīm:\footnote{The arguments and conclusions of this article should still be partially if not universally relevant, *mutatis mutandis*, to adherents to the minority views that the Qaṣr Ibrīm papyrus is a forgery or does not preserve elegies by Gallus: the question is tackled head-on by J. Blänsdorf, ‘Der Gallus-Papyrus – eine Fälschung?’, *ZPE* 67 (1987), 43–57, with bibliography against and for the motion at nn. 3 and 4 respectively, and favouring authenticity on grounds of orthography, style and intertextuality; see also A.S. Hollis, *Fragments of Roman Poetry c. 60 BC–AD 20* (Oxford, 2007), 241–2.}

\begin{verbatim}
fata mihi, Caesar, tum erunt mea dulcia quom tu
maxima Romanae pars eris historiae,
postque tuum reditum multorum templum deorum
fixa legam spoileis deuitora tueis. (Gallus fr. 2.2–5 Courtney)
\end{verbatim}

Then will my fate, Caesar, be sweet to me, when you are of the history of Rome the greatest part, and after your return I read of the many gods’ temples more richly hung with your trophies.

That the lexical sharing between Propertius 4.1.1 and Gallus fr. 2.3 does not extend to strict grammatical similitude need not diminish their capacity to recall...
one another. Nor would 4.1 represent the earliest elegy by Propertius thought to allude to the poem from which this fragment comes, as the above-mentioned cases of Propertius 2.1 and 3.4 already attest. While “[m]indful of our limited access to the corpus of Gallus’, Jeffrey Wills has proposed an even more intricate nexus of allusion whereby Gallus’ use of the form maximus is recalled at both Propertius 2.34.86 (… Varro | Varro Leucadiæ maximæ flamma suæ, ‘… Varro, | Varro the mighty flame of his Leucadia’) and Ecl. 10.72 (Pierides: uos haec facietis *maxima* Gallo, | Gallo … ‘Daughters of Piereus, you will make these [verses] mighty for Gallus, | Gallus …’), which recall each other through ‘expanded gemination of nominal forms’; the fact that this superlative makes its appearance only here in the *Eclogues*, occurs next to the name of Gallus and occupies the same *sedes* as in Propertius 4.1.1 raises intriguing possibilities for the even closer verbal fit of Propertius’ *maxima Roma*. If ignorance of what precisely the Qaṣr Ibrīm papyrus has preserved can be offset by familiarity with poems which may have responded to it, then it can be observed that, of the theories which have emerged, those which take the Gallan verses as individual epigrams or as a catalogue of the beginnings of several longer poems (they are interspersed at intervals of four lines by generous interstices and marginal *H*-symbols), or alternatively as the ending of a single poem or collection of epigrams, are lent support by the possibility of an echo at a parallel or inverse structural point in Propertius 4. On the basis of scrappy evidence and a hypothesized Gallus one cannot safely speculate, but it may be that an echo in 4.1.1 of a more expansive form of elegy either accomplished or envisaged (as the papyrus’ future-tense verbs might suggest) by Gallus signals

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53 As Wills (n. 22), 19, notes in example (iv) of his discussion of ‘phonetic and phonological marking’ (sound allusion), an entire shift in lexeme need not counteract an allusion activated by sound; compare also the cases studied by Hinds (n. 6), 26–31. The collocation of *maximus* and *Roma* in any inflection(s) is rare: see n. 23 above for Livy 4.2.3 (probably insignificant) and Sil. *Pun.* 15.547 (possibly significant). For *tempa deorum* (v. 4), cf. *deis … templum* (Prop. 4.1.5).

54 See Cairns (n. 20), 84, for allusion in 2.1.16 (*maxima de nihilo nascitur historia*) and several other Propertian passages to the Qaṣr Ibrīm fragment; see ibid. 83–103 for further similarities in several other Latin poets; see also S.E. Hinds, ‘*Carmina digna*: Gallus *P. Qasr Ibrim* 6–7 metamorphosed’, *PLLS* 4 (1983), 43–54.

55 Wills (n. 22), 147–8, goes on to postulate that *Ecl.* 10.72–3 is recalled also at Propertius 4.9.67–8, and that *maxima* may have been a word ‘personalised’ by Gallus. See also Cairns (n. 20), 84 n. 64, on *Ecl.* 10.72 proving that *maximus* is ‘meaningfully Gallan’.

56 Anderson, Parsons and Nisbet (n. 43), 140–9, took the verses to be epigrams; so (tentatively) Hollis (n. 52), 250–1; see Putnam (n. 43) for vv. 2–5 of the fragment interpreted as a complete poem. Courtney (n. 43), 264 and 267 on vv. 8–9, views the four-line sections as (part of) an anthology of excerpts; so also S.J. Heyworth, ‘A note on the Gallus fragment’, *LCM* 10 (1984), 63–4. For ‘unitarian’ views of the fragment, see Cairns (n. 20), 404–40; J. Fairweather, ‘The “Gallus papyrus”: a new interpretation’, *CQ* 34 (1984), 167–74 (viewing the verses as part of an amoebaean exchange); Miller (n. 47).


58 See Hollis (n. 52), 250–1, for judicious evaluation of Nisbet’s suggestion that vv. 6–9 come from the end of such a collection.

Propertius’ (re-)engagement with the origins of Roman elegy at the very moment when (to us) he appears to be moving his furthest from it.

IV. MAXIMA ROMA IN PROPERTIUS, VIRGIL AND GALLUS

There now arises the risk of overloading the opening of Propertius 4 with allusive possibilities, given the Virgilian resonance with which the phrase maxima Roma has already been charged in this discussion. Not all readers, however, will deem it necessary to choose between intertexts; those who do will need first to dismiss the possibility of Gallan ‘interference’ in the Virgilian passage against a backdrop of other established Virgilio-Gallan ‘window allusions’ in Propertius.60 Hence, in support of the view that Propertius 4.1.1 converses with Virgil’s conversation with Gallus, and not just with Virgil and/or Gallus independently, it can be noted, firstly, that both the Gallus fragment and the Gates of War ecphrasis in Aeneid 7 concern temples of war and allude to the involvement of a Caesar in Roman history. Secondly, a Parthian expedition mentioned by Virgil (v. 606) is also thought to be the subject of the Gallus fragment, while Propertius 3.4, the elegy by which this hypothesis is all but confirmed (see n. 43 above), exhibits lexical similarities not only to the Gallus fragment but also to the opening of the Gates of War in Virgil. This last point is instructive, for if Propertius 3.4 and Aen. 7.601 ff. allude (independently?) to Gallus, then they should be (incidentally?) similar to one another as well:61 thus Arma... meditatur *ad Indos (3.4.1) and parat ultima terra triumphos (3.4.3) ~ parant... tendere *ad Indos (Aen. 7.605); Ausonius (3.4.5) ~ Ausonio (Aen. 7.623); Latio (3.4.6) ~ Latio (Aen. 7.601); Partha (3.4.6) ~ Parthos (Aen. 7.606); Mars (3.4.11) ~ Martis (Aen. 7.609); the preoccupation with Mars in both the Virgilian and (to a lesser extent) Propertian passages strikes a suspiciously Gallan note (cf. Gallus’ lament in Ecl. 10.44–5: nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis | ... detenet, ‘now a crazed love for harsh Mars keeps me in arms’), while the East–West compass of Rome’s embrace in Aeneid 7 (vv.

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61 By the same logic, consideration is due also to parallels with Ovid’s propemptikon at Ars am. 1.177–228, argued by Cairns to allude to Gallus via Propertius 3.4 (see n. 46 above): hence, less incidental might seem the bellicose use of parare in the context of reclaiming the Parthian standards: ecce, parat Caesar, domito quod defuit orbì, | addere: nunc, Oriens ultime, noster eris. | Partho, dabis poenas; Crassi gaudete sepulti | signaque barbaricas non bene passa manus (Ars am. 1.177–80) ~ siue Getis inferre manu lacrimabile bellum | Hyrcanianse Ardasique parant, seu tendere ad Indos | Auroramque sequi Parthique reposcere signa (Aen. 7.604–6); similarly, the use of Latium as a compass point in the East–West topos: uincuntur causa Parthi, uincuntur et armis: | Eoas Latio dux meus addat opes. | Marisque pater Caesarique pater (Ars am. 1.201–3) ~ mos erat Hesperio in Latio (Aen. 7.601; see the previous and following quotations for the other parallels here); compare also arma mouebis (Ars am. 1.191) ~ mouent in proelia Martem (Aen. 7.603); pulcherime rerum (Ars am. 1.213; cf. Pont. 1.2.81–2 in n. 23 above) ~ maxima rerum (Aen. 7.602). Among the other similarities in Latin poetry to the Gallus fragment compiled by Cairns (n. 20), 83–103, noteworthy similarity to Aen. 7.601–2 is borne by Sulpicius, Epigramma ap. VSD 38.II.3–4: tu maxime Caesar | non sinis et Latiae consulis historiae.
601–6: *Mos erat Hesperio in Latio ... Auroramque sequi,* ‘There was a tradition in Hesperian Latium ... and pursue the Dawn’) and Propertius 3.4 (vv.5–6: *sera, sed Ausoniis ueniet provincia virgis; ... Parthae tropaeae Iovi,* ‘Though late, she will become a province under Ausonian fasces: the Parthian trophies will grow accustomed to Latin Jupiter’) is a topos thought to have been extended by Gallus (cf. esp. Ovid, *Am.* 1.15.29: *Gallus et Hesperiis et Gallus notus Eois,* ‘famed is Gallus in the West, and famed is Gallus in the East’; cf. *Ars am.* 3.537; *Met.* 5.440–1; *Tr.* 4.9.22; Prop. 2.3.43–4; *Ciris* 352).62

It does not seem necessary to suggest that Propertius 3.4 is functionally conversant with Virgil’s ephesis of the Gates of War for the similarities between the two texts to be ascribed to their respective engagement with a celebrated elegy by Gallus.63 Propertius 4.1, on the other hand, does (as argued in §§ II and III above) have the chronological means and thematic motive to allude both to the Gallus fragment and to *Aeneid* 7, and is therefore likely to be au fait also with Virgil’s dialogue with the same Gallan passage. Once again, the possibility that the relevant lines of the Gallus fragment represent the beginning or end of a poem makes it as conspicuous a target for allusion in Virgil’s symbolic opening of the Latin war as it does for Propertius’ opening of a new, somewhat more martial poetry collection. Moreover, Francis Cairns’ hypothesis that the Gallus fragment is part of a *propemptikon* for a Parthian expedition suggests that the *Aeneid* passage is cast (intertextually rather than rhetorically) in the same form – perhaps even with a ‘schetliastic’ dimension as far as the peaceable Latinus is concerned (cf. *Aen.* 7.616–19)64 – as a prelude to the mobilizing Latin forces whose catalogue requires of Virgil yet another invocation of the muses (*Aen.* 7.641–6) before he himself can get going. If this be so, the Gallan *propemptikon* was converted by Virgil into a literal and literary send-off65 before being restored by Propertius 4.1 to a form of elegy that, for its part, was now less (typically?) Gallan and more Virgilian than, say, Propertius 1.1.

V. CONCLUSIONS

§§ II and III above need not necessarily be contingent on one other, and independently they offer suggestions about the direction taken by Propertian elegy in its final phase: it seems plausible that the less erotic, more martial Propertius 4 should begin with an allusion to the passage in the *Aeneid* where the war that dominates its second hexad is ceremonially opened, and/or it seems plausible that Propertius 4 should begin with an allusion to Gallus, though whether to underline a departure from the founder of Roman elegy, or a return to his style, cannot be

62 See Cairns (n. 20), 97–9.

63 However, in addition to its similarities to Virgil’s opening of the Gates of War, Propertius 3.4 also opens with an allusion to the opening of *Aeneid* 1 (*Arma deus Caesar.* 3.4.1 – *Arma uirumque,* *Aen.* 1.1), and specifically mentions Aeneas at 3.4.20: see F. Cairns, ‘Propertius and the *Aeneid* incipit’, *CQ* 53 (2003), 309–11 (= Cairns [2007: n. 15], 212–13).

64 On the *scheliasmis,* see F. Cairns, *Generic Composition in Greek and Roman Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1972), 12–13 and index s.v., with 131–5 on Dido’s *scheliasmis* at *Aen.* 4.305–85.

65 The *locus classicus* for the literary *propemptikon* is Hor. *Od.* 1.3, on which see R.O.A.M. Lyne, *Horace: Behind the Public Poetry* (London and New Haven, 1995), 79–81, with bibliography and further examples in the Augustan poets.
determined on the evidence available. Nevertheless, the ‘existence’ of the two-tier Virgilio-Gallan ‘window allusion’ in the opening of Propertius 4, as suggested in § IV, raises interesting possibilities too, constituting as it would a contemporary commentary on Virgil’s own intertextual reception of a poet whose verse, aside from a few meagre fragments, is sorely missing from our understanding of Latin elegy. As suggested above, it is plausible that Virgil should engage with a Gallan propemptikon when sending his Latin troops to war (especially to a war triggered by a series of erotic catalysts). Moreover, if the Gallan passage were (also) a recusatio, as some have argued, then it is pointedly overturned by the reges et proelia now accepted (though in a manner no less incompatible with the Callimachean aesthetic) as Virgil’s theme.

Perhaps more speculatively, the marked pastoral atmosphere common to Propertius 4.1 and its associate passages in Aeneid 7 and 8 would be consistent also with a Gallan intertext, were the latter securely established as a class of pastoral elegy. Georg Luck saw that Tibullus’ ‘blend of the pastoral and elegiac romance’ stands half-way between Propertian erotic elegy and Virgilian bucolic; were this descriptive also of Gallan elegy, then Propertius 4.1 suggests all the more precisely how the elegiac genre might replicate Virgil’s ascent from pastoral/erotic to patriotic poetry. Hence, just as Propertius 1.1 positions the poet of amor outside Roma by invoking a version of the myth of Atalanta and Meleager likely to have been translated (via Callimachus and possibly Philetas) into an Arcadian setting by Gallus, so now at the opposite end of the Propertian corpus a Gallan intertext repositions Propertius at the heart of Roma, but not necessarily in a way that reneges on the original (pastoral and aetiological, as well as erotic) concerns of the genre.

If the Qaṣr Ibrīm papyrus has preserved a poem in which Gallus espoused the ideals of Roma (whether in pastoral terms or otherwise), then its combination in 4.1 with Virgilian epic might be taken to remind the reader that elegy was always equally capable of ‘serving the fatherland’, as Propertius promises to do at 4.1.59–60. Alternatively, if that poem was one in which Gallus conceded to amor, then its combination in 4.1 with Virgilian epic produces an intertextual antagonism which anticipates the ‘bipolar’ poetics of the book as a whole. Ultimately, though, the sociopolitical valency of Gallan (as of Propertian) elegy cannot have been so dichotomous. Above all, therefore, the Virgilio-Gallan ‘window allusion’ of Propertius 4.1.1 exposes Virgil at his most elegiac (that is not to say anti-Augustan): what Virgil introduces at Aen. 7.604 is not bellum, after all, but lacrimabile bellum, a Latinized Homericism (as Servius spotted) which, through a Propertian lens, cannot but associate Virgil’s principal theme with the quintessential marker of the elegiac genre (cf. Horace, Ars P. 75; Ovid, Am. 3.9.1–6). Therefore, more than suggesting the inflation of Propertian amor with Virgilian Roma and/or the

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66 See n. 47 above.
67 See n. 18 above; see also Cairns (n. 20), 127–40, on the prevalence of caves, glades, groves and wild surrounds in Latin poetry connected with Gallus.
68 Luck (n. 18), 72; see ibid. 76–7: ‘With Propertius he [sc. Tibullus] shares some typical erotic motifs; with Vergil he shares the feeling for nature and country life. But his love-experience is not that of Propertius, and his bucolic themes are not those of Vergil.’
reciprocal deflation of Virgilian Roma by Propertian amor, as scholars attentive to Propertius’ reception of Virgil have tended to emphasize, Propertius 4.1.1 points to (or constructs) via Gallus the spiritual affinity of Virgilian epic with elegy, such that it might be wondered, however incidentally, whether the words Aeneas, collis and herba (4.1.2) might not expose (or impose) Virgil’s cognomen in the previously Gallan maxiMA ROma with which this conspicuously Virgilian collection of elegies opens.

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