

The Elegiac Mysteries: Initiation Symbolism in Propertius 1.3

By Dannu Hütwohl (dhutwohl@unm.edu) CAMWS 2016

Handout 1:

Qualis **Thesea** iacuit **cedente carina**
languida desertis Cnosia 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 consertis nixa caput manibus,
ebria cum multo traherem **vestigia Baccho**,
et **quaterent sera nocte facem pueri**.
hanc ego, **nondum etiam sensus deperditus omnis**,
molliter impresso conor adire toro;
et quamvis duplici correptum ardore iuberent
hac Amor hac Liber, durus uterque deus,
subiecto leviter positam temptare lacerto
osculaque admota sumere tarda manu,
non tamen ausus eram **dominae** turbare *quietem*,
expertae metuens iurgia saevitiae;
sed sic intentis haerebam fixus ocellis,
Argus ut ignotis cornibus Inachidos.
et modo solvebam nostra de fronte **corollas**
ponebamque tuis, Cynthia, temporibus;
et modo gaudebam lapsos formare capillos;
nunc **furtiva** cavis **poma** dabam manibus:
omnia quae ingrato largibar munera **somno**,
munera de prono saepe voluta sinu;
et quotiens raro duxti suspiria motu,
obstupui vano credulus auspicio,
ne qua tibi insolitos portarent **visa** timores,
neve quis invitam cogeret esse suam:
donec diversas praecurrens luna fenestras,
luna moraturis sedula luminibus,
compositos levibus radiis patefecit ocellos.
sic ait in molli fixa toro cubitum:
'tandem te nostro referens iniuria lecto
alterius clausis expulit e foribus?
namque ubi longa meae consumpsti tempora **noctis**,
languidus exactis, ei mihi, sideribus?
o utinam talis perducas, improbe, **noctes**,
me miseram qualis semper habere iubes!
nam modo purpureo fallebam **stamine somnum**,
rursus et **Orpheae** carmine, fessa, lyrae;
interdum leviter mecum deserta querebar
externo longas saepe in amore moras:
dum me iucundis lassam **Sopor** impulit alis.
illa fuit lacrimis ultima cura meis.'

(Propertius *Elegies*, 1.3)

Handout 2:

Passage 1:

Ἐγωγε, καὶ δάδων γέ με αὔρα
τις εἰσέπνευσε μυστικωτάτη.
(Aristophanes *Frogs*, 313-314).

Passage 2:

Χορός:
Ἐγειρε· φλογέας ἐν χερσὶ γὰρ
ἤκει **τινάσσω**,
Ἴακχ', ὦ Ἴακχε,
νυκτέρου τελετῆς φωσφόρος
ἀστήρ.
(Aristophanes *Frogs*, 340-343)

Handout 3:

Maenads brandishing torches and approached by a satyr. (Amsterdam, Allard Pierson Museum 14107, 6th c. black-figured *lekythos*.)



Bibliography:

- Allen, A.W. 1962. "Sunt Qui Propertium Malint." In J.P. Sullivan, ed., *Critical Essays on Roman Literature*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 107-148.
- Blech, M. 1982. *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen*. Religions-geschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, 38. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Bernabé, A. and A. Jiménez San Cristóbal. 2011. "Are the 'Orphic' Gold Leaves Orphic?" In R. G. Edmonds III, ed., *The "Orphic" Gold Tablets and Greek Religion: Further Along the Path*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 68-101.
- Bron, C. 1987. "Porteurs du thyrsi ou bachants." In C. Bérard, C. Bron and A. Pomari, eds., *Images et Société en Grèce ancienne. L'iconographie comme méthode d'analyse. Actes du colloque international, Lausanne 8-11 février 1984*. Lausanne: Université de Lausanne, Inst. d'Archéologie et Histoire Ancienne, 145-153.
- Colomo, D. 2004. "Herakles and the Eleusinian Mysteries: P. Mil. Vogl. I 20, 18-32 Revisited." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 148: 87-98.
- Curran, L. C. 1966. "Vision and Reality in Propertius 1.3." *Yale Classical Studies* 19: 189-207.
- Dickie, M. W. 1995. "The Dionysiac mysteries in Pella." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 109: 81-86.
- Eliade, M. 1958. *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth*. Dallas: Spring Publications.
- Graf, F. and S. Johnston. 2007. *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife: Orpheus and the Bacchic Gold Tablets*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Greene, E. 1995. "Elegiac Woman: Fantasy, Materia and Male Desire in Propertius 1.3 and 1.11." *The American Journal of Philology* 116: 303-318.
- Harmon, D. 1974. "Myth and Fantasy in Propertius 1.3." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 104: 151-165.
- Lyne, R.O.A.M. 1970. "Propertius and Cynthia: Elegy 1.3." *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 16: 60-78.
- Miller, P. A. 2002. *Latin Erotic Elegy*. London: Routledge.
- Paleothodoros, D. 2010. "Light and Darkness in Dionysiac Rituals as Illustrated on Attic Vase Paintings of the 5th Century BCE." In M. Christopolous, E. D. Karatantza, and O. Levaniouk, eds., *Light and Darkness in Ancient Greek Myth and Religion*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Richardson, N. J., ed. 1974. *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Richardson, Jr., L., ed. 2006. *Propertius Elegies I-IV*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Wyke, M. 1989. "Mistress and Metaphor in Augustan Elegy." *Helios* 16: 25-47.