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# Discourses of Exemplarity in Propertius IV

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# Introduction:
## An Overview of Exemplarity in Augustan Rome[1]

One question that has frequently emerged over the course of my own study thus far but which has yet to be seriously considered is seemingly obvious, yet, as it seems to me, quite interesting to consider: why exactly was there such a flourishing of literary output during the principate of Augustus?  What was happening during this time that cultivated the rise of so many of the most influential authors of the entire Latin (and Western, one can argue) literary canon?  In thinking about this question over the course of the past year, I began to consider, very broadly and generally, about the political and cultural environment that promoted such literary activity, and also, the sorts of ideas and subjects that these different Augustan authors focused upon, to see any common threads that could then be extrapolated to other areas of the cultural landscape, such as art and architecture projects, and how those might in turn lead to insights in terms of understanding the processes of and corresponding attitudes to the most significant political changes within living memory of any of the participants.

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[1] I would like to take this opportunity to thank my advisor, Liz Young, for all of her help and guidance over the course of the year as I have worked on this project.  I would also like to thank Ray Starr, whose comments on the earlier draft of my first chapter proved very helpful.  Furthermore, in reference to this paper's title,  the phrase "discourse of exemplarity" comes from Roller (2004), and is something I will define and address subsequently.  Broadly speaking, it refers to the process in which Romans engaged with exemplary figures, and is a reading that I will seek to apply to Propertius.

These questions regarding shared concerns of different authors during this time came to the forefront of my mind this past year as I studied Augustan culture in three different contexts: legal/political in a Roman law class, literary in reading Augustus's *Res Gestae* in a Latin literature class, and artistic/topographic in a Roman art history class.  To me, what emerged most strongly was the singular focus upon both the restoration and subsequent idealization of past institutions, be they political, religious, or artistic.  Many, many scholars have written many wonderful knowledgeable books on Augustus's own relationship to and use of the past in different spheres of activity, and it would be beyond the scope of this introduction here to discuss all of the numerous, complicated ways in which these ideas develop.  However, I do think that one idea from Karl Galinsky in his book on Augustan culture, will prove a useful starting point: in describing Augustus's goals, he states "the *res publica* will be refounded and administered on the basis of traditional, proven virtues.  Such virtues are not abstract, but need to be exemplified by individuals."[2]  Galinsky explains the changes that Augustus made to Rome's governmental system in terms of, as Augustus himself would say, restoring the republic.  The civil wars of the republic were brought about due to, as it was understood at the time,  "the failure to adhere to a traditional value system that placed the common good, the *res publica*, ahead of private interests...the Augustan solution, therefore, was a

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[2] Galinsky p. 88

conscious return to and rearticulation of these basic values and principles."[3]  As

stated above, often, such "basic values and principles" were embodied by

individual figures known as *exempla*.

This exemplification is evident in many of the art projects undertaken

during the principate, perhaps most notably the *summi viri* in the Forum

Augustum leading up to the temple of Mars Ultor.  Statues of great men of

Rome's past, as Galinsky describes, their purpose was "to be viewed by the

citizens as exemplars...hence they were chosen in order to personify both civic

and military virtues."[4]  All of the statues included both a *titulus,* an inscription

identifying them as well as an *elogium,* a longer description of their deeds and

accomplishments.  Although it is unknown how many statues originally stood, it

is certain that room was left in the forum for future statues.[5]  Aeneas, Romulus,

various members of the *gens Iulii,* Augustus's family, as well as various civic and

military leaders all featured.[6]  As many have observed, this sculptural program

illustrates Augustus's typical blending of old and new, which is further seen in

examples such as his restoration of old temples and his legislative program,

which is, as Hutchinson describes, "innovative in its interference, but it aims at

reinforcing traditional morals and hierarchies."[7]  As such, the past and the

present are continuously woven together.  Furthermore, Galinsky discusses how

[3] Calinsky p. 7
[4] Galinsky p. 204
[5] See Chaplin p. 175
[6] For a very thorough discussion, see Zanker (1988).
[7] Hutchinson p. 3

the *summi viri*, this "sculptural and architectural Hall of Fame"[8] is closely related

to Augustan poetry, most notably the catalogs of famous Romans in Books 6 and

8 of the *Aeneid*.  Indeed, Galinsky goes so far as to claim that "Vergil is likely to

have been one of the inspirations behind the Augustan idea for an equivalent in

his forum."[9]

Learning from figures of the past underlies another monumental cultural

work of the Augustan period, that being Livy's *Ab urbe condita*, in which he

explicitly states in the preface to the work that *exempla* ought to be sought from

history in looking towards both correct and improper behavior.[10]  As such, a

variety of scholars in recent years have done work examining the various ways

in which Livy deploys *exempla* throughout his own work.  Chaplin defines

*exempla* in Livy as "any specific citation of an event or an individual that is

intended to serve as a guide to conduct...and hence an opportunity to learn from

the past."[11]  Figures from Romulus to Lucretia to Appius Claudius Caecus,

through their deeds, inform readers how to behave, just as viewing the *summi*

*viri* in the Forum Augustum do.  As a result, exemplarity has an explicitly public

role, in that *exempla* essentially teach Romans how to be good citizens, and what

qualities they should shun.

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[8] Galinsky p. 206
[9] Ibid
[10] See *AUC* Praef. 10 *Hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri. inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu foedum exitu quod vites.*
[11] Chaplin p. 3

One then, in considering how important the past was in informing

Augustan politics, would not be surprised to see exemplarity being deployed in

monumental projects.  Aeneas is perhaps the Roman *exemplum* par excellence,

and the *Aeneid* assumes a very public role.  However, one might be surprised to

find exemplarity discussed in another genre that perhaps somewhat surprisingly

also flourished under Augustan rule, love elegy.  Rather than exemplary heroes,

the protagonists of elegy are love-struck young men of leisure, who often neglect

their public duties as Roman citizens in pining after their *dominae*, often to no

effect.  Indeed, a common reading of love elegy for many years was that it was

explicitly a subversive genre that undercut the expectations laid upon young

Roman men.[12]  Understandings of the genre in recent years have grown more

nuanced, but it can't be denied that the *amatores* of Ovid, Tibullus, or Propertius

would hardly belong among the *summi viri*.  However, despite the fact that the

majority of love elegy conforms to the narrative of a lover detailing and often

bemoaning the state of his love life, not all elegy is so narrowly focused,

particularly later elegy.  Propertius's fourth book is one interesting example.

The first poem of Propertius's fourth book begins on a note that many

readers of his earlier work would find strange and surprising.  Book III ends on a

note of resignation, as the Propertian narrator, apparently at his wit's end, bids

Cynthia a rather less than fond farewell.  He has grown tired of her wiles and

deceits, which largely comprise the narrative of these first three books, and the

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[12] See Lyne (2002) for more detail

final poem of Book III would seem a fitting end to the work at large. Both the voice and subject matter correspond to the reader's expectation; the narrator is, by this point, a familiar character, as is Cynthia. This being the case, the fourth book opens on a surprising note. *Hoc quodcumque videt, hospes, qua maxima Roma est / ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit* ("Whatever you see, guest, where Rome is greatest, was a hill and grass before Phrygian Aeneas" 4.1.1-2)[13] a voice announces, a voice that even within the first two lines of the poem, establishes a distant and formal atmosphere that could scarcely be more different than that of Propertius's first three books. Indeed, it seems reminiscent of Book VIII of the *Aeneid* (which would have begun to circulate several years before Propertius IV, which was completed sometime around 16 BCE), both in its reference to Aeneas himself and in the manner in which the narrator juxtaposes past and contemporary Rome.[14] The Propertian narrator's intimate presence, characteristic of his earlier poems, seems to have almost completely vanished, replaced by a voice that more characteristic of epic poetry. Also immediately

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[13] All Latin text is cited as it appears in Hutchinson's edition. The text of Propertius IV is notoriously corrupt, and I have decided to use Hutchinson's text throughout the paper just to maintain consistency, and I am not attempting to argue for or against certain versions of the text, as I don't believe it is really relevant to my argument.

[14] See *Aeneid* 8.306-369. Book IV connects with *Aeneid* VIII in many instances, notably here; 4.9, which centers upon Hercules and the *Ara Maxima,* and 8. 184-305, which describes the story of Hercules and Caecus; and 4.6, which focuses upon the Battle of Actium, and 8. 671-713, which details the same battle as it is depicted on Aeneas's shield. Indeed, Hutchinson says that Propertius's engagement with *Aeneid* VIII "avoids the *Aeneid*'s monumental (if intricate) continuity of narrative, but through its own discontinuity, it creates a still wider image of Rome.(Hutchinson p. 6)"

apparent and surprising (and further associated with epic) is the "Roman-ness" of this poem, an emphasis on civic history and geography that doesn't play a hugely significant role in the earlier books. Propertius often alludes to mythology, but in this poem, notably, all the characters are historical, playing a part in Roman history. Within the first seventy lines, the narrator mentions, among others, Aeneas, Evander, Vesta, Romulus, Remus, Lycmon, Brutus, Venus, Julius Caesar, Iulus, Cassandra, Ennius, and Jupiter: a staggering list of names, gods and mortals, kings, soldiers, peasants, and poets, Trojans, Latins, and Romans. It is only at the end of this passage that the narrator's first-person voice emerges in full strength, when he declares,

> Ennius hirsuta cingat sua dicta corona;
> mi folia ex hedera porrige, Bacche, tua,
> ut nostris tumefacta superbiat Umbria libris,
> Umbria Romani patria Callimachi!
>                         4.1.61-64

> Let Ennius wreathe his own words with a shaggy crown; To me,
> Bacchus, extend leaves from your own ivy, in order that Umbria may
> take pride in our books, Umbria, the fatherland of the Roman
> Callimachus!

Propertius thus seamlessly flows from Rome's history, traditions, geography, and heroes to himself and his own work, which, like that of Ennius and Callimachus, will both concern history and take part in history. In doing so, it will be remembered and will become a source of civic pride. However, within the poem's next few lines, the astrologer Horos unceremoniously shoots down Propertius's proposed project, and as a result, the poet's lofty statements recorded in the previous lines seem excessive and a bit humorously

grandiloquent as a result.  Horos then engages in his own historical musings, and

likewise, ends with Propertius's own history.

> ossaque legisti non illa aetate legenda
> patris, et in tenues cogeris ipse lares.
> nam tua cum multi versarent rura iuvenci,
> abstulit excultas pertica tristis opes.
>                     4.1.127-130

> and the bones of your father which ought not to be collected when you
> were that age, you collected them, and you yourself were driven into a
> poor home.  For although many cattle were dwelling in your fields, a
> pitiful measuring-rod carried off your cultivated wealth.

This story presented above is quite different in terms of tone, a contrast to the

patriotic, war-glorifying verse of the first seventy lines.  Intimate and emotional,

Propertius emerges as a character in his own poetry with a much more

contextualized background than what is immediately apparent; his personality is

developed over the course of the poem.  Moreover, his narrative, his story,

contests the depiction of the state that he himself has put forward earlier.

Propertius's own past is woven into, and thus retroactively colors our perception

of, Rome's past.  Propertius IV as a whole, I believe, explores this sort of

uneasiness that exists between contesting narratives and the blending of

categories.

I have dwelt on 4.1 here because I think that it can serve as a primer, a

kind of compact version of the themes and tensions of Propertius IV as a whole.

The split between aetiology/history and love elegy is readily apparent.  But what

I think is also representative of the book as a whole is the simultaneous presence

of an abundance of Roman gods, historical characters, and contemporary figures:

Venus, Iulus, and Propertius all coexist in this poem. Commentaries on

Propertius IV often make note of the incongruity of the poems, the fact that they

lack a consistent register, narrator, and subject matter.[15] Particularly striking is

the juxtaposition of characters such as Arethusa and Tarpeia, Hercules and

Romulus, and Cynthia and Cornelia. Both the sheer number of characters and

the fact that they each exist in their own poem invite this sort of comparative

thinking as a way to make sense of the poems, to relate them to each other, and

to thus understand them as a cohesive unit. Particularly interesting are the ways

in which the historic figures relate to the more elegiac individuals, and how the

boundaries between the two categories become blurred over the course of the

book. This then complicates the reading of these characters. For instance, and

as I shall discuss in more detail in the subsequent chapter, 4.4 begins as an

aetiology of the *mons Tarpeius*, but transforms into a narrative that

sympathetically details the intensely personal struggle undergone by the

ostensible antagonist. Tarpeia, as the reader learns, commits her treachery

because of love, and her long speech rationalizes her betrayal by explaining it in

terms of her love for Tatius, the Sabine commander. Thus, Tarpeia, despite

clearly exemplifying everything a Vestal Virgin should not be, engages the

audience's sympathy, sympathy that is then only heightened by the brutality of

her death at the end of the poem and Tatius's own cruelty. Similarly, Hercules in

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[15] I am specifically referring here to Hutchinson and Richardson, as they are the
primary commentaries I have used in writing this paper. Hutchinson's is the more
detailed and the more recent, so I have mostly used his commentary, with Camps
more as supplementary material.

4.9, another aetiological poem in the beginning, behaves in the manner typical of an *exclusus amator*, a stock character of elegy.[16] It is thus worth considering how what apparently manifests as a stark contrast between love elegy on the one hand and aetiological poetry on the other becomes more nuanced throughout the book, and the categories become more intertwined. As Hutchinson explains, discontinuity in all of these different forms, from chronology to genre to subject matter, is perhaps the overriding motif of the book. As noted above, there is even discontinuity from the end of Book III and the beginning of Book IV. As such, this kind of discontinuity is striking considering the overall context of Augustan culture, which, as I have tried to explain above, sought to seamlessly weave old and new. Time and narrative are continuous - Aeneas and Romulus lead the progression to Augustus.[17] As such, the "chasm between past and present"[18] as well as that between genre and narrative is especially interesting in considering exemplary characters in Propertius IV.

As is clear from above, Propertius IV, like Livy and the *summi viri*, engages closely with public concerns, but in a very complex manner. As such, in this project, I intend to explore the ways in which Propertius deploys exemplarity, specifically with two characters who are perhaps the clearest instances of *exempla*, both positive and negative: Cornelia, the protagonist of 4.11, and commonly acknowledged as the embodiment of Augustan matronly femininity,

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[16] See Welch (2012) for more detail
[17] See Hutchinson in particular for a detailed explanation of continuity in Augustan culture, literature in particular.
[18] Hutchinson p. 3

and Tarpeia in 4.4, the infamous traitor of the Capitoline to the Sabines under the reign of Romulus in Rome's infancy.  What will emerge is that exemplarity in Propertius, rather than defining characteristics of behavior to imitate or avoid, instead offers no clear answers, confusing boundaries rather than defining them. In examining Propertius's use of exemplarity with regards to these two figures, I am indebted to Matthew Roller's idea of "exemplary discourse," which, as he explains, "links actions, audiences, values, and memory."[19]  He further states that "while this (simplified) scheme may leave the impression of monolithic, seamless coherence, in fact the production of exemplary discourse is beset at every turn by instabilities, contradictions, and contestation...to produce an *exemplum*, then is to struggle constantly to establish or disestablish a particular interpretation of an action's value, a monument's reference, or an imitator's success, and alternative readings threaten (or do) proliferate at every instance."[20]  With this in mind, I will approach Cornelia in the first chapter and Tarpeia in the second. In these two *exempla*, Propertius illustrates the very struggle that Roller outlines above in his poetry, in that he depicts these figures in a certain way only to later undermine that very reading of the character, and it thus falls to the reader to resolve the alternate readings of these characters presented in the poetry itself. As I will describe, Cornelia is on the outset, presented exactly as I stated above, the *exemplum* of the Augustan matron; however, the poem that details her, 4.11, shares close formal similarities with an earlier poem in the book, 4.7, which

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[19] Roller p. 4
[20] Roller p. 7

focuses upon the ghost of Propertius's eternal *domina*, Cynthia.  Propertius then

uses Cynthia to disestablish the reader's earlier interpretation of Cornelia's

exemplarity, forcing the reader to question the very values Cornelia embodies.

In a likewise manner, Propertius, in 4.4, undermines the reader's initial

judgment of what Tarpeia supposedly represents, and what he sets the reader up

to expect.  Thus, in reading Propertius IV, the reader undergoes this very process

of "exemplary discourse," and as such, though Propertius's use of exemplarity

may seem less then typical, actually presents a very full and complete picture of

the manner in which such figures existed in the wider Augustan cultural sphere.

**_Letum non omnia finit_:**
**The _Domina_ as a Contestation of the _Matrona_**

As I noted in the introduction, Propertius IV can in many ways be characterized by discontinuity, by the mingling of seemingly well-defined categories that extend from genre (aetiology vs. love elegy), narrative, and chronology within the poems themselves.  However, despite this apparent discontinuity, links between the poems still exist, and, as I shall demonstrate in the following chapter, such links are critical in determining how the reader is to understand the characters as presented in the poems.

Two characters in particular exemplify this blending of historical figure and elegiac personality, the protagonists of 4.7 and 4.11, Cynthia and Cornelia.  Arguably the central figure of Propertius's first three books, Cynthia's absence is conspicuous throughout the first six poems of the fourth book.  She resurfaces in 4.7, but has apparently died, and she returns from the dead both to provide a lengthy, detailed narrative about the manner in which she died as well as to upbraid Propertius both for not mourning her properly and for mischaracterizing their relationship in his poetry.  4.11 bears numerous striking resemblances to 4.7.  It also details a woman, Cornelia, speaking from beyond the grave to an audience comprised of, alternately, her husband, her children, and a sort of jury of the underworld.  In addition to this basic structural similarity,

identified by Basil Dufallo as the rhetorical device *mortuos ab infernis excitare,*[21] the poems share mythological references, use of legal terminology, and the female speakers' preoccupation with and insistence upon their own fidelity. Moreover, the poems share a common, essential theme.  In the cases of both Cynthia and Cornelia, their fidelity becomes intertwined with the manners in which they seek to be remembered and thus their notions of commemoration and life after death.  This theme becomes especially explicit, considering that both women, speaking about how they wish to be remembered by the living, are actually dead and speaking to those by whom they wish to be commemorated. Furthermore, the language of both poems evokes Roman epitaphs,[22] and 4.7 even goes so far as to describe and cite what will be Cynthia's own epitaph. Therefore many layers of death and life after death exist in these two poems. However, their concepts of remembrance and how they themselves want to be remembered differ drastically, and this divergence between the two characters is reflected in further differences in their characterizations.  Thus, it seems that Propertius does not end his story of Cynthia in 4.8, but uses Cornelia as a point of reference and comparison to his *domina*.

As a result, 4.11 seems to justify a sort of retroactive reading of Cynthia in 4.7, in which we compare these two very different women who nonetheless share the same language and preoccupations.  Through these two characters, Propertius thus offers to the reader competing interpretations of what life after

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[21] See Dufallo
[22] See Hutchinson on 4.7 and 4.11, esp. p. 170 and 232

death entails.  Moreover, Cornelia's oft-interpreted status as an *exemplum*

directly engages this question of how to define a person's afterlife.  *Exempla*

function as characters of the past that convey a particular set of ideas or values

to a contemporary audience; as such, by their very nature, *exempla* live on in a

collective memory long after the individual has died.  Scholars such as Matthew

Roller, Jane Chaplin, Mary Jaeger, and J. Mira Seo have all essentially defined

*exempla* as such, characters who become, in Seo's words, "templates of behavior

used by the Romans to embody particular characteristics with an ethically

normative force,"[23] or in Chaplin's discussion, "an event or an individual that is

intended to serve as a guide to conduct."[24]  Thus, considering the similarities and

differences in the ways in which Propertius sets up Cynthia and Cornelia, it

seems that Cynthia, who emerges as the opposite of Cornelia in so many ways,

can be read as a "contested evaluation," to use Roller's phrase, of Cornelia's

exemplarity.[25]  According to Roller, such a dynamic is crucial to the manners in

which Romans conceptualized *exempla*.  Roller argues that "any given invocation

of the hero as a canon of value may engage a different one (or more) of these

aspects, leading to divergent and sometimes contested evaluations.  These

contestations, these instabilities in the production of exemplary discourse, are

precisely what make *exempla* so good for the Romans to think with."[26]  In light of

this dynamic between Cynthia and Cornelia, it seems that Propertius, in Cynthia,

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[23] Seo p. 9
[24] Chaplin, p. 3
[25] Roller p. 51.
[26] Ibid

defines a new sort of *exemplum*, one that questions and reinterprets the values

embodied in Cornelia.  In doing so, Propertius somewhat ironically establishes

Cynthia as the more exemplary character, the character who will live on in the

audience's memory.  As a result, 4.11, although having seemingly nothing to do

with Propertius and Cynthia, can be read as the final triumph of their

relationship.

Cornelia shares many features of the historic *exempla* found most

prominently in Livy, especially Lucretia and Verginia, and it is thus worth

considering how she compares to these two models.  Interestingly, Cornelia

differs from them in several aspects, aspects that undermine or at least call into

question the values she exemplifies.  Like other *exempla,* she defines by her very

nature a set of social values.  As many have pointed out, Cornelia is a nearly

perfect depiction of Augustan family and marriage legislation.[27]  She has given

birth to three children, as stipulated in the *lex Iulia*, and has apparently acted

with the dignity befitting her station.  As Michele Lowrie writes, "Cornelia is a

perfect candidate for being written up and for being read as instantiating in her

life the very laws that intervened in life."[28] Indeed, Cornelia herself states *quin et

erat magnae pars imitanda domus. / nec mea mutata est aetas: sine crimine tota

est* ("rather, she was a member of that great house who ought to be imitated, and

my life was never changed; it is entirely without crime" 4.11.44-45).  In this, she

echoes her supposed ancestor, Cornelia of the Gracchii, who was renowned for

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[27] See Lowrie and Hutchinson, for example
[28] Lowrie, p.176

her own matronly virtues.[29]  Even Augustus himself considers her a worthy

relation, as *ille sua nata dignam vixisse sororem / increpat, et lacrimas vidimus ire*

*deo* ("that man exclaims that I lived as worthy sister to his own daughter, and we

saw the god's tears come" 4.11.59-60) suggests.  In addition, although the entire

poem is in her own voice, and that she constantly emphasizes her own agency,

with declarations such as *ipsa loquar pro me* ("I myself will speak on my own

behalf" 4.11.27), Cornelia is defined by her interactions with others, primarily as

a wife and a mother.  As such, in the manner of an *exemplum,* she lacks an

individual personality that exists independently of these roles.

Furthermore, the fact that the entire poem consists of her advocating on

her own behalf, that she needs to persuade her audience of her worthiness,

underscores her own lack of power and control over her identity.  Like Lucretia

and Verginia before her, Cornelia's individual character is subsumed by the

values, the laws that she represents.  Seo notes that this feature is common

across *exempla* in Roman literature.  Seo argues that "the contemporary focus on

unique individuality seems to be less of an ideal in ancient Roman conceptions of

the self; Roman historical consciousness narrativized individuals as characters in

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[29] See Valerius Maximus 4.4.  Though it is interesting to note Hutchinson's
observations that Cornelia's claim to be descended from Scipio Aemilianus, the
husband of Sempronia, Cornelia of the Gracchii's daughter is impossible, as Scipio
Aemilianus had no heirs (see Hutchinson p.231-2 and 237).  Whether this is an error
on Propertius's part or an intentional mistake, to have Cornelia confuse her own
genealogy, I am not sure; it would certainly be quite ironic to have Cornelia misstate
her family's history, when she puts so much emphasis on it

an ongoing functional discourse of ethical values."[30]  Moreover, just as Lucretia,

Cornelia's exemplarity exists in her loyalty to her husband and thus her status as

the ideal wife.   Indeed, as noted above, Cornelia embodies Augustus's marriage

laws, which explicitly tied female sexuality to the success of the state.  Sandra

Joshel writes that Augustus's laws "indicate the regime's concern with regulating

sexuality...the program was to return Rome to its ancestral traditions, renew its

imperial greatness, and refound the state."[31]  She goes on to note how Lucretia

and Vergina represent formative moments in Rome's history: Lucretia as the

founding of the Roman Republic, Verginia as the overthrow of the decemvirs and

resolution of the Conflict of the Orders, and now Cornelia emerges as the logical

next step in the sequence, the reestablishment of the Republic under Augustus.

However, despite the similarities in which their bodies are closely

intertwined with male-dominated politics, Cornelia lacks what Roller

emphasizes is a critical part of an *exemplum*: the approval of the character's

contemporary audience and thus the legitimization of the values the character

represents.  He writes that *exempla* make their audience "complicit in a temporal

collapse of past and present.  For the spectator is pulled backward in time,

required to evaluate a past action by the same criteria that he or she would use

in evaluating a contemporary action, and finally dispatched to his or her own

present with the idea that the deed discovered is ethically relevant to one's own

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[30] Seo, p. 10
[31] Joshel p. 114

choices and actions."[32]   As such, in 4.11, the audience is asked to adjudicate the

values Cornelia represents.  Her entire speech, given in part before a court of the

underworld (an unforgiving court, to go by the tone of the poem's opening), is

organized as a defense of her life, that she ought to be seen as an *exemplum.*

Thus the audience assumes the role of the court, asked to judge Cornelia.

Interestingly, and as Micaela Janan notes, Propertius leaves the ending

unresolved; we don't know whether Cornelia's speech was successful in

persuading the underworld jury.[33]  She ends with *causa perorata est...sum digna*

*merendo / cuius honoratis ossa vehantur avis* ("My case has ended...I am worthy

of obtaining that my bones be carried to the decorated ancestors of my shade"[34]

4.11.99-102).  Lucretia and Verginia's chastity, and thus their exemplarity, was

solidified only by their death, and yet even in death, Cornelia must still advocate

on her own behalf.  Indeed, the very deaths of Lucretia and Verginia are essential

in defining them as *exempla*, and even though Cornelia is likewise dead, it is not

her death, but rather her life, that defines her exemplarity.   And her life is what

the audience is forced to adjudicate, without the sound morality that death lends

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[32] Roller, p. 32

[33] Janan p. 160-162

[34] This translation is indebted to Goold's translation in the Loeb of this difficult and
likely corrupted sentence.  These final lines of Book IV are disputed, and, as I said
before, the version that I have cited is Hutchinson's.  Alternate versions have *sim* for
*sum*, and I think that it is interesting to consider Hutchinson's explanation - he
prefers *sum*, reading a "proud assertion" rather than a wish, as the subjunctive
would indicate (see Hutchinson p .249).  To me, this reading seems more in line with
the character we have seen over the course of the poem - she is confident that she is
worthy of such an honor, as she lists the reasons why over the course of the poem.
*Sum*, to me, makes a stronger impression; however, both the Loeb and Richardson
have *sim*.

the other two *exempla*.  Thus, although Cornelia is an *exemplum* of Augustan

morality, the structure and language of the poem force the audience to re-

evaluate the basis of that morality.  As such, without even considering Cynthia,

4.11 seems to call into question the values that Cornelia exemplifies.

Moreover, the difficulty in determining the precise nature of the scenario

in 4.11 underscores the audience's hesitation in supporting what she represents.

Cornelia is never physically described, and she alternates between speaking to

her husband Paullus, her children, and an assembled court of the underworld.

Lowrie notes the narratological difficulties in reading this poem, observing that

it drifts not only between addressees, but also between genres, including

elements of *laudatio,* defense speech, and grave epigram.[35]  The fact that neither

Cornelia herself nor the setting in which the poem is occurring is concretely

described adds to the difficulty in locating the poem in a temporal or narrative

sense; it is hard to imagine what exactly is the scene taking place, because the

poem so often shifts between addressee, and thus Cornelia never seems to

assume any sort of physical form.  Unlike Lucretia and Verginia, whose

narratives focus on the violence enacted upon their bodies, the manner of

Cornelia's death is never described.  We get glimpses of her funeral and her

public mourning in *maternis laudor lacrimis urbisque querelis; / defensa sunt et*

*gemitu Caesaris ossa mea* ("I am praised by maternal tears and by the laments of

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[35] Lowrie, esp. p.168-171

the city, and my bones are protected by Caesar's groan" 4.11.57-58)[36], but the

lack of physical description causes Cornelia to seem disembodied and abstract.

This is on the one hand illustrative of what *exempla* become: names and values

without any grounding historical context. Indeed, as Roller notes, the details of

the historical stories of the *exemplum* do not need to harmonize or can even

flatly contradict each other; what that person represents is more important than

that person's context.[37] Moreover, as Joshel notes, Lucretia and Verginia also

become disembodied over the course of their own narratives. She writes that

"Women as a presence disappear from the narrative and leave the stage of

history to men struggling with one another...Lucretia and Verginia endure and

are removed from the scene by the activities of the conqueror."[38] However,

because Cornelia lacks the verification of her contemporary audience (the court

of the underworld), the fact that she seems so insubstantial as a character and

that the scene is difficult to imagine makes it more challenging for the audience

of readers to sympathize with her and thus legitimize the values she exemplifies.

It is somewhat ironic that Cornelia, an actual historical figure, has less of real

presence than Cynthia, a fictional character, and, arguably, a literary construct

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[36] It is interesting to note both the legal and militaristic connotation of *defendo* - according to the Lewis and Short, *defendo* can mean to protect or ward off against a hostile force, but also to vindicate against an accusation; thus the verb resonates in the larger narrative frame of Cornelia striving to vindicate herself before the jury of the Underworld.
[37] See Roller's discussion particularly of Horatius Cocles
[38] Joshel p. 128

herself.[39]  As Lowrie writes, "even that cipher Cynthia, with her passion and

jealousy, appears emotionally fuller than Cornelia, who seems to be nothing

more than a symbolic representation."[40]

Indeed, Cynthia and Cornelia are two diametrically different women, both

in terms of status and in how they are characterized.  The similarity in the

structure of 4.7 and 4.11 highlights these differences.  Unlike Cornelia, Cynthia is

a figure of flesh and blood, and Propertius vividly describes both the setting of

the encounter and her appearance:

> eosdem habuit secum quibus est elata capillos,
> eosdem oculos. lateri vestis adusta fuit,
> et solitum digito beryllon adederat ignis;
> summaque Lethaeus triverat ora liquor.
> spirantesque animos et vocem misit, et illi
> pollicibus fragiles increpuere manus:
> (4.7.7-12)

> she had the same hair with which she was buried, the same eyes.
>  Her dress was burned to her side, and a flame had eaten away at the one
> jewel on her finger; and the water of Lethe had worn away the edges of
> her mouth.  She emitted a voice and a living mind, and her brittle hands
> rattled when she snapped her thumbs.

Particular attention is given to her face and her hands, and as a result, she has a

vivid, corporal presence, rather than being just an *umbra,* although that is how

she is described in the final lines of the poem.  Also worthy of note is how

Propertius personifies her mind, calling it *spirantes*.  Her hair, her eyes, her dress,

the ring on her finger, physical traits that characterized her appearance while

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[39] See Wyke (1987) for further explanation of Cynthia as a literary construct for
Propertius's poetry in and of itself
[40] Lowrie, p.172

she was alive, still exist and serve the same function now that she is dead.[41]

Again, such details lend Cynthia a strong physical presence, and the encounter

between Cynthia and Propertius, the scene presently taking place, is readily

imaginable, despite the fantastical element of a woman rising from the dead to

scold her lover.  Furthermore, she is, by her own (somewhat surprising)

admission, a prostitute, as *iamne tibi exciderunt vigilacis furta Suburae / et mea*

*nocturnis trita fenestra dolis* ("have the secrets of the watchful Subura, and my

windowsill, worn away by nightly deceits already been lost to you?" 4.7.15-16)

suggests.  This, combined with her account of climbing down from her window,

hand over hand (*alterna manu* 4.7.19), to meet Propertius, adds to this physical,

earthy sensibility.  Both in life and in death, Cynthia has a bodily presence; she

laments that, as her dead body lay prostrate, ready for burial, *laesit et obiectum*

*tegula curta caput* ("and a broken tile wounded my exposed head" 4.7.26).  As a

result of such rich physical description, the scene is able to materialize in the

mind of the audience; the meetings, the funeral, and now this otherworldly

encounter have a sense of reality, rather than timeless abstraction. Thus Cynthia,

in many ways, is the opposite of the *exemplum* Cornelia is; not only is she a

prostitute and, an unmarried and childless woman, hardly a model of good

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[41] Perhaps of some interest, adding to the vividness of this description (and the
spookiness) is both Camps's and Richardson's comment on this passage, noting how
Pliny in *NH* 11.150 explains how the eyes, closed after the person has died, open
again on the pyre (See Richardson p. 456, his note on line 8; see Camps p. 116, his
note on lines 7-8).  This would then add to the eerie physicality of Cynthia's ghost,
blending the boundary between the living Cynthia and her shade, as well as to the
specific detail of the description.

Roman matronly behavior, but as noted above, she seems so grounded in terms of space and time that she hardly seems to "mediate between singularity and repeatability,"[42] as Lowrie writes.  Indeed, Cynthia seems to be precisely the most singular, indomitable character in Propertius's entire body of work, and even though the wicked Chloris has attempted to get rid of her, Cynthia is the one who remains nevertheless, the one who has the last word.  Not even Cornelia, who actually gets the last word in this book, can silence Cynthia.  Having read 4.7, the audience hears and feels Cynthia's reverberations throughout 4.11, and thus comes back to Cynthia in the end.  Indeed, Propertius's words at 1.12.20 hold true at the end of Book IV: *Cynthia prima fuit, Cynthia finis erit* (First there was Cynthia, Cynthia will be the end).[43]

The similarities in the structure of the speeches are what cause this emergence of Cynthia in 4.11, a poem that ostensibly has nothing to do with her. These similarities then go on to highlight the fundamental differences between these characters.  It is worthy of note that the speeches of both women are, to a large extent, focused on proclaiming their fidelity.  They use the same phrase *si fallo* ("If I deceive" 4.7.53; 4.11.27), a phrase that occurs in the middle of their respective lines, while calling punishment down upon themselves through a jussive subjunctive if they indeed are deceptive.  Both Cynthia and Cornelia allude to the same mythological characters, including an unchained Cerberus, Cybele, and the Danaids.  Furthermore, both Cynthia and Cornelia incorporate

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[42] Lowrie p. 172

[43] The title of Liveley's article, which first drew my attention back to this poem

legal terminology into their speeches (for example, *haec postquam quaerula mecum sub lite peregit* "after she finished with me in querulous indictment"[44] 4.7.94; *causa perorata est...testes* "my case has ended...witnesses" in 4.11.98).  In addition, the speeches of both Cynthia and Cornelia are structured in a similar manner, in that towards the end, they give a long series of jussive subjunctives to their respective addressees about what those people ought to do, and it is within these commands that the most telling differences between Cynthia and Cornelia emerge.  Cynthia states,

> nutrix in tremulis ne quid desideret annis
> Parthinie: potuit nec tibi avara fuit.
> deliciaeque meae Latris, cui nomen ab usu est -
> ne speculum dominae porrigat illa novae
> <div align="right">4.7.73-76</div>

> And don't let my nurse, Parthinie, want for anything in her old age; she
> was not able to be false to you.  And my darling slave Latris, whose name
> is derived from her occupation, may she not extend a mirror to a new
> mistress.

Clearly, Cynthia is still jealous and does not want to be replaced, despite the fact that she apparently has gained admission to the better part of the underworld. She is painfully aware of the continued existence of Chloris, who allegedly had poisoned her and has set herself up as a rival to the *domina*; Cynthia laments that Chloris has melted down a golden image and seeks to obtain a dowry from the burning of Cynthia's pyre (*te patiente, meae conflavit imaginis aurum,/ ardente e*

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[44] "in querulous indictment" is the translation suggested by Richardson for *quaerula sub lite*.  Both he and Hutchinson mention how the *sub lite* in particular adds a marked legal flavor to Cynthia's statement.

*nostro dotem habitura rogo.* "since you allowed it, she melted down the gold of

my statue, about to obtain a dowry from my burning pyre" 4.7.47-48).

Furthermore, Cynthia declares her everlasting presence with Propertius; even

though she is dead, she will have him forever, and in that sense she will continue

to exist (*nunc te possideant aliae; mox sola tenebo. / mecum eris, et mixtis ossibus*

*ossa teram* "other women may have you now; soon, I alone will hold you. You'll

be with me, and I will rub my bones against yours, when they are mingled

together" 4.7.94-95).[45] *Tenebo* and *teram,* occupying the final position of their

respective lines, emphasize Cynthia's own actions, and as such, the power she

holds over Propertius, even in death.[46] It is worth noting that, as with the

physical descriptions of Cynthia, the temporal adverbs in particularly the above

lines but also throughout the speech, serve to further situate it, make it more

vivid by lending it a narrative sense – now this is happening, but soon, that will

happen. This preoccupation with remembrance and continuing to exist after

death is also reflected in that Cynthia has Propertius set up a grave for her, with

a specific inscription in a specific location, an inscription short enough that

anyone, even a messenger traveling from Rome, might be able to read it – in

other words, she wants to be forgotten by no one, despite the fact that her

golden image has been melted down. Cynthia's concern for her own

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[45] As both Richardson and Hutchinson note, *terere* is a favorite verb of Propertius, and carries a range of meanings, including an erotic one (as does *mixtis*). See Hutchinson p. 188 and Richardson p. 461.
[46] As Hutchinson notes, Cynthia's *tenebo* reverses *Chloridos herba tenet* in 72 (Hutchinson p. 188).

remembrance is also revealed in her instruction to Propertius to destroy the poems he has written about her (*et quoscumque meo fecisti nomine versus / ure mihi; laudes desine habere meas* "and whatever verses you have composed for my sake, burn them for me; cease in holding my praises" 4.7.77-78). She desires to be memorialized in the manner dictated by herself, rather than as presented in Propertius's poetry. As such, Cynthia acts to ensure not only that she is remembered, but is done so in exactly the ways in which she prescribes.

In contrast, Cornelia seems perfectly at peace with the idea of being replaced. She tells Paullus to stop weeping at her grave,[47] whereas Cynthia scolds Propertius that he didn't weep enough for her, that he didn't even bother to follow her funeral procession and was cheap in adorning her grave.[48]. Cornelia also encourages her children to accept a stepmother. Janan argues that Cornelia, "insofar as she refuses to bar Paullus's remarrying, she ceases to exist as a prohibition…she sacrifices the exchange of his celibacy for her death in order to be absolutely nothing. Cornelia will exist in their 'conversation' only as the pauses between his words – precisely as *nothing*, silence, nonmeaning."[49] Unlike Cynthia, who had such a physical presence and insists upon both physical and emotional memorials, Cornelia, insubstantial and disembodied in her poem,

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[47] See 4.11.1. This to me seems interesting overlap of vocabulary and syntax with 4.7.78 - *Desine urgere lacrimis meum sepulchrum* in 4.11 and *Desine habere meas laudes* in 4.7; yet another linguistic link between these two poems that seems to encourage their reading together.
[48] See 4.7.27-34 for Cynthia's grievances as regards to Propertius's behavior at her funeral
[49] Janan, p.162

will cease to exist. We know exactly how Cynthia died, yet have no hint as to what happened to Cornelia; she's just dead, and now not even a narrative exists to preserve her. It is further ironic that no one seemed to mourn Cynthia at her funeral (*at mihi non oculos quisquam inclamavit euntes* "but no one called out to my eyes as they lost vision[50] 4.7.23), while everyone, even Augustus, lamented Cornelia's death – no one cried out to Cynthia's eyes as they departed, but Cornelia's children closed her eyes with their own hands (*condita sunt vestra lumina nostra manu* "my eyes were closed by your hands" 4.11.64). Paullus has a statue made of Cornelia, and Cynthia's *imago* is melted down by Chloris. Yet Cynthia is the figure who, again, both insists upon and is memorialized, both within the poem and within the larger poetic project as a whole. And, interestingly, Cynthia needs no persuasion of the court of the underworld on her behalf; she, if she is to be believed, already lives in Elysium, alongside the likes of Andromeda and Hypermnestra.[51] Thus, Cornelia's audience, her adjudicators, seems to have already implicitly confirmed Cynthia. This adds to the sense that Cynthia retroactively is really redefining and re-evaluating Cornelia's exemplarity in terms of what she herself represents.

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[50] *oculos euntes* is translated by Hutchinson as "eyes as they lost vision," which I have borrowed above. As both Hutchinson and Richardson note, this is an odd phrase, and Richardson disagrees with Camps's comparison to Ovid's *labentes oculos* (*Tr.* 3.3.44). Richardson has emended the line to Reland's suggestion *eunti*, and thus have it modify *mihi*. Either way, it seems to me, the sense is clear - Cynthia is dying.

[51] Again, it is striking to consider how different Cornelia's and Cynthia's experiences of the underworld are - the setting of 4.11, as described in the poem's first ten lines, is so gloomy compared to Cynthia's gardens of Elysium.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that these two poems not only set

Cynthia and Cornelia in contrast with each other, but also Propertius and Paullus

as the elegiac lovers. Paullus is, objectively, much better at it than Propertius;

he's weeping at her grave, secretly whispering words to her statue (*Desine,*

*Paulle, meum lacrimis urgere sepulchrum* "Paullus, cease in pressing upon my

tomb with your tears" 4.11.1; *atque ubi secreto nostra ad simulacra loqueris / ut*

*responsurae singula verba iace* "and when you secretly speak to my image, send

forth every word to me, as though I were about to respond" 4.11.83-84).

Meanwhile, *perfidus, ingratus* Propertius is lying in bed, apparently too lazy or

careless to even properly adorn the funeral pyre of his so-called beloved, and nor

has he, far from cherishing Cynthia's *imago* to the extent that he's actually

speaking to it, stopped Chloris from melting it down. However, Paullus differs

dramatically from most of the male characters present in exemplary texts. He is

no Brutus or Verginius; indeed, behaving as a typical elegiac lover, he is

practically their antithesis. This adds another layer of complexity to Cornelia's

exemplarity, emphasized by the fact that, throughout the entire poem, Cornelia

expresses not a single word of affection or regard towards Paullus, which casts a

strange light upon their relationship. Indeed, as Richardson notes in his

introduction to 4.11, "it is not a sympathetic picture of an affectionate household

that is presented us here."[52] Cornelia's role in her family is what defines her,

what makes her the *pars imitanda domus magnae*, and yet, there is a certain

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[52] Richardson p. 481-482

amount of tension that exists in how that role is unfolded over the course of the poem.  Furthermore, unlike Paullus, who will remarry and ostensibly have nothing really more to do with Cornelia (again, at her own instance), Propertius has assured us that he and Cynthia remain together.[53]  Despite having foresworn Cynthia in the final poem of Book III, a visit from Cynthia's ghost has rectified their relationship, and through Cynthia's action, rather than Propertius, their being together will endure forever, even after they have both died.  As such, in light of 4.11, it seems that Propertius in 4.7 is, in a way, reworking and critiquing the values embodied by Cornelia.  Cornelia is figured as an ideal character who ought to be imitated but as Janan notes, there is a kind of emptiness that exists in that premise, because Cornelia an individual is ultimately rendered meaningless by the very laws that she supposedly represents.[54]  A stepmother is already waiting in the wings to replace her.  Cynthia, however, as a reworking of Cornelia as an *exemplum*, continues to exist as a flesh and blood character both within the text and between the text and reader.

Both 4.7 and 4.11, because of their structural similarities, are worth reading together.  Both poems are fundamentally concerned, it seems, with memory and representation, how to give voice to someone after they have died.  Both poems insist upon a retelling of the past.  Cornelia and Cynthia and Propertius and Paullus all exist as variations on this theme.  Thus, in being a

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[53] A somewhat striking proposition, given how Book III ended with Propertius's renunciation and condemnation of Cynthia.
[54] See Janan, p. 161-163

"contested evaluation" of Cornelia, Cynthia exists as an embodiment as one of Propertius IV's fundamental themes: the reworking and problematizing of a unified historical narrative. Just as in 4.1, when Horos's presentation of Propertius as a victim of Octavian's land confiscations complicates and re-figures the poem's earlier patriotic sentiments, Cynthia calls Cornelia's exemplarity into question. Furthermore, Propertius, by the end of this book, exists as an interesting sort of reworking of Paullus; he is no longer the typical sort of elegiac lover, as Paullus, whose weeping over his beloved's death is ultimately rendered meaningless. He and Cynthia have moved on. Thus, 4.11, despite the utter absence of Propertius's voice, even as a narrative framework, can be read as being ultimately about him and Cynthia. As is often the case in Latin love elegy, the poems fundamentally give voice to the author; Propertius's voice is what remains, and thus, even the discontinuity of Propertius IV, which is so manifest throughout the book, can be called into question, as the final poem of the book, although it has seemingly nothing to do with Propertius and Cynthia, can be understood as a celebration of their relationship, answering the despair and resignation that ended Book III.

## Propertius's Tarpeia:
## A Complication of (Anti-) Exemplarity

In many respects, Propertius IV centers itself around its characters in a manner that was henceforth unique among Latin elegy.  Rather than focusing on the narration of the affairs of the lover and his *domina,* Propertius IV widens its lens to include the voices of many different figures in many different contexts. For decades, scholars have noted that, despite chronological and narrative jumps from one poem to the next, the book contains strong unifying themes of war, death, love and desire, and a search for and creation of some sort of cohesive identity.  In this way, the scope and ambition of Propertius IV becomes greater, and the poems assume a role that is very much a public one.  For although the cast of characters that form Propertius IV abounds in diversity, from male to female, god to mortal, distantly mythic to nearly contemporary, famous civic leader to private lover, they can all be understood to be in dialogue with each other, in that they express different aspects of Roman identity, aspects that are informed by the character's interactions with the book's major themes, such as war, death, and appropriate civic and social behavior.  As such, in articulating these aspects, it seems appropriate to view these characters in Propertius IV through a lens of exemplarity, in order to help identify and interpret the aspects of Roman identity that these poems express.  As Seo explains, "exemplary individuals became templates of behavior used by the Romans to embody particular characteristics with an ethically normative force...directed toward

transmitting and perpetuating Roman ethical norms and values for individuals, [while] conflict and appropriation were always a part of the reception of these models."[55]   In this chapter, I will attempt to apply Roller's theory of exemplary discourse to Tarpeia, the infamous betrayer of the Capitoline to the Sabines during Rome's early days under the reign of Romulus.  As such, what will emerge, as with Cornelia, is the questioning and destabilization of values and ideals, rather than a figure who perfectly encapsulates a characteristic that ought to either be imitated or avoided.

This sort of conflict and appropriation is prominent in Propertius, for his characters do not behave as straightforwardly as they might initially be presented.  And, as I attempted to demonstrate in my previous chapter on Cornelia and Cynthia, these characters are complicated by the fact that they comment upon each other's aspects, and force the reader to as well, illustrating what Roller terms a "discourse of exemplarity."[56]  The traits and actions exhibited by these characters are constantly reinvestigated and renegotiated, both within the poetry itself and outside of the text, by the reader.  As I have tried to prove in my previous chapter, because they are connected through clear formal similarities, Cynthia in 4.7 questions and refigures Cornelia's exemplary traits, which forces the reader to go back and critically reconsider Cornelia's narrative.  In Propertius IV, exemplarity is not presented in a straightforward

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[55] Seo p. 9-10; also see Roller
[56] See Roller

manner in the manner of authors such as Valerius Maximus, for instance,[57] and as such, these characters cannot be termed either "exemplary" or "anti-exemplary."  Rather, they exist in the space in between, forcing the reader to reconsider their judgment of the traits exhibited in the poems' narratives.  As such, as I have mentioned in the cases of Cornelia and Cynthia, through his use of exemplary discourse, Propertius brings forward the notion of competing historical narratives, and thus the question of how the past is remembered and memorialized, highlighting its fundamental subjectivity and mutability.

Tarpeia, in many ways, represents the opposite end of the spectrum from Cornelia.  These two characters are perhaps the most obvious instances of exemplarity in the entire book, positive and negative.  However, as I mentioned earlier, Cornelia's positive exemplarity may not be as clear-cut as we are initially led to believe, through the reader's consideration of her in relation to Cynthia.  In a similar vein, I would like to view Tarpeia along the same lines; I would like to consider her not as a straightforward anti-exemplum, but rather, as a complication, or destabilization of the clear notions of exemplarity that are evident in the writings of Valerius Maximus, for instance.  Thus, she complicates the portraits of identity that Romans used to help form notions of themselves, of their place in the world and how to behave.  Like Cornelia, Tarpeia's exemplarity, or in her case, anti-exemplarity, is problematized.  This is because Tarpeia is

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[57] For a discussion of *exempla* in early imperial authors, see Chaplin, particularly Chapter 6. She argues that "the early imperial authors regard each *exemplum*'s meaning as fixed.  This is especially clear in Valerius Maximus..." (Chaplin p. 170-171).

strongly characterized by contradiction, by the spaces that exist in between the identities she holds.  Her situation exemplifies the conflict and competition of various identities and, like Lucretia, Verginia, and Horatia (juxtapositions that seem striking, as these women are held as the archetypes of Roman femininity, while Tarpeia is normally condemned as the worst type of traitor), Tarpeia must die in order for the conflict to be resolved.  Furthermore, by assigning her the motive of love, rather than greed as is the case in Livy, and by writing her the longest soliloquy that is thus far given to a character who is not the poetic narrator, Propertius ensures that the reader finds sympathy, or at the very least, empathy for Tarpeia.

This feeling of empathy is further emphasized by the fact that Tatius, not Tarpeia, is the one depicted to act with true cruelty and duplicity.  As a result, Propertius's Tarpeia, seemingly the clearest kind of anti-exemplum, is not really so; rather, her conflict of identities and eventual death and thus resolution of the conflict illustrates that of Rome and its citizens writ large, as they struggle to reconcile what exactly Roman identity entailed, what being a Roman citizen meant.  Moreover, the context of Propertius's writing, both the civil war and subsequent consolidation of power by Augustus cannot go unnoticed when thinking about the struggle to express a cohesive identity.  As Horos reminds us in 4.1, *ossaque legisti non illa legenda / patris, et in tenues cogeris ipse lares. / nam tua cum multi versarent rura iuuenci, / abstulit excultas pertica tristis opes* ("and the bones of your father which ought not to be collected when you were that age,

you collected them, and you yourself were driven into a poor home; for although many cattle were dwelling in your fields, a pitiful measuring-rod carried off your cultivated wealth" 4.1.127-130).  This is of a poet who, of course, began his fourth book with grand statements on the continuity of past and present through juxtaposing historic and contemporary Rome, suggesting a unity that he then undermines through the introduction of Horos.  He continues along such a framework in 4.4, thus creating not a straightforward anti-*exemplum*, but rather, a sympathetic and nuanced character whose struggle to reconcile various aspects of her identity can be extrapolated to the poet and Roman society at large.

The story of Tarpeia is of course not unique to Propertius; her notorious betrayal long existed as an aetiological myth for the Tarpeian Rock, a familiar aspect of Rome's cityscape.  Indeed, Propertius's poem begins in a manner that suggests an aetiological aim: *Tarpeium scelus et Tarpeiae turpe sepulcrum / fabor, et antiqui limina capta Iovis* (I will speak about the Tarpeian crime and the infamous tomb of Tarpeia" 4.4.1-2)[58] the narrator intones.  Just as in 4.1, the poem's opening fifteen lines or so emphasize a sense of continuity with the past by juxtaposing it with the present (interestingly, 4.1.7 includes a direct reference to the nominal subject matter of 4.4 in *Tarpeiusque pater nuda de rupe tonabat* "and Tarpeian Jupiter was resounding from the bare cliff" - as Richardson and

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[58] I have translated *turpe* to mean infamous, as Richardson suggests - as he explains, the tomb itself is not ugly or disfigured, but rather, Tarpeia herself has become so through her crime.

Hutchinson note, this is a reference to the Temple of Jupiter Feretrius, whose origin will be examined in 4.10.  This is but one instance in which Propertius weaves the poems in this book together, and manipulates the reader's sense of narrative and chronology).  However, as in 4.1, the narrator's initial declaration of purpose does not necessarily correlate with what he then comes to set forth.  Indeed, the reader might be forgiven for forgetting about the *mons* at all; only in lines 1 and 93, at the poem's beginning and end, is it mentioned at all.  Instead, the poem devotes an extraordinary amount of space to Tarpeia herself.  The narrator does have a typical sort of omniscience, seen in the lines that describe Tarpeia's actions and emotional responses, such as *obstipuit regis facie et regalibus armis* ("she stood agape at the appearance of the king and at his regal arms" 4.4.21), and thus, at least in the beginning of the poem, the reader may be tempted to agree with the narrator's moral judgment - the words *scelus* and *turpe* prominently stand out in the poem's first line, and any reader familiar with Tarpeia's narrative would likely approach this poem with a similar mindset.  Furthermore, as Hutchinson notes, the verb *fabor* has a distinctive flavor in stressing the action of speech, the agency and authority of the poet communicating his knowledge to the reader.[59]  As such, the reader approaches the poem expecting a certain kind of clear and straightforward narrative, gleaned from the poet's own expertise.

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[59] Hutchinson p. 119

However, Tarpeia's long speech, lasting from lines 31-66, the central third of the poem, serves in effect to undermine the narrator's own moral authority, in that it actively engages the reader, and invites the reader's judgment of Tarpeia on her own terms, so to speak.  But, the speech itself is complex, as it both causes the reader to understand and sympathize with Tarpeia, but also, to critically question her reasoning and her legitimizing of her actions, if not her motivations.  As Hutchinson points out in his commentary on the poem, Tarpeia's monologue does much to "engage the reader's sympathy; but the speech has a dynamic movement to bold treachery and wildly assured fantasy."[60]  But, as Hutchinson goes on to argue, the poem's ending conjures sympathy again in the reader, and a much more nuanced view of the situation.  Tarpeia begins her long speech on a bold note:

> ignes castrorum et Tatiae praetoria turmae
> et formosa oculis arma Sabina meis,
> o utinam ad vestros sedeam captiva Penates
> dum captiva mei conspicer ora Tati!
> 4.4.31-34

> Fires of the camp and headquarters of Tatius's troops,
> and Sabine arms, beautiful to my eyes,
> would that I sit as a captive before your household gods
> provided that, as a captive, I might behold the face of Tatius!

This passage certainly is uncomfortable to read, especially as it follows the narrator's description of Tarpeia meticulously performing her normal ritual activities, but with the wrong intent.  She is supposed to be acting on behalf of

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[60] Hutchinson p. 117

Rome's safety, but rather, she acts *Romula ne faciem laederet hasta Tati* "in order that the spear of Romulus might not wound the face of Tatius" 4.4.26. In this passage, Propertius casts Tarpeia in the guise of an (male) elegiac lover, who acts irrationally and selfishly out of love. Indeed, as Hutchinson notes, Tarpeia quite literally realizes *servitium amoris*.[61] This thematic connection is made especially prominent by the repetition of *captiva* in lines 33 and 34. Thus, casting Tarpeia as an elegiac lover would immediately resonate with the reader of Propertius's earlier poetry books, all told from the perspective of such a figure, and while perhaps not immediately inducing sympathy, a certain understanding of Tarpeia as an unfortunate, love-struck being emerges, an understanding that begins to undercut the severity of the pronouncement *Tarpeium scelus* at the poem's beginning. Tarpeia then becomes more and more heated and passionate over the course of her speech, at some points showing remorse and self-awareness for what she is about to do (*et valeat probo Vesta pudendo meo* "and let Vesta be strong, she who is about to be made ashamed by my disgrace" 4.4.36; *quantum ego sum Ausoniis crimen factura puellis / improba virgineo lecta ministra foco* "how great a disgrace am I about to be for Roman girls, I, wicked, selected to be the attendant to the virginal hearth" 4.4.43-44), and at other points, making wild and irrational justifications for her actions (*si minus, at raptae ne sint impune Sabinae / me rape et alterna lege repende vices* "at least, so that the Sabine women may not have been seized without punishment / seize me and pay them

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[61] See Hutchinson p. 125

back in turn by the law of reprisal"[62] (4.4.57-58). Furthermore, by the time

Tarpeia reveals that which is her true wish, to become Tatius's queen (*dic, hospes,*

*pariamne tua regina sub aula*? "tell me, guest, will I not bear children as a queen

in your palace" 4.4.55 and *adde, Hymenaee, modos; tubicen, fera murmura conde /*

*credite, vestra meus molliet arma torus* "Hymenaeus, god of marriage, add your

melodies; trumpeter, put away your uncivilized rumblings; trust me, my

marriage bed will soften your weapons 4.4.61-62), Tarpeia has revealed herself

to be in such a state of confusion, veering between awareness and delusion, that

the audience cannot help but feel a sense of sorrow and pity for her - just like a

typical elegiac lover, she is hopelessly ensnared by her desire, and her desperate

attempts to rationalize this conflict reveal how torn and troubled she is. This

sense is heightened by the audience's awareness that Tarpeia indeed will not

marry Tatius, but that a horrible death awaits her. As such, Tarpeia's speech, in

vividly depicting her various states of mind as she struggles to rationalize her

desire to see Tatius be victorious and to then marry him and be his queen, and

by establishing her really as the victim of being hopelessly struck by love, as an

elegiac lover, engages the reader's pity, despite her ultimate betrayal.

 Similarly to that of Cornelia in 4.11, Tarpeia's speech invites the active

judgment of the reader, and in doing so, it collapses the distance between the

character and the reader, and demonstrates the fluidity of the process of

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[62] Here, I borrow Goold's translation of *alterna lege* as "the law of reprisal" as
printed in the Loeb; Richardson suggests "the law of an eye for an eye," and notes
that this phrase appears to be a coinage of Propertius's own.

understanding and adjudicating - the outlook of the reader as concerns the narrator, Tarpeia, Tatius, and the story itself are different at the beginning than they are at the end, different than what even the poem's beginning sets the reader up to think. Notably, by the end of the poem, the narrator does not seem like quite the bastion of authority as he does at the beginning. Particularly after Tatius's blasé cruelty, amplified by the only words he speaks in the poem as he prepares to have his soldiers crush her to death (*nube...et regni scande cubile mei* "marry...and ascend the bed of my kingdom" 4.4.90), the narrator's insistence that Tarpeia got what she deserved (*haec, virgo, officiis dos erat apta tuis* "this, maiden, was a dowry fit for your services" 4.4.92)[63] and his abrupt return to the *mons* whose origin he sought out to explain (although, as I mentioned, the *mons* plays absolutely no role in the story itself) cause the reader to question and reevaluate the narrator's own authority, to examine his own line of reasoning. Like the relationship between Cornelia and Cynthia, this poem as a whole demonstrates the fluidity that is inherent in notions of exemplarity. As Roller and others have pointed out, what exactly an *exemplum* typifies is not fixed, but rather, changes over time as readers or viewers reconsider it. The ongoing process of reevaluating the *exemplum* is crucial, and, to a great degree, keeps the *exemplum* relevant over the course of history. Propertius illustrates that process at work within this poem, and it is particularly noticeable because Tarpeia

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[63] This seems to me to be reminiscent of Livy's portrayal of Tarpeia as who was "bribed with gold by Tatius to admit armed men into the fortress" (Livy 1.11.6 *Huius filiam virginem auro corrumpit Tatius ut armatos in arcem accipiat* trans. B.O. Foster, Loeb Classical Library Vol. 114)

herself, as her speech reveals, is not a stable or monolithic character, but rather, is one who veers back and forth between shame and righteousness, between understanding and delusion.  As a result, Propertius here typifies the process of understanding and processing *exempla* with a very untypical character, as Tarpeia typically is cast as the archetypical anti-*exemplum*, like Appius Claudius Caecus, a character who, in Seo's words, "embodies characteristics to avoid."[64] Thus her inherent contradictions are made all the more manifest, as the audience experiences its own judgment of Tarpeia, Tatius, and the poetic narrator changing over the course of the poem.  The audience is thus forced to question the legitimacy of their own preconceptions; they must go back and reread, refigure and adjust their understanding of the characters in this poem. Thus, a unified notion of "characteristics to avoid" is rendered problematic.

Furthermore, unlike many exemplary figures, such as Lucretia, or Cornelia in 4.11, the narrative structure of this poem, in devoting so much space to Tarpeia's agonized rationalizations and flitting back and forth between remorse and self-righteousness, it is somewhat difficult to define Tarpeia solely in relation to her action, her betrayal.  This is made especially clear in that the action of the poem itself, the betrayal and sack of the citadel, is crammed in the last twenty lines, and it moves quickly, in short sentences.  For instance, Tarpeia's betrayal is detailed as such:

> hoc Tarpeia suum tempus rata convenit hostem;
> pacta ligat, pactis ipsa futura comes.

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[64] Seo p. 9

> mons erat ascensus dubius, festoque remissis
>
> <
>
>                                            >
>
> nec mora, vocales occupat ense canes.
>
>                         4.4.81-84
>
> When she thought this to be her own opportune time, Tarpeia
> meets with the enemy;  she seals the agreement, she herself about
> to be a partner in what was agreed.  The tricky mountain was
> ascended, and men were relaxed in celebration...without delay, she
> attacks the barking dogs with a sword.

As compared to the rest of the poem, the action happens so swiftly and abruptly;

Richardson aptly terms these sentences "almost telegraphically concise," and he

emphasizes how they lend "the effect of their stealth and speed as Titus Tatius

and the Sabines immediately act on her information."[65]  Moreover, the aftermath

of Tarpeia's betrayal is never discussed; we are without mention of the slaughter

of sleeping Romans, even the sack of the citadel itself.  It is thus rendered even

more difficult for the reader to associate Tarpeia with wicked betrayal when the

only consequence of the above named action is Tarpeia's own gruesome, brutal

death.  It is she who is betrayed by Tatius.  As a result, the sympathy Tarpeia's

speech engenders in the audience is amplified at the end of the poem, and that is

the feeling upon which the poem ends.  As a result, far from being defined as a

template of behavior of which to avoid, Tarpeia, to a certain extent, becomes a

tragic victim of fate, and this instability created by feeling sorry for a character

who commits a horrific crime against the Roman state is illustrative of the way in

which Propertius uses exemplarity in service of one of the overriding themes of

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[65] Richardson p. 440, see note on line 83

the entire book, namely, the falsity of a single, unified narrative.  Rather than reaffirming qualities characteristic of Roman identity, Tarpeia instead destabilizes them.[66]

As mentioned above, Propertius is not the first Augustan author to depict Tarpeia in a complex manner.  Scholars such as Feldherr and Welch have done much work in analyzing Livy's Tarpeia through the lens of exemplarity, as exemplarity, learning from history, is the primary stated goal of Livy's work.  There are notable similarities between Livy's Tarpeia and Propertius's, so it is perhaps worthwhile to apply the work of Feldherr and Welch to Propertius, because I think that Propertius's narrative has the same force as Livy's.  However, the differences between the two Tarpeias, which I will discuss later, further emphasize Tarpeia's function as a destabilizing force to traditional modes of exemplarity and thus constructions of behavior and identity.  Welch argues, using the framework established by Feldherr in analyzing the story of Horatia, that Tarpeia similarly " dwells in the gap between appearance and reality, and between one identity and another, and therefore lends herself to multiple perspectives."[67]  She goes on to relate how Livy's Tarpeia exists in the space between concepts of being a *filia* and a *virgo*, which demonstrates the conflict between her relationship and loyalty to her father, which Welch terms a

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[66] Interestingly, this ambiguity is capitalized upon by the textual uncertainty in the poem's final line; Richardson and Hutchinson have the line as such: *o vigil, iniustae praemia sortis habes* "watchful one, you have the reward of an unjust fate" whereas in the Loeb, the text reads *o vigil, iniuste praemia mortis habes* and is translated by Goold as "wakeful one, you do not deserve such a reward for your death"
[67] Welch p. 191

vertical tie, and her role as an unmarried woman there to serve an integrating function with another family, or horizontal tie.[68]  As Welch explains, "fathers find themselves at risk in this tense situation, and daughters also often suffer, husbands (or their non- espoused analogues, i.e., Tatius) generally come out ahead. In other words, individuals and families lose some ground, but the state broadens its citizen base. The only winner, in fact, is the groom – the one whose social role is most beneficial to an expanding state."[69]

Welch further notes in her discussion an interesting comparison with Roman historical women as opposed to those from Greek myth.  She states, " Greek myth is rich with tales of girls caught between their fathers and their lovers, but unlike their Roman analogues, loyalty swings both ways in the Greek stories...Perhaps the difference lies in the ways these two cultures conceived of their origins: Greek communities rooted their identity strongly in the land they occupied; the Athenians and Thebans even sprang from that land itself. The Romans, on the other hand, had always been – and, as imperialists, would always be – composed of someone else."[70]  As such, Tarpeia's dual role, as a daughter loyal to her father but also as an unmarried woman by means of which to incorporate outsiders, vividly exemplifies this struggle of allegiance and creation of identity.  Indeed the Sabine Women, whom Propertius's Tarpeia herself invokes (*si minus, at raptae ne sint impune Sabinae, / me rape et alterna lege*

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[68] See Welch p. 190-191
[69] Welch p. 184
[70] Ibid

*repende vices* "at least, so that the Sabine women may not have been seized without punishment / seize me and pay them back in turn by the law of reprisal" 4.4.57-58),[71] are in this same position, but their story resolves somewhat more neatly, with the reconciliation of their two loyalties, whereas Tarpeia, in both Livy and Propertius, is not so lucky. Indeed, as Welch states, "Marriage blends family lines through children, who thereafter share in the common bonds of both families...marriage thus acts as a powerful metaphor not just for the specific, familial integration, but also for integration on a larger community scale."[72] Interestingly, in Propertius's version, marriage and parenthood with Tatius is what Tarpeia herself desires, and thus this sort of integration itself, which of course is essential to Rome's own identity as an imperial power (*dic, hospes, pariamne tua regina sub aula?* "tell me, guest, will I not bear children as a queen in your palace?" 4.4.55). Rome's war with the Sabines can be read as one of the earliest "conquests" of the Roman state, setting the standard for how the state is to grow and incorporate new peoples as loyal Roman citizens. Thus the eventual integration of the Sabines is completely necessary for Rome's continued growth and survival. As Janan articulates, " Tarpeia makes possible Rome as Propertius and his contemporaries know it... eventually reconciling the two warring factions and, gradually, for Rome to absorb her former enemies completely. Tarpeia's action is both abhorred and utterly necessary - the type of *felix culpa* that Roman legend regularly stages and that just as regularly demands the sacrifice of a

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[71] See note 8 on Goold's translation
[72] Welch p. 181

woman."[73]  Tarpeia herself both desires and believes that her actions will end the

war between the Romans and the Sabines, that it will result in eventual

reconciliation between them.  As such, as Welch concludes, "when Livy's readers

assess Tarpeia, they reveal the limits and contingencies of their own perspective.

Livy puts us not only in the position of an onlooker with a broader view, but also

in the position of Tarpeia herself, pulled in two directions at least. Livy positions

his reader, that is, as both self and other at once."[74]  Thus Livy's Tarpeia, like

Propertius's, is not simply an anti-exemplum, but rather, in her blurring of

identities, reveals how problematic and conflicting they can be, and thus force

the reader to consider Tarpeia in light of these circumstances.

Propertius's Tarpeia capitalizes upon many of the same ambiguities that

are present in Livy's version, and similarly forces the reader to consider dueling

points of view, placing him or her in Tarpeia's very position.  As in Livy, Tarpeia

occupies multiple spaces, assuming different identities, and thus blurring the

boundary between the categories she embodies.  Thus interpretations of her

character according to multiple perspectives become possible: in what light are

we to view Tarpeia, as a foolish, pitiable, empty-headed girl, as a disloyal and

criminally selfish priestess, or as an elegiac heroine, caught between love and

duty, who anticipates the reconciliation of Roman and Sabine?  Like Livy,

Propertius capitalizes upon the ambiguity of the narrative, leaving room for the

creation of a complicated character who destabilizes traditional categories by

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[73] Janan p. 437
[74] Welch p. 195

occupying different roles at the same time, and by moving back and forth within these roles. Indeed, Tarpeia's very speech illustrates her movement between these categories, as I have explained above, and it demonstrates how one might understand her actions from multiple viewpoints, and in different ways at different points throughout the poem.

However, Tarpeia is different in Propertius's poem in two notable ways. First, she is clearly and repeatedly identified as a Vestal Virgin. Secondly, she is motivated to action by a sudden and intense love and desire for Tatius: she *obstipuit regis facie* "struck dumb by the appearance of the king" (4.4.21) rather than *gemmatorum magna specie anulorum* "by the magnificent appearance of their jeweled mail" (from Livy 1.11.6). Both of these factors, her status as a Vestal Virgin and that her betrayal was due to love, create an even stronger effect upon the reader in terms of negotiating conflicting identities and the blurring of boundaries that make Tarpeia's story difficult to morally adjudicate, and thus understand in terms of an anti-exemplum with a clear, unified meaning. Furthermore, this is all within the context of love elegy. Propertius turns Tarpeia into a sort of amatory heroine, not unlike his own speaker, who acts irrationally because of love. And, Tatius assumes, to some extent, the characteristics of the deceitful object of desire, normally the *domina*. Thus, the reader must adopt multiple perspectives in order to understand Tarpeia's story, undermining the sense that it espouses a single, universal moral lesson around which Romans can

construct their own identity.  Rather, like Tarpeia's, identity is fraught with conflicting notions.

Repeatedly throughout 4.4, and unique among other depictions of Tarpeia, Propertius emphasizes her status as a Vestal Virgin.  Tarpeia is drawing water for a sacred rite when she first sees Tatius, she makes almost a sort of apology to Vesta in her soliloquy, and the offended Vesta is depicted almost as an angry goddess avenging Tarpeia's lack of proper respect due to the goddess from her priestess by eerily stoking Tarpeia's desire and thus path to ruin (*nam Vesta, Iliacae felix tutela fauillae, / culpam alit et plures condit in ossa faces.* "For Vesta, happy guardian of the Trojan embers, nourishes this fault and builds in my bones many torches of love" 4.4.69-70).  Indeed, Richardson, in his commentary, goes so far as to say that Tarpeia's "lot in life was undeserved, however fitting her death may have been, and that while the gods were outraged, Tarpeia was a helpless victim."[75]  Interestingly, he believes that the angry goddess in line 69 should be Venus, rather than Vesta.[76]  He points out that the epithet *felix* is often associated with Venus, as well as the fact that "the fires and torches of love are the province of Venus and Amor, and for Vesta to arrogate them to herself to compass so cruel a purpose as the further undoing of her votary is monstrous."[77]  Indeed, it seems that this confusion and conflation of Vesta and Venus symbolizes the difficulties in characterizing Tarpeia, as she negotiates her

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[75] Richardson p. 440
[76] See Richardson p. 439 for his full explanation
[77] Richardson p. 439

conflicting roles as a virginal priestess and a young woman who desires love and marriage, both of which are respectable and necessary roles. Furthermore, as Mary Beard demonstrates, and as Welch goes on to mention, the priesthood of the Vestal Virgins is characterized by dueling aspects of identification.[78] Vestal Virgins are simultaneously wives and daughters, women and girls, matrons and virgins, symbols of the state's success and fertility while virgin and a symbol of ruin and disaster if they become pregnant. Tarpeia realizes these paradoxes, in that they really are unstable and problematic. Ritually chaste, she desires to marry and have children, and Tatius deceives her by exploiting that desire *(nube, ait, et regni scande cubile mei* "marry me, he said, and ascend the bed of my kingdom" 4.4.90). Thus the boundaries between these paradoxes are shown to be unstable, and Tarpeia collapses the boundaries between them. As Janan explains, "the poem marks feminine desire as a different economy of thought-a place where traditional categories of thought are exceeded, where binary opposition, as the foundation of meaning, collapses under the weight of its own conceptual inadequacy."[79] This binary opposition, wife and ritual virgin, good and evil, exemplum and anti-exemplum, Tarpeia shows to be false - instead, she flows between categories, blurring and thus destabilizing them. Janan and O'Neill have noted the importance of water imagery in the poem as being analogous to Tarpeia's condition. Water and drinking are indeed prominent in the poem; the grove on the Capitoline echoes with the sound of water ("*multaque*

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[78] See Beard and Welch p. 194
[79] Janan p. 441

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*nativis obstrepit arbor aquis"* "the trees resounded often with the natural waters"

4.4.4), Tatius's horse drinks from a pool (4.4.14), Tarpeia draws water for

religious rites and spills it when she drops the pot, she says in her monologue

that her deeds "will be drunk by the entire city" (*tota potabitur urbe* 4.4.47) -

such images associate Tarpeia with water, and thus its physical fluidity

emphasizes her metaphorical fluidity.

Indeed, the idea of fluidity and the destabilization of boundaries

permeates this poem in multiple aspects.  For instance, this concept can be seen

in the blurring of the wild and the civilized.  The setting of the poem is first

described as a bucolic grove, which seems typical of a mythological setting, and

doesn't seem to entirely correspond with the poem's opening lines (4.4.1-14):

> Tarpeium scelus et Tarpeiae turpe sepulchrum
> fabor, et antiqui limina capta Iovis.
> lucus erat, felix hederoso conditus antro,
> multaque nativis obstrepit arbor aquis:
> Silvani ramosa domus, quo dulcius ab aestu
> fistula poturas iubebat ire oves.
> hunc Tatius {fontem} vallo praecingit acerno
> fidaque suggesta castra coronat humo.
> quid tum Roma fuit, tubicen vicina Curetis
> cum quarteret lento murmure saxa Iovis?
> namque ubi nunc terris dicuntur iura subactis,
> stabant Romano pila Sabina foro.
> murus erant montes; ubi nunc Curia saepta,
> bellicus ex alto fonte bibebat equus.
>
> I will speak about the Tarpeian crime and the infamous tomb of
> Tarpeia and the captured thresholds of ancient Jupiter.  There was
> a grove, hidden in an ivy-covered cave, and the trees resounded
> greatly with the natural waters.  There was the branchy home of
> Silvanus, where a pipe rather sweetly was beckoning the sheep,
> about to drink.  Tatius surrounded this fountain with a maple-wood
> rampart, and crowned his loyal camp with heaped-up earth.  What

> was Rome at that time, when the Sabine trumpeter shook the nearby stones of Jupiter with a heavy rumble? For where now laws are spoken to conquered lands, Sabine javelins were standing in the Roman forum. Mountains were walls; where the Curia is now enclosed, a war-horse was drinking from a deep fountain.

Here, the boundaries between the *ramosa domus Silvani* and the *fida castra*, although outlined in much descriptive detail, becomes a little bit blurred; it is somewhat hard to imagine a war camp in the middle of a pastoral grove.  This grove in particular is full of sound - the *arbor obstrepit nativis aquis* and a *fistula* plays for the sheep.  Both of these sounds, the rustling of trees and water and the music of a shepherd's pipe contrasts with the noise of a *tubicen*, and yet, all of these senses are co-existing.  This overlapping between the wild and the manmade can also been seen in the physical descriptions of the grove and the camp.  The grove contains a native spring (*nativis aquis*, 4.4.4) and is protected by a natural feature of the landscape (*hederoso conditus antro*, 4.4.2), whereas Tatius has artificially fortified his camp (*suggesta castra coronat humo*, 4.4.8). However, as demonstrated by the word *hunc* in line 7, both of these locations are existing in the same place - the sacred grove is Tatius's camp.  This is somewhat strange; as Hutchinson notes, "such a thickly wooded spot seems an unlikely choice for a camp...Tatius's warlike action contrasts with the peaceful behavior of the shepherd."[80]  As such, the reader is forced to conflate images of the wild, peaceful, natural grove and those of a manmade war camp and thus understand the setting as existing between these two categories.

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[80] Hutchinson p. 120

In addition, particularly in the passage cited above, the physical locations

of the Romans and the Sabines are conflated, with *namque ubi nunc terris*

*dicuntur iura subactis / stabant Romano pila Sabina foro* (4.4.11-12).  Indeed, in

line 9, the speaker asks the reader, "*Quid tum Roma fuit?*"  Rome as we conceive

of it doesn't really yet exist - after all, *murus erat montes* (4.4.13).  Throughout

the poem, except for a brief description of Romulus's festival occurring the night

Tarpeia sneaks down to Tatius, Rome itself doesn't really materialize; Tarpeia

exists as a priestess, but her family or relationships within her society are not

depicted, unlike in Livy, for instance.  Indeed, the main action of the poem,

Tarpeia's betrayal, happens very quickly, within the last ten lines of the poem, so

even the attack of the Sabines on the Roman citadel doesn't really create a strong

sense of antagonism between the two; rather, the poem's drama comes from

Tarpeia's inner struggles, as she deals with her conflicting loyalties and desires,

and this is especially evident towards the end of the poem, as not only Tatius, but

Roman gods, Jupiter and Vesta, become Tarpeia's antagonists.[81]  As such, the

boundary between Roman and Sabine identity itself becomes blurred, as indeed

it does later in history: are the sons of Romulus's men and the Sabine women

they abducted Romans or Sabines?  Indeed, Tarpeia's reference to the rape of the

Sabine women in rationalizing her own actions call this event to mind.  Moreover,

Tarpeia's actions and death, as Janan points out, are ultimately necessary to the

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[81] See 4.4.69-70 and 4.4.85-86

reconciliation of the Romans and the Sabines.[82]  In this way, Tarpeia evokes the

more traditionally exemplary female characters of Horatia, Lucretia and Verginia,

all of whose deaths brought about necessary political change.  In addition, the

very image of Tarpeia going back and forth between the Sabines and Romans

really emphasizes this fluidity, this sense of existing between established

binaries.  Thus in every sense, Tarpeia embodies the problem of conflicting

identities, and forces the reader to negotiate the movement such identities, and

thus consider her as more than just an anti-exemplum.

   As such, the reader's sense of boundaries, of what is defined as what,

constantly shifts over the course of the poem.  Although the poem itself would

seem to typify Roller's description of exemplary discourse, with the reader

constantly renegotiating his understanding of the character and story, and what

it means, Tarpeia herself occupies so many different categories at once that she

becomes, in essence, the opposite of the anti-exemplary character she is initially

presented as - rather than being defined by one action, her betrayal, she emerges

as a complicated, nuanced character in her own story, one who demonstrates

how unstable the boundaries of traditional Roman categories of identity are.

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[82] See Janan p. 437

## Conclusion

As I have discussed in the preceding two chapters, one of the most striking

features that characterizes Propertius's fourth book is his establishment of

binary, oppositional categories, and his subsequent complication of those

categories through their blending.  This tendency, well established in the corpus

of literary scholarship,[83] can perhaps be understood most broadly in terms of

genre, seen in the blending of elegy and epic.  Articulated as two separate,

competing categories in 4.1 and in Propertius's previous three books, over the

course of the final book, these two categories gradually become more and more

intermingled, as the poems incorporate epic and elegiac elements, confounding

and confusing them.[84]  Of particular note in this regard is the relationship of

Propertius IV to *Aeneid* VIII.  Traces of Vergil can be found throughout this book

of Propertius, and, interestingly, relate to both contemporary (i.e. Augustan) and

mythological events.  These parallels occur most noticeably in 4.1, in which

Propertius's description of the Roman landscape and his method of juxtaposing

past and present recalls Aeneas's first meeting with Evander and his survey of

the future Roman cityscape; in 4.6, where the battle of Actium forms the poem's

central narrative, and thus relates to Actium as described on the shield of

Aeneas; in 4.9, in which Hercules's entry into Rome comments on Vergil's

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[83] See Garani and Richardson for examples
[84] See Garani for more detail

version of the same event.[85]  Indeed, as many scholars have noted, Hercules

adopts the role of an *exclusus amator* in 4.9, and thus a poem that is ostensibly an

aetiology becomes elegiac, with epic Vergilian overtones.  More subtly,

commentators have seen epic connections in even the most "elegiac" of

Propertius IV, those poems being 4.7 and 4.8, the only two poems in the book

that directly deal with Cynthia.  Allison, for instance, notes the resemblance of

Dido and Cynthia in 4.7: both women are dead, their respective lovers are

accused of faithlessness, and the lovers encounter the ghosts of their dead

mistresses.[86]  Specifically, Allison mentions how both women accuse their lovers

of being *perfidus* (Propertius 4.7.13 and Vergil 4.305 and 4.366)*, a characteristic

commonly applied to the mistress, rather than the *amator.[87]*   Allison also notes

how the setting of the encounter between Propertius and Cynthia in 4.7

resembles that of Patroclus's visit to Achilles in the *Iliad*, and how the roles of

Cynthia and Propertius in 4.8 correspond to those of Odysseus and Penelope in

the *Odyssey*.[88]  Allison further discusses Propertius's use of Vergilian language

throughout 4.7 and 4.8, and as such, both in terms of theme and language,

Propertius undermines his own established binary between elegy and epic.

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[85] For a more detailed commentary on 4.9 in general and specifically, its relation to
Vergil, see Welch 2004.
[86] See Allison, p. 332 and her entire article for a much more thorough explanation of
the intertextual relationship between Vergil (specifically Book IV of the Aeneid) and
Propertius, in terms of both language and themes.
[87] See Allison, p. 333
[88] See Allison, p. 332

The category of genre is only one of the many established binaries that Propertius sets up, only to unravel and confuse later. Gender norms, a favorite theme of elegy, are another, notably in 4.9 in the character of Hercules, as he, the model of Greco-Roman virility *par excellence*, adopts feminine characteristics, which confuse and complicate his character, especially keeping in mind Vergil's Hercules and Propertius's own *amator* from his previous books. Indeed, Lindheim argues that Propertius constructs the character of "Hercules so that the hero comes to represent, on an exaggerated scale, the Propertian *amator*, who himself vacillates between 'masculine' and 'feminine' identites."[89] Welch also notes how 4.9 in particular unsettles many categories, including gender identity, imperialism, and historicism, and writes that as a result of these confounding of boundaries, "Propertius's Hercules makes an important contribution to Rome's evolving sense of itself during the transition from Republic to Principate."[90]

As such, thus far, I have attempted to show how exemplarity is another category that Propertius works to complicate throughout his fourth book. The relationship and connection he creates between Cornelia and Cynthia examines the process of understanding *exempla* themselves, and Cynthia's traits call those of Cornelia into question. With Tarpeia, the boundary between good and evil, right and wrong, virgin and wife, Roman and Sabine, friend and enemy, appearance and reality, and wild and civilized are all called into question, as

[89] Lindheim, p. 44
[90] Welch p. 62; also see p. 61

Tarpeia embodies these conflicting traits at the same time.  Thus the audience is constantly forced to question and reevaluate its own judgment of Tarpeia, a character whose betrayal, at least initially, is thought to be the one thing that defines her and so establishes her as an anti-*exemplum*; this is in fact what the narrator of 4.4 sets the audience up to expect with the first lines of the poem. But the character herself refuses to be categorized, and thus Propertius illustrates the inherent difficulties in establishing characteristics of identity.  We are supposed to admire Cornelia's devotion to her husband and children, but Propertius makes that admiration feel unsteady, just as he complicates our supposed revulsion of Tarpeia.  As a result, in recognizing how our own understandings of and reactions to characters change over the course of reading a poem, or reading two poems in tandem, Propertius calls attention to the process of judgment and memory, both key to concepts of exemplary discourse, and how these processes evolve and change over time.  This exemplifies Roller's description of exemplary discourse.  The past, as Propertius constantly reminds his readers, is just as messy as the present, and not necessarily the idealized utopia often presented in Augustan propaganda.  And yet, as scholars even today cannot agree on Propertius's own ideology regarding Augustan politics, he proves that even that seemingly simple category, pro-Augustan and anti-Augustan, is collapsed and rendered problematic.

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