



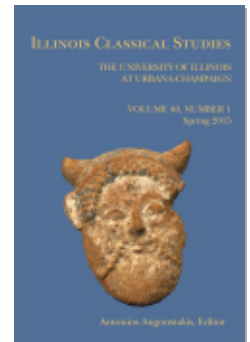
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From *otium* to *imperium*: Propertius and Augustus at Baiae

AMY LEONARD

This article considers the military and political alterations to the land of Campania under Augustus through the lens of Roman elegist Propertius. Styling himself as the Roman Callimachus, Propertius gives voice to the transformation of Magna Graecia under the innovations of the Augustan regime, primarily the location of the imperial fleet at the *lacus Lucrinus* adjacent to the resort at Baiae. Elegies 1.11 and 3.18 accomplish a literary echo of the military might of Rome alongside the development of the imperial cult while mirroring the poet's own self-aware evolution from a poet of love to a poet of state.

Located at the northern reaches of Magna Graecia, the region of Campania around the Bay of Naples is filled with the monuments of a heroic and legendary Greek past.¹

The ancients believed that Lake Avernus was the site of the fabulous Homeric Nekyia and that Heracles had journeyed along the coast with the cattle of Geryon, leaving a massive causeway of his own construction.² Coastal towns like Baiae and Misenum bear the names of Trojan-era sailors, companions of Odysseus and Aeneas.³ When the earliest Romans ventured into these lands, it was first as philhellenes and those seeking to steep their children in Greek culture, though coastal Campania ultimately came to be a place of *otium* for the rich. Roman writers found inspiration in these lands owing to the echoes of Hellenic culture; these were the landscapes, moreover, upon which their patrons carried out the Romanization of southern Italy.

1. I would like to thank Steven Tuck who first suggested this topic to me, the anonymous reviewers for suggesting important threads of discussion and updates to my bibliography, and the editors, Ian Fielding and Carole Newlands, who offered constant, constructive feedback on this, my first published article.

2. Str. 5.4.5–6.

3. McKay (1972) 23. The Greek tradition claims that Baius, helmsman and companion to Odysseus, was buried here.

The quest for leisure spots in Campania by Roman aristocrats dates to the beginning of the second century BCE, when Scipio Africanus, seeking solitude and respite from the obligations of the city, retired to a coastal villa at Liternum where he died in 183 BCE.⁴ With the influx of wealth from recent conquests in the East and alliances with new Roman colonies around the Bay of Naples, wealthy Romans sought properties to the South in ever greater numbers. Indeed, by the early 90s BCE, construction of maritime villas had increased markedly. This “migration” was aided by the expansive real estate opportunities, the availability of goods coming into the harbor at Puteoli, and the bountiful fertility of the volcanic soil.⁵ By the end of the first century BCE, Campania had become the *de facto* vacation spot and playground for the Roman upper class.

A focal point for elite Roman getaways quickly became the vast resort at Baiae, whose healing waters and vapors inspired the development of an expansive bathing complex. A visitor to the region around Baiae today can catch glimpses (and scents) of the healing vapors which so captivated the ancient spirit of healing and relaxation. Pliny the Elder, Statius, and Martial wrote about the hot baths at Baiae resulting from the volcanic springs beneath the complex.⁶ The healing vapors were celebrated and sought by such famous Romans as consul Cn. Cornelius Scipio Hispallus, general and consul C. Marius, and M. Claudius Marcellus, nephew and heir of Augustus.⁷

To focus upon Baiae’s reputation as a retreat for healing is to elide conspicuously its fame as a licentious pleasure ground celebrated in Cicero’s *pro Caelio*, Ovid’s *Ars amatoria*, and the moral letters of Seneca.⁸ The emperor Augustus was never known to have visited Baiae, an unsurprising detail of the historical record, considering his publicly displayed simple tastes, moral legislation, and grim treatment of his granddaughter, Julia.⁹ However, areas surrounding Baiae were highly influenced by Augustan innovations, including the *aqua Augusta*, the temple of Apollo at Cumae, the construction of the *portus Iulius* on the *lacus Lucrinus* adjacent to Baiae, and the relocation of the imperial fleet to Misenum. It is these last two Augustan modifications that make an appearance in the poems of Propertius, specifically 1.11 and 3.18.

4. See Henderson (2004).

5. D’Arms (1970) 1–38.

6. Plin. *Nat.* 31.4–5, Stat. *Silu.* 3.2.17, 3.5.96, Mart. 1.62.4.

7. D’Arms (1970) 1–31.

8. Cic. *Cael.* 28, 25, 28, 49, Ov. *Ars* 1.255–8, Sen. *Ep.* 51.

9. Milnor (2005) 43 notes that Augustus saw the domestic female role as an imperial virtue, one inseparable from civic virtue.

This article offers a close examination of these two poems for literary echoes of Augustan changes to the Campanian landscape.¹⁰ Roman influences on the region were well underway when Augustus turned his particular attention to it, and the literary record under the *princeps* offers a unique perspective as to how these alterations to the area around Baiae reflect imperial policy and cultural change. In summary, I attempt to convey that what once belonged to Campania (i.e., Baiae and its culture) is reflected through the poems of Propertius as indelibly Roman and, more particularly, Augustan.

Born around 50 BCE into a family which lost much of their Umbrian fortune to the land programs of the second triumvirate, Propertius nevertheless received a privileged Roman education. But ultimately he eschewed the life of law and politics to write poetry. Following the publication of his *Monobiblos* in 28 BCE,¹¹ Propertius entered the literary circle of Maecenas, and it can be assumed that the pressure upon him to write poetry celebrating Augustus and his regime steadily increased throughout the composition of his remaining three books.¹² While he successfully avoided the composition of epic poetry, a self-styled Roman Callimachus (3.1.1–2), he managed to paint his elegies onto the landscape of Augustus' world. And when the trials of love failed him as the *materia* of his poetry, he adapted the civic themes of the new regime to his own meter and elegiac style.¹³

In 1.11, an entreaty to Cynthia to avoid the temptations of the resort at Baiae and return to him still a *casta puella*, Propertius manipulates the Baian landscape to evoke images of heroic and legendary achievement:

Ecquid te mediis cessantem, Cynthia, Bais,
qua iacet Herculeis semita litoribus,

10. For the literariness of the Campanian landscape (esp. as treated by Virgil and Statius), see Hinds (2001).

11. Richardson (2006) 7–8. The date of the book is based on its dedication to Tullus, whose uncle was co-consul with Octavian in 33 BCE and proconsul of Asia in 30 BCE. It is assumed that the book was presented to Tullus prior to his mission to the East (1.6).

12. Stahl (1985) 170–71.

13. Stahl (1985) 249–50. Stahl describes the development of the Propertian corpus as follows. Book 1: the poet is helplessly dependent upon Cynthia yet mindful of the family losses during his formative years. Book 2: the poet's superficial reverence for the emperor combines with personal resistance to imperial ideology. Book 3: the poet's isolated resistance to the Zeitgeist results in the first signs of surrender without true conversion. Book 4: the poet's personal resistance gives way to his own desire for contemporary fame through poetic recognition of Augustus' divine connections. See also Hutchinson (2006) 7–21.

et modo Thesproti mirantem subdita regno
 proxima Misenis aequora nobilibus,
 nostri cura subit memores adducere noctes? (Prop. 1.11.1–5)

Does any concern for me enter you, to bring nights mindful of me,
 you idling in the midst of Baiae, Cynthia,
 where the path lies on Hercules' shores,
 marveling that waters only lately situated
 beneath Thesprotus' kingdom are now next to glorious Misenum?¹⁴

Here, Propertius focuses on two important geographic features of the Baian landscape: the *semita* that connected Baiae to Puteoli (the legendary handiwork of Hercules) and the connection of Lake Avernus (*Thesproti . . . regno*) and the waters adjacent to Misenum. These geographic landmarks have been uniformly accepted as referring to the construction of the *portus Iulius* by Agrippa in 37 BCE.¹⁵ The *portus Iulius* was established in response to Sextus Pompey's naval dominance in the western Mediterranean. His aggressive opposition to the second triumvirate included threats to the grain supply in Rome. Octavian enlisted his lifelong friend and military advisor Marcus Agrippa to construct a harbor on the western coast of Italy that could serve as a safe port for training sailors and rowers for the upcoming (and ultimately successful) naval campaign against Sextus Pompey.¹⁶ Before this time, Rome's closest naval station on the western Mediterranean was in Gaul at Forum Iulii. And so it was Agrippa who saw to the construction of a system of channels cut between Lake Avernus and Lake Lucrinus, and then from Lake Lucrinus into the bay alongside Misenum. Such a monumental undertaking by Agrippa created the first port in the Greco-Roman world to be used solely as a war harbor.¹⁷

The opening two distichs of Propertius' poem serve to link Hercules' legendary accomplishment and Agrippa's "Herculean" project at Lake Avernus.¹⁸ Hercules created a barrier between sea and land where none existed before; Agrippa did the opposite by joining the waters of Avernus with the sea near Misenum through a monumental feat of engineering. Hercules' deed, an act of heroic strength, resulted in an unnatural alteration of the coast; Agrippa's construction,

14. I have used Richardson's (2006) edition of Propertius and Mynor's (1969) edition of Virgil; all translations are my own.

15. Camps (1961) 70; Richardson (2006) 176.

16. Powell (2002) 113–18; Welch (2012) 261–76.

17. Starr (1941) 7 notes that Octavian had already abandoned the harbor when he sent Antony's ships to Forum Iulii after the battle of Actium. For a discussion of the form, placement, and type of construction of *portus Iulius*, see Gianfrotta (1996) 65–76.

18. More broadly, on the representation of Hercules' deeds in Campania as similar to those of a Roman general, see Connors in this volume.

both in itself and by association in this poem, is of the same quality.¹⁹ A Greek landmark becomes Roman as the land comes into use for Roman dominance and expansion on the Mediterranean.

The reference to Epirote king Thesprotus (3), whose territories contained the Lake Acherusia and the Acheron and Cocytus rivers, also emphasizes the mythological and Hellenic cast of this landscape. But that these waters once in Epirus, having passed through the underworld and reappeared in Italy at Avernus,²⁰ now flow out to sea in the shadow of Misenum allows Propertius to further Romanize a Greek landscape. Indeed, Propertius' own poetic lineage from Callimachus bears a strong resemblance to this miraculous emergence of Greek waters on Italian soil.

Praise for Agrippa's achievement can be found in contemporary literature, both in Strabo (5.4.5) and Virgil's *Georgics* (2.161–64). Since both Propertius and Virgil enjoyed the patronage of Maecenas, it is to be expected that the two poets shared thematic material related to contemporary events. Yet, the parallel between the texts goes beyond the *portus Iulius* alone:

an memorem portus Lucrinoque addita claustra
atque indignatum magnis stridoribus aequor,
Iulia qua ponto longe sonat unda refuso
Tyrrhenusque fretis immittitur aestus Auernis? (Virg. *G.* 2.161–64)

Or should I recall the harbors and the barriers added to Lucrinus
and the sea resentful with its great shrieking,
where the Julian wave resounds widely from the thrown back sea
and the Tyrrhenian surge is admitted to the Avernian straits?

The reference to Agrippa's harbor construction lies in the section of the *Georgics* known as the *laudes Italiae*, wherein the poet extols the superlative abundance and relative peace of Italy. Omission of the harbor's warlike purpose allows the passage to read more generically as praise for the Italians (i.e., Agrippa and, by extension, Octavian) who constructed it. Virgil portrays Italy as the land of Saturn as he sings his "Ascrean song" (*G.* 2.176), calling to mind Hesiod and the Golden Age myth. Christopher Nappa notes that Virgil's invocation of the Golden Age creates tension between a historical reality (in which wars were necessary) and rhetorical fantasy (a land of continual spring and unusually productive plants and animals). This tension reveals the achievements of Octavian as both reassuring and disturbing, but ultimately necessary.²¹

19. Saylor (1976) 130.

20. Cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 88.

21. Nappa (2005) 84–85.

Just as Virgil adapted a Greek model to envision the Italian landscape of his own day, Propertius looked to his elegiac predecessors to find language to suit his vision of Campania. In 1.11, the poet continues his lament for the distant Cynthia who now herself appears to be enclosed safely in the *lacus Lucrinus*:

atque utinam mage te remis confisa minutis
 paruula Lucrina cumba moretur aqua,
 aut teneat clausam tenui Teuthrantis in unda
 alternae facilis cedere lymphæ manu . . . (Prop. 1.11.9–12)

And would that rather a charmingly small boat delay you,
 relying upon narrow oars, on the Lucrine water,
 or that it hold you enclosed in the shallow waters of Teuthras,
 easily yielding to your alternating hand.

The image of Cynthia rowing herself around the *lacus Lucrinus* calls to mind the recent training of sailors that took place on the same waters. Yet, the military setting is artfully softened by the presence of key stylistic terms of Roman Callimacheanism: *paruus* and *tenuis*, adjectives closely associated with the supposedly lesser genre of elegy.²² Cynthia's swimming arms (*alternæ manu*) in line 12 evoke the meter of elegy with its alternating hexameter and pentameter lines.²³ In addition to these metapoetical occurrences, the use of *facilis* as a calque for the Greek *poetikos*, may refer to the creation of Propertius' own work and an allegorical, if not linguistic, mirroring of Agrippa's *facta* around Lake Lucrinus.²⁴ Agrippa's epic military achievement is thoroughly adapted to the genre of love poetry, and Campania's volcanic pools have been transformed from their mythological associations with the Greek Underworld to the landscape upon which the public wars and private love-affairs of first century BCE Rome took place.

Propertius envisions his mistress separated from the corruption and temptations of Baiae, in the enclosed confines of the Lucrine Lake or in another, unidentifiable, pool nearby, one named for the legendary Mysian king, and thus another connection with the eastern settlers of Magna Graecia.²⁵ Ellen Greene has described this image as one of idealized captivity, where the poet-lover prefers to

22. Commager (1974) 8n12, 11, 46n20–22.

23. Cf. Ov. *Ep.* 15.5, *Fast.* 2.121, and *Tr.* 3.1.11, 3.1.56, 3.7.10.

24. Wray (2003) 235. While Wray's article focuses on Tibullus 1.1, the calque is also found in Virgil's third *Eclogue*, as well as in Propertius 2.1.9, referring to Cynthia's nimble hands on the lyre. Wray suggests a degree of critical blindness on *facilis* that has ignored the broader implications of ancient ecphrasis as an allegory for the poem itself.

25. Camps (1961) 71. Silius Italicus makes Teuthras an inhabitant of Italian Cumae, which was originally founded by settlers from Aeolian Cumae in Mysia; see further Augoustakis in this volume.

imagine what his mistress might be doing rather than fretting over her more likely actions.²⁶ Considering the fact that by this time the lake was not fully enclosed, it seems that Propertius may have been writing retrospectively, imagining the lake as it was prior to the canals and military installations. The stronger imagery here is that of the military setting, supported by the poet-lover's oft-adopted occupation as *miles amoris*,²⁷ and evoked in line 7 of this poem, when the rival is introduced as a *hostis* bearing *simulatis ignibus*.²⁸ The images of Cynthia at peace on the placid waters of the Lucrine Lake, where no enemy can find her, implies another poetic celebration of Agrippa's achievement with the *portus Iulius*, while the tamed landscape simultaneously invites erotic danger and future challenges for the poet-lover. This symbiotic tension is soundly reflected in the assessment by Alison Keith that it is Roman militarism that made the imperial matrix of love, luxury, and leisure possible for poets like Propertius to conceive of and compose their works.²⁹ The naval accomplishments of Agrippa, both at *portus Iulius* and later at Misenum, helped to usher in the *Pax Augusta* and the Golden Age,³⁰ thus Propertius' elevation of the Baian landscape as both danger zone and safe harbor echoes the achievement of Agrippa and the protection afforded by connection with Rome.

The idealized captivity that Propertius wishes for Cynthia in 1.11 cannot, however, be sustained, as we learn in the companion poem 1.12 that his appeal for Cynthia's chastity has failed. Grant Parker notes that travel is inimical to both love and the social order. In a world where male travel is the norm, travel undertaken by a female exposes another of elegy's inversions.³¹ Cynthia's travels, whether to Illyria in 1.8 or to Baiae in 1.11 and 12, form variations on the elegiac inversion of male-female roles. While only 1.8 provides a *propemptikon* against military travel, both are painted with the language of militaristic danger. This is a logical choice for the elegist, as military travel is the natural enemy of a love affair, and even a trip to Baiae cannot be effectively described without accompanying military language. Propertius found a convenient metaphor for danger and safety in the new harbor construction near Baiae. That his appeal ultimately fails has less to do with Agrippa's harbor than with the necessary tension to be maintained in an ongoing elegiac discourse.

26. Greene (1995) 311.

27. Prop. 1.6.29–30.

28. Stahl (1985) 6. Propertius marks a line here between good and evil. The poet-lover's intentions are good and honest, while a rival, or enemy, lover must be held in suspicion.

29. Keith (2008) 148–49. See also Bowditch (2012) 120.

30. McKay (1967) 8.

31. Parker (2006) 89.

And so, Propertius lauds Agrippa, and through Agrippa, Octavian, the new leader of the Roman world.³² It is worth noting that Propertius is the first writer on record to call Octavian by the name “Augustus” as he does in his second book, composed under the patronage of Maecenas.³³ And it is in books 2 and 3 that the poet continues to wrestle with the dominant forces that rule his life—alternately powerful Cynthia and powerful Augustus. Though the poet withstands the pressure to write an epic celebrating Augustus’ martial victories (explicitly in 2.1 and more generally in 2.34), by the time of the composition of book 3, Cynthia has receded into the background, and he has become disillusioned with love. In the absence of this thematic material, Propertius has discovered that in isolating himself from the regime’s official ideology (i.e., his refusal to glorify war), he has abdicated the contemporary fame which he seeks for himself.³⁴

at mihi quod uiuo detraxerit inuida turba
post obitum duplici faenore reddet Honos . . . (Prop. 3.1.21–22)

But that which the envious crowd withholds from me during life
Honor will repay with double interest after my death.

Despite the poet’s announcement that he will adhere to themes of peace, he allows direct praise for Augustus to emerge as he continues to wrestle with imperial policies and his own dependence upon them for his literary success. It is with this in mind that we take a closer look at the next poem and consider its resonances with the Campania of the Augustan age.

Elegy 3.18, the second work of Propertius that uses Baiae as its backdrop, was published in 21 BCE. The poem is the *epicedion* for Augustus’ heir Marcellus who died near the resort in 23 BCE from an illness of some kind, for whose treatment he may have specifically visited the baths. It is agreed that the work is not an expression of private grief, but an official, possibly commissioned, poem that regards the young man’s death as a national tragedy.³⁵ This interpretation seems especially supported when read together with Virgil’s eulogy for Marcellus in *Aeneid* 6 and the historical accounts which describe the public regard for the youth as well as Augustus’ memorializing efforts.³⁶

32. Davis (1977) 50. This praise comes despite the fact that elegy 1.12 makes it clear that Cynthia did not heed his advice and was not protected by the tamed landscape of Agrippa.

33. Prop. 2.10.15.

34. Stahl (1985) 249–50.

35. Cairns (2006) 351; Newman (2006) 346–47.

36. Virg. *A.* 6.860–86; Dio Cass. 53.30.5–6. Augustus gave him a public burial after the customary eulogies, placing him in the tomb he was building, and as a memorial to him finished the theater in Rome whose foundations had already been laid by Caesar and which was now called the theater

Propertius opens 3.18 with echoes of the same geographic features portrayed in 1.11, though, where they once provided the setting for Cynthia's worrisome holiday, they now establish the context for Marcellus' wandering spirit:³⁷

Clausus ab umbroso qua ludit pontus Auerno,
fumida Baiarum stagna tepentis aquae,
qua iacet et Troiae tubicen Misenus harena,
et sonat Herculeo structa labore uia . . . (Prop. 3.18.1–4)

Where the sea plays shut off from shadowy Avernus,
at Baiae's fuming pools of warm water,
and where Misenus, trumpeter of Troy, lies on the sand
and the road built by Heracles' labor resounds . . .

References to the sea near Lake Avernus, the promontory of Misenum, and the Herculean road reiterate the geography in 1.11 and would seem to carry the same references to the military program of Octavian. By this date, however, the *portus Iulius* had been relocated to the harbor at Misenum (ca. 27 BCE), in response to the need for a base on the west Italian coast to balance with Ravenna on the east. While the *portus Iulius* had served well the purpose that led to its construction, the Lucrine Lake silted too quickly and easily. Moreover, Naples and Puteoli were overwhelmed by commercial shipping. Misenum was well located on the west coast, close enough to Rome, not a commercial town, and ideally situated to defend the vital grain routes from Egypt, Africa, and Sicily.³⁸

In this poem, the reference to Misenum in line 3 is to the legendary Trojan Misenus whose untimely death gave the promontory its name; in contrast, 1.11 provides a more generic, less personal reference to "the waters adjacent to noble Misenum." Here, the focus is on a noble youth, the Trojans' trumpeter (according to Virg. *A.* 6.164, the son of the wind-god Aeolus and, therefore, divine) who met an untimely death and was immortalized by this famed landmark, now the home of the *classis Misenensis*. The funeral for this youth features prominently in book six of the *Aeneid* (156–235), and thus the dialogue between the Propertian and Virgilian texts continues. The tragic image of his body lying on the sand (*iacet . . . harena*) evokes the same pathos felt by Aeneas for Priam (*A.* 2.557) and, by extension in this poem, to Marcellus, unjustly slain by a precipitate fate.

of Marcellus. In addition, he ordered that a golden image of the deceased, a golden crown, and a curule chair should be carried into the theater at the *Ludi Romani* and should be placed in the midst of the officials having charge of the games.

37. Camps (1966) 137–39. Multiple references in the poem have led commentators to suggest that the poem was composed before Marcellus' funeral.

38. Starr (1941) 14.

As for the legendary causeway created by Hercules' labor, here it appears to be uninterrupted by Agrippa's canal, resounding with the traffic between Baiae and Puteoli.³⁹ Stephen Heyworth and James Morwood interpret *sonat* of line 4 as the sound of the sea deftly contrasted with the silence of the trumpeter in the hexameter line.⁴⁰ As with Misenus and the massive promontory which bears his name, Hercules left behind a geographical landmark of startling strength, able to withstand the ravages of the coastal sea. Hercules, a heroic and youthful demi-god, was memorialized and ultimately deified for his accomplishments.

Lines 5–6 of the poem announce the presence of yet another deity at Baiae, the great “liberator” Bacchus:

hic ubi, mortales dexter cum quaereret urbes,
cymbala Thebano concrepuere deo . . . (Prop. 3.18.5–6)

Here, when he was propitiously heading for the mortal cities,
cymbals clinked for the Theban god . . .

This otherwise unattested visit to this particular Italian location might have been part of Bacchus' proselytizing tour of the West,⁴¹ but it stands out remarkably in this poem in its pairing with Hercules. Francis Cairns argues that the Augustan poets made conscious efforts to re-integrate Hercules and Bacchus, deities that had been strictly associated with Mark Antony, into a post-Actium consensus.⁴² In 3.17, Propertius contributes to this rehabilitation of Bacchus in a manifesto on wine-production, wine serving as a cure for love.⁴³ His subsequent elegy on the death of Marcellus then appropriately references both Bacchus and Hercules, sons of Jupiter and mortal women who were deified following their triumphs on earth. The oblique reference to Marcellus' divine associations assures those of his uncle who is already celebrated as the “son” of the deified Julius and further rewrites Hercules and Bacchus as precursors of Augustus.

Unlike the Baiae of 1.11, whose introduction brought to mind the safety potentially afforded Cynthia by Agrippa's harbor construction, the associations in this poem lauding Marcellus evoke the young, heroic, god-like mortals of the

39. Richardson (2006) 391 notes that what Propertius says here can no longer be true due to the canal dug by Agrippa. However, the relocation of the harbor to Misenum seems to have allowed the canal to fill again quickly due to rapid silting; see D'Arms (1970) 136–37.

40. Heyworth and Morwood (2011) 286. The authors explain the verb as an echo of Virg. *G.* 2.163.

41. Heyworth and Morwood (2011) 287.

42. Cairns (2006) 366–67. Horace (*Carm.* 1.18) and Propertius (3.17) both work to present Bacchus not as an eastern deity but as an Italian agricultural Bacchus/Liber, stripped of his Antonine associations.

43. Cairns (2006) 369 suggests that 3.17 may have been composed for the *festum poetarum*, an annual event held at the shrine of Bacchus on the Palatine.

legendary past. Thus the opening lines of Propertius' funereal ode set the tone for the apparent apotheosis of Marcellus. Further support for this notion appears in the repetition of *uia* throughout the poem. Beginning with the Herculean road of line 4, carrying over to *cunctis ista terenda uia est* of line 22 and, in the poem's final line, the *humana uia* from which Caesar departed to the heavens, this repetition forms an effective tricolon for the path which Marcellus himself has followed. Under the guidance of the devoted and powerful Octavia, he showed great, heroic promise in his devotion to virtue, courage, and the imperial family:

quid genus aut uirtus aut optima profuit illi
 mater, et amplexum Caesaris esse focos?
 aut modo tam pleno fluitantia uela theatro,
 et per maternas omnia gesta manus?
 occidit, et misero steterat uicesimus annus:
 tot bona tam paruo clausit in orbe dies.
 i nunc, tolle animos et tecum finge triumphos,
 stantiaque in plausum tota theatra iuuent;
 Attalicas supera uestes, atque omnia magnis
 gemmea sint ludis: ignibus ista dabis. (Prop. 3.18.11–20)

What benefit were family and courage for him or the best
 of mothers or that he embraced Caesar's hearthfire?
 Or recently the awnings flowing over a theater so full,
 and all the things achieved by his mother's hands?
 He has died, and the twentieth year stood still for the wretched youth:
 his time included so much good in such a short life.
 Go now, lift up your spirits and fashion triumphs for yourself,
 may whole theaters standing in applause please you,
 outdo Attalic costumes and for your great Games
 let everything be jewel-encrusted—you will throw it on the pyre.

Whatever accomplishments the young Marcellus might have achieved were necessarily cut short by his death. Still his voyage to Spain with Augustus in 25 BCE and his elevation to the office of curule aedile, under which he celebrated the games mentioned above, leave little doubt that he was being groomed for leadership as the likely successor of Augustus.⁴⁴

The next *uia* he travels is the journey of the deceased spirit:

sed tamen huc omnes, huc primus et ultimus ordo:
 est mala, sed cunctis ista terenda uia est.
 exoranda canis tria sunt latrantia colla,
 scandenda est torui publica cumba senis. (Prop. 3.18.21–24)

44. Richardson (2006) 393.

To this place, however, all must come, here first in rank and last;
 it is an evil road but one to be trodden by all.
 each must pray to the dog's three barking throats,
 each must board the grim ferryman's public skiff.

At last, his journey is interrupted by his elevation to the divine realm resulting from his relationship to M. Claudius Marcellus,⁴⁵ Augustus, and Julius Caesar:

qua Siculae uictor telluris Claudius et qua
 Caesar, ab humana cessit in astra uia. (Prop. 3.18.33–34)

Following the Claudian victor of the Sicilian land and
 Julius Caesar, he has departed from the path of man to the stars.

Thus Marcellus has performed the necessary *katabasis*—following in the footsteps of Greek and Roman heroic predecessors and undergoing a triumphant apotheosis. The opening Herculean *uia* and its subsequent repetitions has provided the poet with a succinct geographic metaphor for the life, death, and divine elevation of a member of the Julian family, whose death in the vicinity of Baiae makes this allusion appropriate. By tracing Marcellus' brief but necessary visit to the Underworld, Propertius marks the Campanian landscape with the indelible signs of imperial influence. The parallels with *Aeneid* 6 are important to examine in brief. Virgil, too, celebrates M. Claudius Marcellus, the consul-general in his tour of Roman heroes.⁴⁶ The young Marcellus emerges as a sad shade, yet to be born to his unkind fate. Virgil emphasizes the deeds that might have been accomplished and the widespread lamentations that follow his death,⁴⁷ imbuing Aeneas' *katabasis* with a sense of pathos; only Propertius, however, alludes to Marcellus as a rising star of the Julian clan in his laudatory, optimistic conclusion. Both poets situate this contemporary event in the lands of Campania, thereby praising the imperial family through their association with mythic and heroic traditions and expressing a growing imperial influence over the lands south of Rome.

It should be noted that Propertius had further motivation to suggest the greatness of Agrippa, despite the fact that the harbor at Baiae was no longer in use. At the time of Marcellus' death, Agrippa was married to Marcella, the sister of the deceased youth. Praise for the powerful brother-in-law of an imperial family member would not have been out of place. Furthermore, Agrippa subsequently

45. Richardson (2006) 394. M. Claudius Marcellus was best remembered for winning the *spolia opima* from Gallic chief Virdomarus. He was consul five times and campaigned in Sicily during the Second Punic War, taking Syracuse in 211 BCE. Propertius is the only author to describe his translation into heaven.

46. Virg. *A.* 6.855–86.

47. Virg. *A.* 6.861–84.

married Marcellus' widow, Augustus' daughter Julia, and became the natural successor to the *princeps*. Such an honorific allusion to Agrippa's great achievement would have been approved by Maecenas who allegedly arranged for the marriage to Julia.⁴⁸

On whether or not Propertius was fully committed to Augustus, scholars remain divided. The persona of the elegist was necessarily anti-Augustan (opposed to war, reluctant to marry, avoiding social and civic obligations) as these were the expectations of the genre. When Maecenas invited and accepted Propertius into his literary circle, he would have been well aware of the conventions of elegy, just as the poet would have been aware of the expectations of his new patron. Cairns argues that Propertius' value to Maecenas and Augustus lay in his talents as displayed in the *Monobiblos*. Were the poet to discard his elegiac persona, it would have reduced his value as a literary acquisition.⁴⁹ The tensions between elegiac *nequitia* and imperial doctrine are strongest in the second book, where we find Propertius using the excesses of his persona to indirectly promote Augustus. Consider his defective attack on marriage in 2.7, his declaration in 2.16 that erotic servitude led to Mark Antony's loss at Actium and the outbreak of civil war in the first place, and the visit to the Temple of Palatine Apollo in 2.31 that delayed the poet from his mistress.⁵⁰

It is in book 3 that these tensions begin to work themselves out as Propertius settles into the literary circle more comfortably. Elegy 3.4 celebrates Augustus' military success against Parthia as a foregone conclusion, despite the fact that the poet himself will have naught to do with the campaign beyond watching from the sidelines in the company of his mistress. The poet continues as a spectator of the triumphs of the *princeps* in poem 3.11 as he vituperates Cleopatra and celebrates Caesar's victory. The lament for Marcellus in 3.18 contributes strongly to the trajectory of imperial praise, both in its promotion of the divine ruler cult and in the praises for a would-be successor to Augustus.

Such a transparently pro-Augustan reading of poem 3.18 would suggest that the needs of Propertius had changed in the years since the publication of the *Monobiblos*. The focus is not on the achievement of an Augustan general and the military exploits which solidified Augustus' power, but on the greatness of the imperial family and their divine associations through their Julian ancestor. Omitting the name of the deceased youth and naming instead his adoptive uncle

48. Cairns (2006) 352; cf. Dio Cass. 54.6.5.

49. Cairns (2006) 322.

50. Miller (2009) 205. Miller suggests that the *total* absence of Octavian ideology from the poem demonstrates that Propertius "sidesteps" rather than "challenges" the official message of Apollo's new temple.

(and father-in-law) in line 12 and his divine ancestor in the final line redirect the focus of the poem to the immortal aspirations of the Julian family and the formation of the imperial cult while Augustus was still alive.⁵¹ Steve Ostrow argues that the longstanding presence of Greek culture in the region was instrumental in welcoming the notion of imperial divinity early on. Settlers from Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria, Judea, and Arabia had long practiced ruler worship in their home countries. The concept of a Roman ruler cult thus found support and even enthusiasm among the people of Campania, which makes the setting of Propertius' poem all the more remarkable and appropriate.⁵²

Prior to the Augustan age, the region of Campania surrounding the Bay of Naples served as a playground for Romans to spend their *otium*. Augustus himself owned villas at Capreae, Surrentum, Pausilypon, Baiae, and Nola, and appears to have frequented the region, though not merely for purposes of strict leisure. John D'Arms argues that the scope of Augustan innovations in Campanian cities establishes a more appropriate context for the emperor's frequent visits to the south.⁵³ Coastal towns like Misenum and Baiae, once sought as prime real estate for luxurious villas became, under Augustus, the headquarters of the western imperial navy and protectors of the vast harbor at Puteoli, "the single city in Italy most vital to the imperial economy"⁵⁴ due to the vast imports of Egyptian grain arriving there.

The Campanian landscape was immediately and profoundly affected by the political upheavals surrounding the rise of Augustus. Baiae and its environs, an area replete with divine and legendary monuments of early Magna Graecia, are soundly Romanized by a poet of the Augustan age, under the patronage of the imperial household. Presenting himself as a Roman Callimachus, turning the style of Greek poetic forms into highly stylized Roman elegies expressing contemporary Roman events, Propertius accomplishes a significant transformation in two works written with a legendary Greek setting. Elegy 1.11, published after the battle of Actium yet prior to Octavian's elevation to Augustus, celebrates Rome's emergence as a naval power through the accomplishments of Agrippa,

51. Ostrow (1985) 74. The existence of imperial cult sites in Campanian towns is well attested, and the abundance of inscriptional evidence from Misenum and Puteoli suggests that the work of the *Augustales* in those towns took place during the Augustan age.

52. Ostrow (1985) 88. Ostrow notes that the eastern settlers on the Bay of Naples came from countries where ruler worship had been entrenched for centuries if not millennia, so that enthusiasm for the Imperial cult among the people of Campania was to be expected.

53. D'Arms (1970) 79.

54. D'Arms (1970) 81. See also Frederiksen (1984) 330–36 for a discussion of Puteoli as a focal point for Roman economic and social interests in the south.

having adapted the lands of Heracles and Trojan settlers for a modern, imperial cause. In 3.18, Propertius emphasizes the divine status of the Julian family following the establishment of the Principate, yet he does so in a distinctly Campanian setting, allowing Marcellus to perform a heroic *katabasis* in the lands of Avernus. In these poems, the Roman elegist Propertius manages to give voice to two vitally significant features of the emerging empire: military might and imperial divinity. The fact that these two themes can be evoked so effectively in the lands of Campania transforms this region from a land of *otium* for the Roman elite into a paradigm for the *imperium* of the five centuries to come.

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