COMMENTARY

The second poem (xxxiv b) was written soon after the death of Gallus (cf. modo in l. 91), probably in 26 or 25 B.C.

XXXIV A

1–24. ‘My beloved has almost been stolen from me by a friend. Love breeds strife everywhere. Witness the stories of Paris and Medea. And had you, Lynceus, the heart to touch her? Had she not proved true, could you have lived with such a crime upon your conscience? Yet I will pardon you in the belief that wine led your tongue astray. But your mask of stern morality shall never cheat me. All the world knows how good a thing is love.’

1. iam credat (Nf). ‘Why after this should any man trust his mistress to the care of Love?’ non credit (FlP) is meaningless, but may possibly conceal nunc credit (Postgate), which makes the statement more general and less forcible. Amori, though intelligible, is strange; and amico (5, Beroaldus) may be the true reading. On the other hand Amori leads up naturally to pollut ille deus (5).


9. Lynceus. Unknown from any other source. For his leanings as a poet see 27–42 and 51–4. mean ... curam. ‘My beloved.’

15–16. socium corporis (O) is incredible. The simplest correction is the interchange of socium (15) with dominum (16) (Cornelissen, Housman). A less likely alternative is to read corpus for pectus in 13 and pectoris for corporis in 15 (Postgate).

19–20. solus. ‘When I am alone.’ aemulor umbras. ‘I am jealous of my own shadow.’ The normal meaning of aemulor with the acc. is ‘to emulate’, the dat. being used when it means ‘to be jealous of’. quod nil est. ‘A thing of naught!’ nullo (Heinsius). stulto (O) is a mere slip due to the neighbourhood of stultus.

21. remitto. ‘I pardon.’ cp. Plaut. Most. 1169. For the indic. in indirect question after cur, see on II. xvi. 29–30, and cp. Varro, L.L. viii. 69; Cat. lxx. 10.

23. ruga. The wrinkled brow marking the prude or pedant who disapproves of love; cp. Cic. Red. in Sen. vii. 15.

XXXIV B

25–58. Lynceus is a convert to love and I am glad. What avails your philosophy, your didactic, epic, or dramatic poetry? Quit the buskin and join the dances of love. Sing of your own passion under my guidance. Girls
care nothing for didactic verse. See how I, poor and of no high birth, lord it in the revel by virtue of the talents of which you make so light.'

The theme is awkwardly developed, and it is possible that a couplet has been lost after 38. See on 33-44.

25. seros ... amores. A general statement without any special reference to Cynthia.

27. Socraticus. Platonic philosophy, especially ethics, since rerum uias points clearly to physical philosophy.

29. Erechthei (‘Athenian’) can only refer to Aeschylus in view of line 41. It is clear that Lyceus wrote drama; it is probable that he wrote epic as well; cp. the reference to Homer and Antimachus (45), both of whom are associated with poems on the Theban legend from which the incidents of 37-40 are drawn; similarly the incidents from the legend of Hercules (33-6) had been treated by many epic poets, notably Pisander and Panyasis (cp. Kinkel, Ep. Gr. Fr. i, pp. 248-63; for other poets cp. 212-15). It is possible, however, to regard these references as indicating that Lyceus meditated tragedies (1) on the theme of Sophocles’ Trachiniae, cp. on 33 and 35, (2) on those of Aeschylus’ Septem contra Thebas and a lost play dealing with the death of Archemorus (see below). But the special details selected for mention are suggestive less of tragedy than of epic, in which they would play a more important part. lecta (O) would naturally mean ‘the reading of the songs of the Erechthean bard’. But it is rather colourless, and Erechthei would be the better for a noun to support it. Hence it is possible that plectri (Palmer) may be the true reading.

30. uester. Sc. whom you and your friends admire. senex does not allude to the age of the poet, but is used = ‘ancient master’. Cp. Stat. S. I. ii. 253 Callimachus senex; I. i. 102 Atticus ... senior (see Vollmer’s note).

31. satius. For the rare use of satius with a verb other than sum cp. Varro. R.R. I. ii. 26 satius dicas. memor emus (Np). It is hard to attach any meaning to memor, though it is possible (see Barber, C.R., xlvi, p. 127) that we may have an allusion to some passage in Philetas or his contemporaries in which he was called μηθύων. Merops (see App. Crit.) = Coss is the least unlikely emendation suggested. Merops was king of Cos and either father or son of Cos, the eponymous hero; see Steph. Byz. s.v.; Hesych. s.v. Méropes; Die Inschr. von Olymp. 295-6, no. 160, where Cos is called Méropos νήσας; Quint. VIII. vi. 71 Meropas qui in insula Coo dicuntur habiisse. Those who regard musis memor emus (FLPr) as nearer the truth have supported such corrections as meliorem (Scaliger), musam leuior emus ... Philetas (Santen), &c. The latter would balance non inflati in the next line, but is neither very impressive nor convincing. musis. ‘In your song.’ Philitian. Philetas of Cos, usually Philitas in O (cp. III. i. 1; iii. 52; IV. vi. 3)—the correct form; see J. U. Powell, Coll. Alex., p. 90. Quintilian ranks him as second only to
Callimachus among elegiac poets. Only a few fragments of his work survive; see Powell, l.c. and Introd. pp. xlv sqq.

32. non inflati. See on II. i. 40. somnia. An allusion to the opening of the \textit{Aetia}, where Callimachus seems to have said that the legends contained in his book were told him in a dream by the Muses on Mt. Helicon; cp. \textit{A.P.} vii. 42 and Introd., pp. xl sqq.

33-40. Propertius warns him that, though he write on the deeds of Hercules or of the Seven against Thebes, neither will help him in his love. But while 33–6 refer to incidents in the life of Hercules, and 37–8 to the Theban legends, the main clause (39–40) mentions only the latter. It is possible that a couplet has been lost indicating the futility of singing the deeds of Hercules. As the text stands there is a lack of symmetry.

33–4. rursus. 'Afresh.' Acheloi. The Achelous in likeness of a bull wrestled with Hercules for the possession of Deianira and had a horn broken in the conflict; cp. Soph. \textit{Tr.} 9–21, 497; Apollod. II. vii. 5; Ov. \textit{M.} ix. 1–88. fractus. 'Vanquished by love.'

35–6. 'And how the deceitful wave of Maeander wanders in the Phrygian plain and perplexes his own channels.' The allusion is obscure; but probably refers to the loves of Hercules and Omphale, queen of Lydia. Cp. Ov. \textit{H.} ix. 55 Maeandrus, terris totiens errator in isdem, | qui lassas in se saepes rerorquies aquas, | uidit in Herculeo suspensa monilia collo (sc. in his service of Omphale when he wore a woman's dress). Cp. III. xi. 17–20; Soph. \textit{Tr.} 247 sqq.; Apollod. II. vi. 3; Ov. \textit{H.} l.c. errat . . . decipit. For the Indic. see on II. xvi. 29–30.

37–8. Arion . . . Archemori. Hypsipyle, having fled from Lemnos, became the nurse of Archemorus, the young son of Lycurgus and Eurydice, and left her charge to point out a spring near Nemea to the army of the Seven against Thebes. On her return she found the child slain by a serpent. The serpent was killed, and the Nemean games established in honour of the dead boy. Arion, the horse of Adrastus, was gifted with human speech and was victorious at the games. tristis (O) would imply that the horse showed his sorrow either by weeping or by lamenting in human speech (cp. Hom. \textit{II.} xix. 407). But the fact that there is no record of such an incident, coupled with the abnormal accumulation of adjectives (\textit{uocalis, tristis, victor}) is suspicious, and it is possible that we should read tristia (Heinsius), which is, however, rather colourless. The only detailed account of the legend is that of Statius (\textit{Th.} iv. 716 sqq.; v. 505 sqq.; vi. 301 sqq.). But the theme was treated by Aeschylus (\textit{Trag. Gr. Fr.} Nauck (ed. 2), p. 49), by Euripides in his \textit{Hypsipyle}, and presumably by other Greek writers on the Theban legend.

39–40. The opening words cannot be restored with certainty. \textit{Amphiarœæ non prosint saeâ} (Itail) is possible, but \textit{Amphiarea tibi non prosint} (Postgate) and \textit{Amphiarea nihil prosint tibi} (Rothstein) provide attractive alternatives. The adjective \textit{Amphiareus} derives from the name-form \textit{Ἀμφιάρης} (cp. Pind.
Nem. ix. 24; Euphor. Coll. Alex. (J. U. Powell), p. 36, Ἀμφιδόρεται λοετρά. Amphiaraus, a prophet chief who foresaw his own doom (see on II. xvi. 9), was swallowed up by the earth as he fled in his chariot. Cp. Pind. Nem. ix. 24 and x. 8; Eur. Suppl. 925 sqq.; Stat. Th. vii. 789-823. Capanes Capanes was struck down by a thunderbolt for boasting that he would capture Thebes in despite of Zeus; cp. Aesch. Sept. 423 sqq.; Eur. Phoen. 1172 sqq.; Suppl. 496 sqq.

41. et. If in the above lines the reference has been to Epic, et will introduce a fresh rebuke: ‘and cease from your imitations of Aeschylus’; i.e. drama is as bad as epic. If, on the other hand, the reference has been to drama, this couplet will deal with dramatic style as apart from dramatic themes. But the sense is somewhat strained and obscure on either interpretation, and it is possible that desine et has crept in from 42 and has taken the place of some phrase such as quid iuvat. coturno. Tragic style; for this metaphorical use of coturnus (‘buskin’) cp. Virg. E. viii. 10; Hor. O. II. i. 12; Quint. x. i. 68.

43. angusto . . . torno. ‘To shut in your verses upon a narrow lathe’; i.e. to write short elegies instead of drama or epic. Cp. Hor. A.P. 441 male tornatos incudi reddere versus; Gell. ix. 8 sententiam . . . deteruntam.

45-6. For the epics of ‘Homer’ and Antimachus on the Theban legend, see Kinkel, op. cit., pp. 9-13 and 273-308. Their loves are recorded in the long fragment of Hermesianax (Coll. Alex. (J. U. Powell), pp. 98 sqq.). Homer fell in love with Penelope and went to Ithaca to see her (29, 30), while Antimachus in grief for his beloved Lyde ‘filled his books with lamentation for her’ (41-6); a reference to the poem (in at least two books) entitled ‘Lyde’ in which he recounted the love-tragedies of earlier days (Plut. Consol. Apoll. 106 b). recta. ‘Straight’, ‘shapely’. Cp. Hor. S. I. ii. 123 candida rectaque sit.

47-54. Müller proposed the transposition of 47-50 with 51-4; this has two advantages: it brings harum next to puella, while nobis (50) is picked up by aspice me. But the order given by the MSS. is perfectly intelligible without transposition and free from any serious objection. Cp. on I. xv. 25-32.

48. cornua. Acc. of part concerned dependent on haeserit.

50. tamen must be taken with trux; ‘fierce though you are, yet’, &c.

52. fraternis . . . equis. ‘Or why the moon’s eclipse depends on her brother’s steeds.’ Cp. Virg. G. ii. 478 lunaque labores; Ov. Am. II. v. 38 cantatae luna laborat equis. It is the obscuration of the horses of the sun that causes the eclipse; for this extension of the causal abl. cp. Virg. G. iv. 484 Ixionii uento rosa constitit orbis; E. ii. 26 cum placidum uentus staret mare.

53-4. The text as printed gives the reading of O (erumpnas om. N); no certain emendation is possible. aliquis sedet arbiter undas (Jacob) is as probable as any, though aliquis rest arbiter undas (Munro) is closer; it is hard, however, to believe in the prosaic re est, which is not needed after aliquis. For
COMMENTARY

arbiter cp. III. xix. 27. Alternatively aliquid restabimus undas (Wassenberg) is possible. aliquid restabit arenas (Anon. ap. Burman) is neat, but hardly explains the corruption. si ... si. For si after quaero cp. Liv. XXIX. xxv. 8 quaesitut si aquam ... impossest; a colloquialism for num, which is found not infrequently. For the indicative restabit see on II. xvi. 29-30 and cp. 21, 36 (above).


57-8. mixtas. Cp. Virg. E. x. 55 mixtis lustrabo Maenalae nymphis. eleuor. ‘Wherefore I am despised by you’; cp. II. xxxiii. 44.

59-66. ‘For me the langours of love! For Virgil Epic! Even now something greater than the Iliad is springing to birth.’ 67-76. ‘You sing of the joys of pastoral life and love in your Eclogues.’ 77-80. ‘You rival Hesiod in your Georgics and make music worthy of Apollo himself.’ 81-4. ‘None the less these songs of love that I sing will be unwelcome to none, and you have proved yourself a true swan in love’s music, not (as once you styled yourself) a tuneless goose.’ 85-94. ‘Like songs of love were sung by Varro, Catullus, Calvus, and Gallus, and I hope to find my place of praise among them.’

59-61. Vergilium (Virgilium 5) is the simplest solution of the difficulty presented by me iuvet ... P(u)rgilio (O). The alternative is to read with Housman mi lubet ... posito ... Vergilio. quem ... deus. Cp. I. ix. 29. custodis ... Phoebi. Apollo had a temple at Actium, and it was to his protection that Augustus attributed his victory. See on II. xxxi (Introd. note) and IV. vi. 15 sqq. The allusion is presumably to the description of Actium in A. viii. 671 sqq.

63-4. A clear reference to the opening lines of the Aeneid.


67-76. The change to the second person is most abrupt. It is not improbable that we should assume that a transitional couplet, containing such a vocative (sc. Maro), has been lost after 66; but cp. on II. ix. 15. Propertius takes amatory details from the Eclogues and from Virgil’s models, Theocritus and Meleager, and combines them as he likes; cp. Hubaux, Le Réalisme dans les Buc. de Virgile, pp. 67-8.

67-8. Galaes. A river entering the sea at Tarentum, of which there is no mention in the Eclogues. Probably a vague reminiscence of G. iv. 125, where Virgil describes the garden of the Corycium senex. But Thyrsis and Daphnis are Arcadians from Ecl. 7, a poem into which, however, the Mincius and Hybla intrude themselves! harundinibus. The Pan-pipes, worn by the player’s lips.

69-70. Here again Propertius’ memory is at fault. Cp. E. iii. 70 quod potui, puer silvestri ex arbores lecta, | aurea mala decem misi. The confusion arises from the fact that in the corresponding passage in Theocritus (iii. 10) the
gift is sent to Amaryllis. haedus. Here again he has in mind Theocr. iii. 34. In Virgil (E. ii. 40) capreoli, not haedi, are offered, and again to a boy. impressis. 'Pressed'; sc. 'fresh from the udder which it has sucked'.

72. Cp. the lamentation of Tityrus in E. i. 32 nec spes libertatis erat nec cura peculi, quamvis multa meis exiret victima saeptis, pinguis et ingratae premeretur caseus urbi, non umquam grauis acre domum mihi dextra redibat. When the offerings are so small and cheap, even the unhappy Tityrus may sing to such a mistress; he will not be ruined even if rejected. huic = puellae, to be supplied from amores. It must be remembered also that Virgil uses Tityrus' name to conceal his own identity, which gives special point to the second pers. mercaris; see Serv. ad Ecl. i. i.

73-6. Cp. E. ii. 1 formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin. Here again, according to Servius ad loc., Virgil is Corydon and Alexis = Alexander, a slave boy of Asinius Pollio. This and this only can give the key to the next couplet. ille = Corydon-Virgil. The sense will then be 'Though he is tired of pastoral song, and his pipe is mute, he is praised among the nymphs of easy virtue.' i.e. his lighter songs are read by such as Cynthia. For faciles . . . Hamadryadas, cp. E. iii. 9 sed faciles nymphae risere.


81-2. haec cannot refer to the Georgics or to Virgil's work as a whole, since it is clearly picked up by haec quoque (87) which refers to the poetry of love. We have therefore a reference to erotic poetry in general (among which of course is included the work of Propertius himself); the allusion of hic (83) will be the same, with special reference to the Eclogues. The digression to the Georgics (77-80) forms a clumsy interruption. There is, however, no remedy, save the transference of 77-80 to follow 66 (Ribbeck, Heydenreich), an attractive remedy but one which dangerously weakens the force of tamen (81). The argument is therefore: 'And yet (though Virgil's music in his greater poems is beyond compare and worthy of Apollo himself), songs of love will find a ready public, and Virgil himself has won glory in this sphere (sc. in the Eclogues), despite the fact that he was pleased to disparage himself (sc. as a goose among swans') (83-4).

83-4. A clear allusion to E. ix. 35 nam neque adhuc Vario videor nec dicere Cinna | digna, sed argutos inter strepere anser olores, where Virgil, imitating Theocritus (vii. 39), deprecates his own talents in comparison with those of Varius and Cinna, and ranks himself with the poetaster Anser. Of the general sense of the passage there can be no doubt: 'Virgil too has won distinction in the themes of love as sung in the Eclogues, and has proved himself a swan, not a goose.' But the readings of the MSS. yield no sense: sc. nec minor his animis (animi FL) aut sim minor ore canorus (minor . . . canorus om. N). The simplest correction is that of Housman, who reads hic animis, ut sit minor ore, 'And the melodious swan, displaying equal genius in
these themes, though less stately diction, has not retired with the tuneless strain of a goose.'

85–6. haec quoque picks up haec in 81. Varro of Atax, born 82 B.C. and famous for his translation of the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius (Ov. Am. I. xv. 21; Quint. x. i. 87; Stat. S. II. vii. 77; cp. perfecto Iasone), also wrote poems in honour of his mistress Leucadia (cp. Ov. Tr. ii. 439 is quoque Phasiacas Argon qui duxit in undas / non potuit Veneris furta tacere sua). 89. Calui. Cp. II. xxv. 4. Like his friend Catullus, he is termed doctus, as a master of the new technique and an imitator of the learned poets of the Hellenistic age, and like Catullus he wrote both epic (in his Io) and erotic verse. His wife Quintilia died young, and he wrote an elegiac poem lamenting her death; a pentameter, which probably belongs to this poem, is preserved by Charisius G.L.K. i. 101, 13; cp. also Cat. 96. He seems also to have written other love-poems; cp. Ov. Tr. ii. 431 par fuit exigui similique licentia Calui, / detexit uaris qui sua furtam modis.

91–2. Gallus. Cornelius Gallus (born 70 B.C.), the founder of Roman Elegy, was appointed praefectus of Egypt in 30 B.C., but having incurred the displeasure of his friend Augustus by his arrogance, committed suicide in 26 B.C. (Dio liii. 23). He wrote four books of elegies entitled Amores (cp. Serv. ad Ecl. x. i and Skutsch, Aus Verg. Frühzeit, pp. 23 sqq.), in honour of his mistress Lycoris (cp. Ov. Am. I. xv. 29; Tr. ii. 445; Virg. E. x. 2 and 22). Her real name was Cytheris, under which she is familiar as the mistress of M. Antonius; cp. Serv. ad Ecl. x. 2; Cic. Phil. II. xxiv. 58, &c. formosa . . . Lycoride. A bold abl. of cause, going closely with vulnera; cp. the somewhat similar abl. in IV. xi. 96 prole mea Paulum sic iuuet esse senem. quam (O) 'How many a wound of love that fair Lycoris dealt did Gallus, dead of late, lave in the waters of the nether world!' qui (S) has been widely adopted on the ground that the point is not that Gallus was a lover, but that he wrote love-songs as well. But the reading of the MSS. gives variety and beauty, while no Roman reader could mistake its meaning. Further, qui is slightly awkward, since confessus est must be supplied from confessa est pagina (89). As a possible parallel to the present passage Rothstein cites Euphorion (Collect. Alex., p. 38) Κώκυτος μοῦνος ἄφιξεν παῦσαν 'Adωνιν.

LIBER TERTIVS

I

Propertius puts forward his claim to be the first Roman to follow in the steps of Philetas and Callimachus. His songs may not reap their full reward in an age of war, but none the less his immortality is assured. A prologue poem. I–2.

Callimachi Philetæ, Ovidii