EKPHRASIS, DIGRESSION AND ELEGY: THE PROPERTIUS' SECOND BOOK[1]

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ABSTRACT: Since Lachmann's edition (1816), there have been many discussions on the extent of Propertius' second book of Elegies. Fundamentally, nowadays, we observe two trends in this respect: one that understands that Propertius' elegies must be divided only into four books; and another, less conservative, which argues that the second book is too long, and for this reason this book would be a conflation of 2A and 2B. In this paper, I support the presupposition of the division of Book 2 into two books, by arguing that Lyne's (1998a) thesis on it is very appropriate. I understand that the elegies in Books 1 and 2 are marked by a *narratio a persona*, *Cynthia*. I consider the initial elegy of Propertius' Book 2B, 2.12, as a digression, which both recapitulates the central theme of the first two books and presents a broader poetic program than that which is presented in the previous elegies. Furthermore, I intend to observe the ekphrastic features of this digression in order to support Lyne's thesis by adding a new argument. Thus, 2.12, besides being a programmatic elegy, is also a highly innovative piece in terms of argumentation, since it presents two rhetorical mechanisms: *digressio* and *ekphrasis*.

KEYWORDS: Propertius; book two; elegy 2.12; book division; *ekphrasis*; digression.

ÉCFRASE, DIGRESSÃO E ELEGIA: O SEGUNDO LIVRO DE PROPÉRCIO

RESUMO: Desde a edição de Lachmann (1816), houve muitas discussões sobre a extensão do segundo livro de elegias de Propércio. Basicamente observamos, hoje em dia, duas tendências a este respeito: uma que entende que as elegias de Propércio devem ser divididas apenas em quatro livros; e outra, menos conservadora, que argumenta ser o segundo livro muito

extenso e, por esse motivo, seria uma fusão de dois livros, o 2A e o 2B. Neste artigo, apoio o pressuposto da divisão do Livro 2 em dois livros, argumentando que a tese de Lyne (1998a) é muito apropriada. Entendo que as elegias nos Livros 1 e 2 são marcadas por uma narração *a persona*, Cynthia. Considero a elegia inicial do Livro de Propécio 2B, 2.12, como uma digestão, que recapitula o tema central dos dois primeiros livros e apresenta um programa poético mais amplo do que o apresentado nas elegias anteriores. Além disso, pretendo observar as características ecfrástica desta digressão para apoiar a tese de Lyne, adicionando, dessa maneira, um novo argumento. Assim, 2.12, além de ser uma elegia programática, também é uma peça deveras inovadora em termos de argumentação, uma vez que apresenta dois mecanismos retóricos: *digressio* e *ékphrasis*.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Propércio; livro 2; elegia 2.12; divisão do livro; écfrase; digressão.

I. Introduction

Roman elegiac poetry draws on two compositional traditions: the first is poetic, and includes aspects such as *stanza*, *meter*, poetic genre, subject; and the second is rhetorical, and encompasses *loci communes*, *ethos* and *fides*.[2] In Propertius' elegies, it is important to observe that not only does the poet rely on the above mentioned traditions (as other elegists do), but he also represents Cynthia as a poetic character who provides the thread that sutures the narrative (*narratio a persona*). Thus the elegies of this Augustan poet, as far as his *amor* for Cynthia is concerned, bring to light the argumentative capacities by which he transports the audience's mind to a highly emotional state. After all, he says: "Cynthia was the first; she caught me with her eyes and made me miserable".[3] Specifically with regards to the rhetorical aspect of Propertius' poetry, one feature especially needs to be singled out: digression. This Propertian tool unites the second portion of book 2 with the first, for in both of them love is the narrative's subject matter.

One aspect that must be taken into consideration is the significance of the name 'Cynthia'. Many scholars agree that Cynthia is, at the same time, the central character and the title of Propertius's *tetrabiblos*. Therefore, she is, at the same time, an important poetic *character* in books 1, 2A e 2B[4] and she can also be considered as a metaphor for the poetry itself. In this sense, the editorial tradition offers us Cynthia as Propertius' book's title; after all her name is the first word in the first line of the first elegy of the first book, signalling, therefore, her importance in the collection. Maria Wyke (2002, 23) has argued: "The title Cynthia appears only as the text looks back at the initial poems of the corpus and draws Cynthia-centred erotic discourse to an apparent close. Far more frequently the first-person authorial narrator speaks of love without specifying a beloved, and poetic eroticism takes on a less personal mode." Hence the topos of the beloved's capacity to captivate is right at the

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[2] Reinhard (2006).

[3] Prop. 1.1.1. Translated by Heyworth, 2007, p. 517.

[4] We do not forget that Cynthia appears in the third and forth books too, but she does not have the same function. Prop. 3.21.9; 3.24.3; 3.25.6; 4.1.140; 4.7.3; 4.7.85; 4.8.15; 51; and 63.

beginning of Propertius' first book of elegies. But the next book starts with a consideration of her role in the practice of writing. The elegiac man is now explicitly lover and writer, the elegiac woman both beloved and narrative material.

Despite the fact that Wyke does not agree that book two is divided in two halves, she does notice a narrative structure linking elegies 2A.10, 2A.11, 2B.12 and 2B.13,[5] however she does not identify in this narrative structure a modification in Cynthia's characterization that could determine changes in the editorial structure between Books 1 and 2. So, although Wyke acknowledges the existence of Cynthia as *scripta puella* from 2A.10 onwards (I understand that the *scripta puella* is essentially different from the *amata puella*, constructed as object of praise in Book 1 and deconstructed from 2A.1 onwards as object of vituperation), she refuses to acknowledge a new editorial structure, which, in my view, is connected to these transformations of the poetic *character*. Therefore, I argue that both the transformation of Cynthia's ethos between Books 1 and 2A and her new significance in 2B mark a division of books, that is: Book 1 is in praise of Cynthia, Book 2A is where Cynthia is vituperated, and Book 2B is the book of Cynthia as poetry or as reference to the love for a woman.

Álvarez Hernández presents an argument that supports my hypothesis, since the matter of the elegies turns from love in youth to a discussion on poetics or metapoetics. He suggests that between elegies 2A.10 and 2B.13 there is a significant alteration on the focus of these elegies, because 2A.10 mentions the foot of Mount Helicon (*Permessus*[6]) whereas 2B.13 indicates the *Ascraeum … nemus*[7] at the top of the mount. This suggests a change of tone, from low to high. Fernandez also argues: "this could be interpreted as a meaningful change in Propertius' programmatic thinking and would be a strong argument for dividing the transmitted version of book 2 into book 2A (including 2.10) and 2B (including 2B.13)."[8] Berry, in his turn, complements this idea by showing that the Callimachaean metaphor, to a certain extent, anticipates the change of tone that is consolidated from Book 3 onwards (in 3.1 and 3.3), but which had already been announced in 2A.10. It seems to me that this indication also determines a transformation of Cynthia's significance.[9] In 2A.10, in fact, Propertius feigns an alteration of genre: *aetas prima canat Veneres,/ extrema tumultus: bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est* - Let the first age sing Venuses, the last disorder: I shall sing wars, since my girl is written.[10] At first glance, we could think that Propertius is about to abandon love elegy in favour of epic poetry, but I understand that the change is not of genre, but of the nature of the poetic *character*, who is no longer a symbol of a juvenile love but actualizes a new idea of poetry, adequate to maturity: the *puella scripta*, different from what Wyke suggests.[11] Mader, for instance, says that the key to understanding these

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[5] Wyke, 2002, p. 46-71; 1987, p. 47-61.
[6] Prop. 2A.10.26.
[7] Prop. 2B.13.4.
[8] Álvarez Hernández, A. R., 2010, p. 112.
[9] Berry, 2012, p. 3-4.
[10] Prop. 2A.10. 7-8. Translated by Heyworth, 2007, p. 541.
[11] Wyke, 1987, p. 50; 2002, p. 52.

lines is the equation *aetas*/genre, which can be observed in the affinity between the generic characteristics of elegy: attributes typical of youth (*lusus*, *leuis*, *humilis*, *paruus*) contrast with those of grand style (*graue*, *triste*, *seuerum*, *durum*, *magnum*), which has affinity with maturity.[12]

Another element that deserves attention is the relationship between 2.11 and 2.12 proposed by Wyke, who suggests that these elegies repeat the movement of refusal that appears in 2.10. She also maintains that even though the narrator of these elegies had refused the *puella* in 2.11, in 2.12 she reappears as a result of the effects produced by love, which indicates that the beloved had never left the elegiac ego's heart. This interpretation, in my view, does not allow for a clear demarcation of the division of the books.[13] What I defend that the *puella* has already been written from the perspective of jovial love, and from 2.12 onwards love will not be observed from a particular and subjective perspective, worthy of praise or vituperation, but from the perspective of love in a broad sense, love as a feeling that affects mankind, from where a discussion of poetics will emerge, as we have seen above. Cynthia as love poetry is replaced by poetry of maturity in Books 2B, 3 and 4. Therefore, between 2A.11 and 2B.12 there is certainly "another statement of renewed literary intent",[14] but this does not necessarily presuppose an editorial unity between these elegies, to the contrary, the former closes a book and the latter opens another. Our argument draws on Lyne's refutation of Wyke's thesis. Regarding Wyke's framing of Book 2 (considering 2.1 and 2.34), Lyne argues that the motifs are not "particularly salient, not nearly so salient as those I shall cite between 2.10/11 and 2.1". As to the interrelation of 2.10 and 2.13 and their integration into the second book so as to produce unity, he argues that 2.10 and 2.11 are more *closural* than the other two interconnected, besides the fact that 2.12 is clearly introductory and programmatic,[15] as I intend to show in this article.

In this paper, I argue that the same arguments presented by Wyke to maintain that there is a narrative pattern uniting these elegies can also serve as arguments in favour of the existence of a narrative structure uniting Books 1 and 2A, on the one hand, and 2B, 3, and 4, on the other, marking a clear division of Book 2.[16]

II. Propertius' books 2a and 2b

After these introductory remarks, I now move on to the main subject of my paper, which is to draw an analogy between the two first books of Propertius and rhetorical orations in order to understand the function of the 'digressive ekphrasis' or 'ekphrastic digression' in Propertius' elegy 2.12.

In Books 1 and 2A, Propertius constructs an argument centred mainly on the *character* Cynthia: her affections, her looks, her behaviour, in sum, her whole being, or simply her

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[12] Mader, G. 2003, p. 122. See Sharrock 2000, p. 276.
[13] Wyke, 1987, p. 53.
[14] Wyke, 2002, p. 60; 1987, p. 53.
[15] Lyne, 1998, p. 21-2.
[16] Lyne, 1998, p. 21-2.

ethos.[17] Besides, we must bear in mind that Cynthia personifies love narrative, love lament and love poetry; in other words, she incorporates the Roman elegy itself. Then after the exposition of the arguments, this poetic and rhetorical piece needs a pause that must be affected rhetorically by a digression, which produces an amplification of the arguments previously constructed. It is exactly because of this established unity in the first part of Book 2 (between 1 and 10 elegies) that many scholars suggest that Propertius' Book 2 in fact consists of two books.

This thesis was first posited by Lachmann (1816). In the twentieth century, Lachmann was initially followed by Skutsch (1975), who includes in this hypothesis an argument against G. Williams,[18] and proposes new possibilities for the division of Book 2 whose argument is the late inclusion of Book 1 with those (books II, III and IV) previously compiled and then put together in one book.[19] Lyne (1998b) corroborates these arguments, by presenting new one. Murgia (2000) agrees with Lyne, however, he (Lyne) does not accept 2A.11 as a continuation of 2A.10. Others argue that 2.11 should not be understood as a closing elegy in itself, but that it proposes a discussion that is developed along the second book.[20] Goold (1990, 115) observes:

> As Lachmann first realized, Book 2 is a conflation of two books: its bulk is far too large for an Augustan poetry book; and at 2.13.25 the poet implies that he is writing his third book. But this section of Propertius' oeuvre is badly mutilated. We often meet with sequences, which are fragmentary or dislocated or even interpolated, a baffling situation only emphasized by the unflawed beauty of 2.12, the poet's finest lyric. The themes of this section are still centred on a lover's emotions, and Cynthia still dominates them.

Lyne presents a detailed discussion arguing that elegy 2A.11 is the last poem of what he called Book 2A. However, it is important to consider his arguments concerning the two last poems of the book. In sum, he presents elegy 2A.10 in this way: a) this elegy[21] is an offering at the foot of a statue, which would roughly summarize "the whole twelve hexameter books"; and b) the fact that Propertius presents Permessus by mentioning the feet of Mount Helicon is an explicit reference to erotic poetry. As to Lyne's arguments, I must say that, in the first case, we must bear in mind, besides the fact that that this elegy is an explicit offering, its strict relationship with poem 2A.1, equally a *recusatio*, even though

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[17] See Martins, 2015a, p. 43-7; Martins, 2015b, p. 150-62; Martins, 2015c, p. 132-7 and p. 141-4.

[18] Tradition and Originality in Latin Poetry, p. 480.

[19] Skutsch, 1975, p. 233: "This allows of one explanation only: the text of Propertius excerpted by the grammarians did not begin with the Cynthia Book but with our Book II, and our Book II must therefore be a conflation of the original books I and II.

[20] See: Wyke, 2002, p. 46-77; Keith, 2008, p. 50-1, 97 and p. 181-138; Fear, 2010, p. 435. See Heyworth, 2012, p. 219-33.

[21] Lyne, 1998, p. 27-8.

Lyne suggests that "the expressed intention to write an epic falters and compromises, but this is not exactly a refusal". In this sense, 2A.1 along with 2A.10 would frame of Book 2A. As regards the second issue concerning 2A.10, I can say that the affirmation corresponds to a transformation in the conception of love poetry. Propertius is mature, his poetry is approaching the summit of Mount Helicon, the *nemus Ascraeum*. However, he has not developed the elegiac genre into all possibilities yet, which would mean writing aetiological poetry, therefore justifying the refusal. The poet somehow seems to understand that there is a poetic *cursus honorum* to be fulfilled so that poetry can reach its highest point.[22]

Therefore, 2B.12 would be the overture of Book 2B. I would like to add new arguments to Lyne's thesis.[23] I believe that in the first book and the first half of the second, Propertius had already dealt with everything with regard to his love and his *puella*, his *domina*; so much so that he claims in 2A.11: *Scribant de te alii aut sis ignota licebit*.[24] The final verse of this elegy further substantiates my claim: *Cinis hic docta puella fuit*.[25] The closing of this short poem and its epigrammatic features appear to signify the end of something, as if the poet had placed a tombstone engraved with an epitaph,[26] which could also be considered a *sphragis*

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[22] See Maltby, 2006, p. 172 who proposes: "The poetic themes of poems 2.1 and 2.3 are picked up and reserved in poems 2.10 and 2.11, which Lyne has argued could well have concluded an original Book 2, before an original book 3 opened with our poem 2.12". Scarcia (1987) argues: "Nonostante un certo brusco trapasso di tono (non raro, peraltro, in Properzio), questi versi dovrebbero appartenere – come conclusione – alla elegia precedente: "Io, adesso, mi occuperò di altro con la mia poesia; quanto a te, che altri ti lodi o memo – questo ne è il senso – si tratterà pur sempre di una semina sterile, non feconda dell'immortalità che dona la vera arte; verà la morte, tu perderai tutto, e chi passerà davanti al tuo sepolcro non indugerà a compiangerti.

[23] *Contra* Heyworth, 2007, p. 158, who has a different approach to elegy 2.11, which, in my opinion, is a fundamental key to establish a new reading of the subdivision of Book Two.

[24] See Richardson, 2006, p. 244-5; Martins, 2009, p. 78-80. Fear, 2010, p. 432 proposed another reading of this elegy, establishing a relationship between the practice of the *interdictiones* and the figure of *exclusus amor*. Goold, 1990, p. 152 proposes: 'A break with Cynthia has occurred, but these verses lack the focus necessary for an epigram and must be a fragment of a larger whole.'

[25] Fear, 2010, p. 435-6: "Again, the use of the form of a sepulchral epigram in conjunction with a message of renunciation marks 2.11 as ostensibly closural in nature. The poem is an exercise in what we might call poetic de-composition, as the poet threatens to write out the *puella* and simultaneously reduces her body to *cinis*. It is not surprising, therefore, that it is argued that 2.11 was originally the concluding poem in a Propertian poetry book. Whether or not 2.11 actually ended a book, we can see that this form of poetic *interdictio ingenio* functions well within the dynamics of this literary discourse. For on the level of the pseudo-realist narrative, it serves as a threat to the *domina* that exclusion will be met with exclusion, and thus it remains a bargaining chip in the poet/lover's arsenal. At the same time, on the level of the developing poetics of the author, it serves as a convenient plot twist that suggests the ongoing literary maturation of the poet.

[26] Flaschenriem, 2010, p. 194: "The poet-lover goes a step further in Elegy 2.11. There, he contemplates ceasing to write about his mistress altogether, thus denying her the life in verse, the poetic epitaph that would bring her perpetually to mind".

of the so called book 2A. I also believe that 2A.11 has a strong relation with the two last elegies of the first book, 1.21 and 22: in both poems, Propertius explores the theme of death; however, 1.21 is centred on Gallus, a kinsman,[27] while 1.22 deals with his own poetic *character*. So, in Book 1, the poet eulogizes an elegiac *ego* and an elegiac *ille*, and in Book 2A, in elegy 2A.11, he buries the elegiac *tu* - Cynthia. Therefore the *sphragis* would not be the seal of the author, but that of the elegiac *character*.

If we accept elegy 2.11 as the ending of a supposed Book 2A, elegy 2A.12 (as argued by Lyne) introduces Book 2B. In that poem, Propertius effects a digression in the form of an *ekphrasis*, bringing *Amor* before our eyes. Moreover, this division, in a way, also corroborates Lachmann's hypothesis that the love expressed by Propertius in the elegies that followed 2A.13 was a modified, different kind of love.

Although we are not in front of a piece of speech – judicial, deliberative, or demonstrative – but a collection of poems whose "disjunctiveness of format" is an important characteristic, it is possible that there are in the poems some procedures and effects that are the same as those found in oratorical pieces. It seems clear to us that Propertius rhetorically reaches his audience, by constructing his argumentation from the pathos whose main feature is the emotional assertiveness. In this sense, this argumentation type adapts to conveniently to the poetic characters. These young people who were the target audience of Roman elegiac poetry could not be affected by ethical arguments.

III. Rhetorical doctrines of digression

In oratorical pieces, a digression[28] can be introduced in order to further move the audience's minds after the arguments and the case's subjects have been exposed and narrated. Moreover, digressions can be used to embellish one's argument. In other words, this rhetorical mechanism operates both on the level of *argumentatio* and on the level of *ornatus*, as Cicero clearly states in *De Oratore* 2.312.[29] Cicero discusses the different uses of digression. For example, in *Brutus* 322 Cicero acknowledges digression's ability to delight the audience, whereas in *Brutus* 82 he claims that Servius Galba was the first among the Roman orators to use certain methods (such as digression, pathetic expression, and *loci communes*) not only to embellish the discourse and to delight the audience, but also to move their minds and to amplify the oration's theme. In this second passage, digression serves a discursive purpose with the added goal of making the text more beautiful (*proposito ornandi causa*); in other words, it is a stylistic procedure. One and the same device, in a single passage, is associated with: a) change of conviction; b) amplification of the matter of the discourse; and c) use of

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[27] We must be careful since in Propertius we will find four different *Galli*: 1) an aristocratic friend (1.5; 1.10; 1.13; 1.20); 2) a kinsman (1.22); 3) a son of Arria (4.1); and 4) the first Augustan elegiac poet (2.34).

[28] About digression see: *Rhet. Lat. Minores*: Victorinus (202 Halm): C. Iulius Victor (427-29 Halm); Martianus Capella (487 Halm), and especially Cassiodorus (502 Halm).

[29] On the functions of digression in Cicero, see Canter, 1931, p. 351.

pathetic expressions and *topoi*. Cicero remarks that the use of all these rhetorical resources makes Galba pre-eminent in oratory (*inter hos aetate paulum his antecedens sine controversia Ser. Galba eloquentia praestitit; et nimirum is princeps ex Latinis illa oratorum propria et quasi legituma opera tractavit*).[30] It can therefore be argued that, for this orator, digression occupies a detached position among the rhetorical procedures. In short, according to Cicero, digressions delight the audience by employing the mechanisms of *ornatus*; they move the *minds* of the listeners using the resources of *argumentatio* (the primary concern of all oratorical pieces); and it makes the *dispositio* more transparent.

In Quintilian, another important feature of digression can be found:

> *Ficta interim narratio introduci solet, uel ad concitandos iudices, ut pro Roscio circa Chrysogonum, cuius paulo ante habui mentionem, uel ad resoluendos aliqua urbanitate, ut pro Cluentio* [20.57] *circa fratres Caepasios, interdum per digressionem decoris gratia, qualis rursus in Verrem* [4.48] *de Proserpina: 'in his quondam locis mater filiam quaesisse dicitur'. Quae omnia eo pertinent, ut appareat non utique non narrare eum qui negat, sed illud ipsum narrare quod negat.*[31]

Sometimes a fictitious statement is employed either to stir the emotions of judges, as in that passage of pro *Roscio Amerino* (22. 60) dealing with Chrysogonus to which I referred just recently, or to entertain them with a show of wit, as in the passage of the *pro Cluentio* describing the brothers Caepasius: sometimes again a digression may be introduced to add beauty to the speech, as in the passage about Proserpine in the *Verrines* (4.48), beginning "It was here that a mother is once said to have sought her daughter."[32]

Although in this passage Quintilian deals with some important functions of the *narratio ficta* used *ad concitandos iudices* or *ad [eos] resoluendos aliqua urbanitate*, he alerts us to the possibility of the use of digression in place of this fictitious narration: *interdum per digressionem decoris gratia*. This would suggest that digression might be closely related to the idea of a fictional inset in the argumentation, besides the notions of delight and persuasion we saw above. In the next chapter (*Inst.* 4.3.1), Quintilian argues that digression about some pleasant and attractive topic is used by some orators to complement the dry statement of facts, in order to gain the greatest possible favour from their audience. It seems evident that Quintilian, besides understanding digression as a mechanism which produces delight and conviction, corroborates the Ciceronian idea that it is interesting to make use of digression in the peroration, thus assigning to digression, at the same time, a function in the discursive *ordo – dispositio* as well as in the discursive *argumentatio – inuentio*.

It is important to note that both Cicero and Quintilian draw a close connection between the digression and the ideas of peroration and recapitulation. The relation between

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[30] Cic., *Br.* 82 .
[31] Quint., *Inst.* 4.2.19.
[32] Translated by H. E. Butler.

digression and peroration, and the idea of recapitulation in order to pathetically persuade the judges either in the middle or at the end of an oration are aspects that must also be noted. So, a digression, which is either in the core of the cause explanation or in the final considerations, plays an important role in the practical realization of the argumentation, stirring strong emotions in the audience.

IV. *Digressio* and *ekphrasis*

The ekphrasis is also similar to the digression – as I showed both in Cicero and in Quintilian – with regard to its position in the discourse. According to Sopatros in *On the Division of Questions*, both occupy a detached position at the end of the text or at the close of a section. From this perspective, the ekphrasis can be used in a similar fashion to the digression: as a final appeal to the emotions to elicit additional sympathy for the cause in the epilogue of an oration.

Ruth Webb (2009, p. 131-32) comments the relationship between ekphrasis and the art of persuasion. She points to Sopatros, the Rhetor's, treatise *On Division* and to the commentaries on Hermogenes' *On Issues,* which contain detailed recommendations on how to construct a speech, and she tells us how, where, when and why ekphrasis should be used in the context of judicial and deliberative speeches. Additionally, with regard to epideictic discourses, she discusses the works of Menander, the Rhetor, and Nikolaos. Ekphrasis is presented by these ancient authorities as a means of bolstering the 'speaker's argument for or against a course of action and its contribution to amplification (*auxesis*) and the arousal of indignation (*deinosis*) in judicial speeches, a way of increasing the impact of the subject described.' Conversely, Nikolaos in his *Progymnasmata* states that in epideictic speeches the use of ekphrasis is linked to the pleasure of the audience (*hedone*). In this case, then, the use of ekphrasis could be added to the mechanisms associated with *ornatus*. Pagán may have linked ekphrasis and digression when she suggested that Vergil uses ekphrasis and Tacitus digression to fit the events into their narratives.[33]

But if both techniques, digression and ekphrasis, have such close aims, what is the real difference between them? First, let us consider the issue of *euidentia*, which is necessarily present in an ekphrasis, but is not in a digression. Second, we must bear in mind that the digression's mechanism presupposes a *recapitulation* of intra or extra-textual elements. In the first case, the *digressio* recapitulates the most important arguments within the text; in the

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[33] Pagán, 1999, p. 302-20 remarks that Tacitus' discussion of Teutoburg is the most extended and self-contained flashback in the *Annales*. He varies the rhetorical motifs of historiography to transform defeat into victory, but only temporarily. His description of Teutoburg is an exercise of *inventio*, based on the description of Cremona. Pagán 2002, p. 45-59 notes that Vergil and Tacitus include two watershed events of the Augustan era: the victory at Actium, which looks to the future; and the defeat in the Teutoburg Forest, which invokes the recent past. Vergil uses ekphrasis, Tacitus digression, to fit the events into their narratives.

second case, it brings new arguments, which will amplify the thesis.[34] Ekphrasis, on the other hand, presupposes an *anticipation*. Whereas digressions repeat the arguments at the end of an oration (or one of its sections), an ekphrasis provides an indication of the arguments which will be developed later in the text. Anticipation is a very interesting quality of the ekphrasis, because it suggests something that is incorporeal and invisible to our eyes. For example, the ekphrasis of the paintings at Juno's temple in the first book of the *Aeneid*[35] predetermines Aeneas's heroic *ethos*.[36] Aeneas, who is *profugus* after his escape from Troy, after seeing the paintings recognizes himself as a hero among others – *Se quoque principibus permixtum agnouit Achiuis*.[37] Thus, these images anticipate the heroic actions of Vergil's epic protagonist. Another example, this time in another genre, is Catilina's portrait in Sallust.[38] The *ethopoieia* created by the historian anticipates the action of the monograph's protagonist. This portrait, which is full of vividness, gives emphasis to the emotion, which is fundamental for Sallust's argumentation. Curiously, this portrait anticipates the digression, in the following paragraphs (up to paragraph thirteen), describing past events that explain the present situation, starting from the foundation of Rome. Thus, we have an ekphrasis (*ethopoieia*) here, which *anticipates*, and a digression, which *recapitulates* the argument.

V. The overture of a new book: the image of love, poetic *ekphrasis* or digression

In order to mark a division that is both digressive and ekphrastic in 2B.12, Propertius refers to visual aspects that allude to themes and subjects that were systematically constructed and presented along the narrative of Books 1 and 2A. Elegy 2B.12 starts by circumscribing the matter of the two preceding books, indicating Amor as a technical and artistic product, because it was painted by admirable hands, that is, written by admirable hands – a clear ironic reference to Propertius' own poetic activity. *Pinxit amorem* in line 1 picks up at *scripta puella mea est* in 2A.10.8 – recovered in 2B.13.12 –, which generalizes an affection that had previously been specific. The idea of "writing my girl" and "painting love" accompanies a logic of generalization of the beloved, turning her into love. Between lines 3-6, for instance, the same subject (*is*), the painter or the poet, saw how the lovers lived without caution or shame, and how they changed their attitude, which denotes a clear ethic transformation of the poetic personae along Books 1 and 2A. Therefore, such lines may reverberate, for example, 2A.6, which shows us Cynthia as a prostitute in hyperbole, comparable to Lais, Thais and Phryne, who are paradigmatic in classical literature. The poet, in his turn, appears as a pimp, who does not mind sharing her with other lovers. These new images of Cynthia and of the elegiac ego – besides contradicting the Augustan morals – confirm Fear's thesis,

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[34] Cic., *Inv*. 1. 27.4.

[35] Virg., *A.* 1.446-97

[36] See Martins, 2001, p. 143-58.

[37] Virg., *A.* 1.488.

[38] Sall., *Cat.* 5.

which shows that the Propertian *puella*, from a certain point in the narrative, starts to mirror women like Sempronia, Clodia and Volumnia, who undoubtedly typified famous courtesans or prostitutes. Consequently, the elegiac ego starts to look like an *adulescens* in *uacatio adulescentiae* or in *tirocinium adulescentiae*.[39]

Between lines 9 and 16, Propertius uses one of the most well-known *loci communes* of elegiac poetry: *militia amoris*, which clearly recall elegies 1.7 and 1.9. The poet explains the reason why the elegiac lover wages war, having as a premise of his *recusationes* the fact that he was wounded by Cupid's weapons, and therefore he is already fighting in a specific war. The military metaphors in 2B.12 acquire an erotic sense: "*ante ferit ... quam cernimus hostem*"; "*uulnere sanus abit*" and "*meo sanguine bella gerit*". These topoi are organized in a way that visual aspects suggest the symptoms of this kind of war, composing an ekphrasis.

The last image in this digression that can be seen as a recovery of previous elements is the *Musa levis* (v. 22), who can only be visualized from the poet's perspective. She operates Cynthia's ambiguity, because she can be seen as poetry itself. Thus she is associated with Book 2B, which is starting, or she can be the beloved, who was constructed and deconstructed in the two previous books. Her hair, fingers and head point to her human figure, and her feet, maybe metrical, suggest the softness of the elegiac movement.

In any case, in view of the discussions proposed on the division of Propertius' books that presuppose, on the one hand, editorial questions, and on the other hand, hermeneutic questions, we are going to scrutinise the elegy 2B.12 considering both poetical and rhetorical mechanisms which are at the core of the concepts of digression and ekphrasis. In this sense, 2B.12 is a unique *exemplum* since we do not know any other piece in Roman love elegy which may have been constructed with these features and used with this goal.[40]

> *Quicumque ille fuit puerum qui pinxit Amorem,*
>   *nonne putas miras hunc habuisse manus?*
> *is primum uidit sine sensu uiuere amantes*
>   *et leuibus curis magna perire bona.*
> *idem non frustra uentosas addidit alas,*   5
>   *fecit et humano corde uolare deum:*
> *scilicet alterna quoniam iactamur in unda:*
>   *nostraque non ullis permanet aura locis.*
> *et merito hamatis manus est armata sagittis*
>   *et pharetra ex umero Cnosia utroque iacet,*   10
> *ante ferit quoniam tutos quam cernimus hostem,*
>   *nec quisquam ex illo uulnere sanus abit.*
> *in me tela manent; manet et puerilis imago;*
>   *sed certe pennas perdidit ille suas,*
> *euolat heu nostro quoniam de pectore nusquam*   15

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[39] Fear, 2005, p. 14-7 and p. 19-22.

[40] Actually, this little god had been drawn by Moschus and Meleager *AP*, 5.177; 178; 215 and 180, and others poets of AP: *AP*, 9.449. See Fedeli, 2005, p. 339-59. See Serv., *A*. 1.663.

assiduusque meo sanguine bella gerit.
quid tibi iucundum est siccis habitare medullis?
si pudor est, alio traice tela, puer.
intactos isto satius temptare ueneno;
non ego, sed tenuis uapulat umbra mea.   20
quam si perdideris, quis erit qui talia cantet
(haec mea Musa leuis gloria magna tua est),
qui caput et digitos et lumina nigra puellae
et canat ut soleant molliter ire pedes?[41]

　　Whoever he was who first painted Love as a boy,[42] do you not think he had a marvellous touch? He first saw that lovers live without sense, and that great estates are destroyed by little desires. The same man added, not without reason, the wings that mimic the wind, and made the god fly in the human heart, presumably since we are tossed on fluctuating waves: the breeze nowhere remains steady in our favour. And rightly is his hand armed with barbed arrows, and a Cretan quiver lies on his two shoulders, [10] since he strikes us first, when we feel safe, before we see the enemy, and no one goes off unscathed from that wound.

　　In my case the weapons remain valid; so too does the boyish appearance; but he has certainly lost his wings, since (alas!) he nowhere flies off from our heart, and constantly wages war in my life-blood. Why is it pleasing for you to inhabit my dried-out marrow? If you have any shame, direct your weapons elsewhere, child. Better to try the untouched with the poison of yours; it is not I, but my insubstantial shade that is getting beaten. [20] If you destroy this, who will there be to sing such things, (this light Muse of mine is your great glory), who to sing the girl's head and fingers and the dark eyes and how seductively her feet move?[43]

　　This elegy could simply be presented as a rhetorical exercise that was very trivial in Rhetoric's schools, as Quintilian suggests: "*quid ita crederetur Cupido puer atque uolucer et sagittis ac face armatus*".[44] However, in this case, it seems impossible to dissociate this elegy from its collection, or from its editorial context. Although 2B.12 clearly recovers some *loci communes*

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[41] Edition Heyworth, 2007, p. 53.

[42] Athenaeus in *The Deipnosophists* (13.562c) quotes a fragment of the fourth-century (B.C.) comic poet Eubulus in which the speaker (after beginning, as in line 1 here, 'who was it who first painted Love with wings?') proceeds to argue that this attribute is *not* rightly bestowed on Love, because he sits heavy on his victim and cannot easily be shaken off. Ath. *Deip.* (Epitome) 2.2.104.7.

[43] Translated by Heyworth, 2007, p. 542.

[44] Quint., Inst. 2.4.26: Solebant praeceptores mei neque inutili et nobis etiam iucundo genere exercitationis praeparare nos coniecturalibus causis cum quaerere atque exequi iuberent 'cur armata apud Lacedaemonios Venus' et 'quid ita crederetur Cupido puer atque uolucer et sagittis ac face armatus'

from the *Anthologia Palatina*,[45] I believe that it presents a new practical use in a specific editorial project.

Three features distinguish a simple description from an ekphrasis: the vividness of the description (*euidentia*/*enargeia*), the participatory audience,[46] and the movement that can be observed in the description itself, for instance: *non frustra uentosas addidit alas*, *fecit et humano corde uolare deum*. For if in a narrative the characters move and perform actions, in a description, and especially in an ekphrasis, it is the eyes that move, exploring a trajectory that comprises the whole subject. I believe that Propertius' elegy 2B.12 has all the elements that are necessary to be considered as a digressive and ekphrastic poem. In the second verse, the direct question (*nonne putas*) invites the possibility of the judgement of the audience and inserts the reader (second person) in the text.[47] The reader thus becomes part of the elegiac game, as an active and present judge (*putas*) of the poetic and pictorial product. Moreover, Propertius follows the conventions of ekphrasis by bringing to the interlocutor's attention what is on the painting, exposing didactically both his pictorial and elegiac *auctoritas*.

In this poem, contrary to what occurs in Roman elegy in general, the point of comparison is not the rival or the friend despised by his lover. Here, the *tertius* is the matter itself, which is the concrete or natural cause of the sufferings of love: "the god Amor."

The anaphoric pronoun *is* in the third line amplifies the *ingenium* of the painter/poet. It calls the audience's attention to his visual perception, for he was the one who *primum uidit*. Obviously, *uidere* can be read in a less referential way, as the physical experience of vision, but it can also express the poetic character's capacity to visualize the lovers' feelings. This line seems to interact with elegy 1.1, in which Propertius states: *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis*. In 2B.12, the speaker's eyes have the same ability. Curiously, the verb *putas* in the second line presupposes a certain aptitude from the readers, since they are considered capable of understanding what the painter/poet wanted to depict.

Line 4 presents a common feature in Roman elegiac poetry: polysemy. The expression *leuis cura,* which in the elegiac repertoire would be a clear indication of the swift and soft style, is applied here to the way the life of the lovers affected by Cupid. Thus, 'to live without senses' is clarified by the capacity of letting die that which is great and powerful in the

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[45] See Wyke, 2002, p. 63: Hellenistic epigram and school exercises in rhetoric have been provided as models for the enunciation in 2.12 of the iconography of Love. The poem also locates itself within a framework of Hellenistic erotic literature by the reproduction of Greek words and sounds (*pharetra* and *Cnosia*).

[46] Webb, 2009, p. 10: "Ekphrasis was a technique used to make the audience feel involved in the subject matter, to make them feel as if they were at a scene of a crime, or that they themselves witnessed the achievements for which an emperor is being praised."

[47] Webb, 2009, p. 10: "(...) This analysis shows first that *ekphrasis* was indeed conceived as a means of achieving persuasion, of altering the listeners' perception of the subject in a way that helped the orator to win their assent. Secondly, we see the close interconnections between *ekphrasis* in the Greek tradition and Quintilian's comments on *enargeia* and, finally, *ekphrasis* in epideictic contexts is shown to have a persuasive function."

name of futile, light cares, *leuibus curis*, an expression which may be read in another context as a quality of the elegy, which translates into a concern with the lightness, swiftness and softness of poetry.

The poet/painter starts talking about the irresponsibility of the lovers and its consequences, and then moves on to describe a second important feature of Amor: he is not a mere child, but a winged god with the ability to fly. This physical attribute has a specific purpose: it enables the god to fly into the human heart and remain there (*corde humano,* line 6). Moreover, the fact that Amor is a god gives him argumentative superiority in relation to the lover. The human heart, once inhabited by the little winged god, produces its effects: physical symptoms. Those inhabited by the god are like toys for him to play with.

One more attribute is added to Cupid's portrait: the bow and arrows, his weapon of choice (lines 9-10). This weapon has a metaphoric valence, since it is a commonplace in erotic poetry to attribute to the eyes the power of seduction. And it is noteworthy that he who painted Cupid did that after having apprehended the god with the eyes – *primum uidit* (line 3). Also, in Propertius 1.1, the elegiac *ego* says that he was captivated by Cynthia's gaze – *Cynthia prima … me cepit.* Thus the eyes in love are connected to *Cupid*'s weapon. Thus, the arrows/eyes pierce before we can perceive the enemy, in a way that makes it impossible for the lover to get rid of the pain. It is noteworthy that these verses imprint swiftness to the effects of *Amor*. Therefore the pain caused by the arrows are already in place before the tormentor can be seen. The use of the verb "to discern" (*cerno*) is rather curious, for it implies an operation of judgment, besides the fact that it can be understood according to the fifth definition of this word in the OLD: "to discern visually". Hence, the critical situation of the affected.

Verse 13 *in me tela manent, manet et puerilis imago* marks a clear alteration in speech. On the one hand, the past tense is replaced by the present; and on the other hand, the third person and the first person plural are replaced by the first person singular (*in me*). Thus, what was first presented in a general, paradigmatic manner, becomes specific: "In my case the weapons remain valid". This beautiful chiasmus denotes a double change, in addition to confirming the association of the arrows with the eyes. After all, the *image* (*imago puerilis*) remains, and so do the *arrows*. Their presence in the chest and in the blood causes wars, which expresses the paradox of love, for although *Amor* torments the lover, there is no love without war.

The last element in this composition, the peroration, requires some decoding. My suggestion is based on the relationship expressed in the 4 last lines.

The absence of the elegiac poet (*si perdideris*) not only stops the *carmen*, but also the existence of poetry altogether, represented not by the *doctae uirgines* as in Catullus or the *doctae puellae* as in Propertius himself, but by the *Musa leuis*. Whereas the Muse (*domina*, *puella*, *mulier*) is at the same time the personification and the essential quality of elegy, the *puella* is announced in the two last verses by her physical attributes: head, fingers, and dark eyes.

Furthermore, her feet are not limp as those in elegy, in his *uerba*, as suggested by Ovid in *Amores*,[48] but *mollis* (soft) according to the *decorum* of the *res* in Roman elegy.

Propertius' poem, therefore, can be seen as the painting of a painting, for writing is painting with words. By saying that the painter had admirable hands for having painted the Love child, he praises the renderings *euidentia*, achieved by highlighting the typical attributes of Cupid.

VI. Conclusions

The division of Propertius book 2 remains problematic. Is the book a united whole, or should it be divided in two halves (and if so, where)? However, it is clear that elegy 2A.11 has an emphatic place in the collection, since its epigrammatic character and funerary tone grant it the form of a *sphragis*, which can be considered the end of the book or at least of a section.

My argument in favour of an ending after 2A.11 is based essentially on the end of Cynthia as the exclusive theme of the elegies. The character's construction reaches its summit, its conclusion or exhaustion in elegy 2B.12. After that, Cynthia still appears in the subsequent books (2B.13, 14, 15, 16.), but in another light and not as the exclusive theme.

If we accept 2A.11 as the book's end – obviously we do not ignore possible loss and disruption of propertian text[49] –, 2B.12 must be the overture of a new book. Its theme and construction point to a generalization of the main subject observed up to this point: love. Moreover, it constructs an *ethopoieia* of the god Amor, which embodies the elegies' theme. This generalization and this *ethopoieia* can be read as a result of the application of the rhetorical mechanisms of digression and ekphrasis, since both produce the same effects: a) alteration of mind; b) amplification of matter; c) delight of the audience.

In conclusion, 2B.12 must be understood as a double-faced elegy. One face looks to the preceding elegies, synthesizing them in a larger argument, and so, assuming the typical function of a digression in rhetorical pieces that have an important argumentative function, despite the fact that it pertains to disposition. And the other face looks to the forthcoming elegies of book 2B, as an *ekphrasis* that is the overture of a new book, anticipating its central theme and taking its subject beyond one specific example, that is, beyond the love affair between Cynthia and Propertius, so that others will be writing about their 'Cynthias' or will be painting their *Amores* in words.

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[48] See Ov., *Am.* 3. 1. 7-10.
[49] However Fedeli (1984), Goold (1990), Viarre (2005), Giardina (2005) and Heyworth (2007), all of they consider this edition correct.

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