zed in lines 19, 21-22, and 27-28, may be a factor in the pillory being restricted to the poem. Two vivid descriptions of the tumultuous uproar of ancient urban life come to mind, Plautus, *Mercator* 405-9 (reminiscent of the *pappagalli* of modern Rome), and Cicero, *Ad Q. F.* II 3.2. It is a common feature of the literature of classical antiquity actually to incorporate in a poem what it describes as a projected event.

**PROPERTIUS IV 1, 20: CURTUS EQUUS AND THE EQUUS OCTOBER**

G. Devereux, in a recent article in this journal ¹, provided a new interpretation of the ritual sacrifice of the Equus October; his argument is quite sufficient in itself, but he overlooked a passage which furnishes additional confirmation for his view, a passage which for lack of that interpretation has been misunderstood for many years. This is Propertius IV 1, 20 *qualia nunc curto lustria novantur equo*. In accord with the old interpretation of the ritual, commentators (see e.g. Hertzberg, Rothstein, Butler, Butler and Barber, *Camps ad loc.*) have regularly taken *curtus* in the manner of the new *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, fasc. II (1969), 477 s.v. l.b: “having the tail cut off, docked”. Applying Devereux’ view, we can restore to *curtus* the stronger and more literal meaning, ‘castrated’, the sense played upon in Hor. *Sat.* I 9, 70 *curtis . . . Iudaecis*.

Readers will note that Devereux’ interpretation was in effect anticipated by the older dictionaries, e.g. Lewis and Short s.v., *Thes. L. L.* s.v. 1504, 21, for presumably erroneous reasons. In any case, future commentators on this Propertius passage must take Devereux’ suggestion into account, and subsequent editions of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* may eliminate the now unnecessary phrase quoted above, for which Propertius provided the only example.

**HOLED PITCHERS FOR THE Danaids: A FIRST ALLUSION IN SENECA?**

Seneca *Medea* 748-9

vos quoque, urnis quas foratis inritus ludit labor,
Danaides, coite: vestras hic dies quae rit manus.

Medea is inviting the famous sinners of Tartarus to abandon their punishments and attend her as she destroys Jason’s new

*Mnemosyne*, Vol. XXVI, Fasc. 3

bride, Creusa, immediately after their nuptials. The appeal to the Danaids is particularly appropriate, for they too had been driven to murder by a repugnant marriage, albeit their own; but the real interest of the passage lies in the words *urnis* ... *foratis*, as here we seem to have the earliest allusion to the Danaids carrying holed pitchers. While many certain or probable references in Greek and Latin authors to their water-carrying in the underworld do not explain precisely how it was futile (e.g. ps.-Pl. *Ax.* 371 e, Hor. C. II 14, 18, Ov. *Met.* 4, 462-3; 10, 43-4, *Ibis* 175, 354, Marc. *Arg.* 31, 5-8 Gow-Page = *AP VII* 384, 5-8, Plu. *Sept. Sap.* 160b, Lucian *DMar.* 8(6), 3), those which do normally indicate that its eternal frustration was due to the recipient jar or cask (*πιθος*, *dolium*, etc.) being perforated or otherwise incapable of holding the water they pour in: e.g. Lucr. 3, 1008-10, Hor. C. III 11, 26-7, Tib. I 3, 79-80, Phaed. *App.Fab.* 5, 10-1 Müller, Lucian *DMort.* 11, 4, *Tim.* 18, *Hermot.* 61 (and ΣΣ on *DMar.* 8, 3, *DMort.* 11, 4, *Tim.* 18 Rabe), Hyg. *Fab.* 168, 5, Serv. on *Virg.* A. 10, 497, *Suda* s. v. *ἀπληστική* and *εἷς τετρημένον πίθον ἀντλεῖν*, Apostol. 6, 79, Macar. 3, 16, Diogenian. 1, 95. The different version attested in *Med.* 748-9 may or may not also be implied in another allusion in Seneca, *HF* 757 *urnasque frustra Danaides plenas gerunt* (where the reference of *frustra* is ambiguous); but that line at least helps to put it beyond rational doubt that he employs *urnis* in our passage to signify the pitchers carried by the Danaids (*not* the stationary cask or casks), in conformity with the word’s usage in other mentions of the legend (e.g. *Prop.* II 1, 67, IV 11, 28, Phaed. *l.c.*) and with its regular denotation of a *portable* water-vessel (for which see Daremberg-Saglio s.v. *urna*, and note a further Senecan instance in *Thy.* 805). Thus in *Med.* 748 Seneca has apparently transferred, or more probably extended, the attribute of perforation from the jar to the pitchers. Other accounts in which the Danaids’ pitchers leak are few and of later date, and do not present an exact parallel, viz. *Zenob.* 2, 6 *ἀπληστος πιθός: ... καὶ κόραι δὲ, ἢς Δαναΐδας λέγουσιν, πληροῦσι εν κατασχόντων ἁγγείων θηρὸ πρός αὐτὸν φέροντο τετρημένον*, Porph. *Abst.* 3, 27 ὡς εἰ αὐτὶ Δαναΐδες θηρότον τίνα βιον βιώσονται ἀπαλλαγείσαι τῆς περὶ τοῦ τετρημένον πίθον διὰ τοῦ κοσμίου λατρείας; note also Juv. 6, 614 *A-614 B Clausen* *semper aquam portes rimosae ad dolia, semperi studium onus subeas ipsis manantibus urnis*, where *ipsi* suggests that *manantibus* means ‘leaking’, not ‘overflowing’, but a specific allusion to the Danaids is conjectural. It is clear that those passages concerning the Danaids which simply feature the holed jar are connected with the belief that the uninhibited and the impious are punished in this way in the underworld; similarly both the passages in *Zenobius* and *Porphyrius* just quoted are